



NATIONAL

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# DRAGSTER<sup>®</sup>

## ON ANGELLE'S WINGS



**TORRENCE, CAPPS, COUGHLIN,  
AND SAMPEY LEAD WINNERS AT  
THIRD STRAIGHT INDY EVENT**

### U.S. Nationals preview

- Mickey Thompson Pro Bike Battle
- Dodge Hemi Challenge
- JEGS Allstars



Sampey ends four-year victory drought; how and why she kept the faith in herself

# NOTES FROM THE PRO MOD REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

BY JIM LUIKENS

It was déjà vu all over again for NHRA's Pro Mod racers as the second race of their 2020 season was contested at the same place as their first race and the third race of their season will also be held at that same place: Lucas Oil Raceway at Indianapolis. The winner of the first race as well as the winner of the third race will both be decided at that event. Such is the case in this unprecedented season.

In my coverage of the rained-shortened first event I mentioned that two first-time finalists will compete for the trophy. That is incorrect as **Chad Green** had two runner-ups in 2018. However, we will have a first-time winner, no matter who holds the Wally.

For the second race in a row, **Khalid alBalooshi** was the No. 1 qualifier. alBalooshi won his first round here despite a rather leisurely .165-second reaction time. In the second round, he improved to an .089 reaction time but still lost to Jonathan Gray's much quicker .026-second leave.

alBalooshi is driving the 2019 Camaro that is owned by Canadian **Justin Bond**. Bond, along with the seven other NHRA Canadian Pro Mod regulars, have been missing in action so far this season due to the need for them to quarantine for 14 days upon their return from the United States.

**Brandon Pesz** and his team had another great outing. Pesz



Brandon Pesz

was a DNQ at the first race when his 5.901-second qualifying time, which would have been good enough for 10th on the final qualifying sheet, was disallowed.

No drama in qualifying here as Pesz went right into the field with a strong 5.826-second qualifying time that was good enough for the seventh starting position. This time his drama started in the first round of eliminations when he was unable to stage his car and thus gave the automatic win to Bo Butner.

Pesz's teammate, **Jeff Jones**, continued to run well as his fourth-place qualifying position actually improved on his sixth starting spot from the first race. His drama also started in the first round when he was unable to stage against **Mike Janis**.

It was a near-miracle that Janis was able to answer the first-round bell at all. During his final qualifying pass on Saturday

his left rear quarter panel literally tore right off his car. He was able to answer that first-round call on Sunday thanks to some mixed materials and a lot of work overnight.

It was great to see **Jim Whiteley** back in action. Driving his familiar 1963 Corvette while his new 1957 Chevrolet remains under construction, Whiteley

qualified 12th upon his return and defeated Chad Green in the first round of eliminations before a .313-second reaction time was his undoing in the second round.

No Nitrous Plus cars showed despite the fact that 25 pounds have been removed from their 959-cubic inch combination. I keep hearing that they are coming, so we'll see together.

The Pro Mod points scene could not be any tighter. A surprising **Kris Thorne** sits atop the points sheet with 145 points, just one point ahead of Gray.

**Jason Scruggs** with 130 points is in third followed closely by Green at 129, Clint Satterfield at 127, and Butner at 124 points.

Rosebush Racing is celebrating its 50th year in drag racing this year. As part of their celebration for reaching the half-century mark they are sponsoring my NHRA Pro Mod commentary this season. **NHRA**



Doug Winters

## PRO MOD

1. Khalid alBalooshi, Marion, Ohio ('69 Camaro) . . . . . **5.729, 251.67**
2. Jason Scruggs, Saffilo, Miss. ('19 Camaro) . . . . . **5.749, 251.86**
3. Steve Jackson, Evans, Ga. ('18 Camaro) . . . . . **5.788, 247.47**
4. Jeff Jones, Weatherford, Texas ('19 Corvette) . . . . . **5.794, 249.81**
5. Chad Green, Midland, Texas ('17 Corvette) . . . . . **5.795, 250.51**
6. Steve Matussek, Olathe, Kan. ('21 Mustang) . . . . . **5.799, 253.80**
7. Brandon Pesz, Weatherford, Texas ('68 Camaro) . . . . . **5.826, 247.93**
8. Jeffery Barker, Kathleen, Ga. ('18 Camaro) . . . . . **5.828, 249.67**
9. Jonathan Gray, Artesia, N.M. ('18 Camaro) . . . . . **5.838, 250.13**
10. Bo Butner, Floyd's Knobs, Ind. ('20 Camaro) . . . . . **5.848, 247.66**
11. Kris Thorne, Nims, Fla. ('18 Camaro) . . . . . **5.851, 255.82**
12. Jim Whiteley, Grand Junction, Colo. ('63 Corvette) . . . . . **5.855, 241.71**
13. Mike Janis, Lancaster, N.Y. ('20 Camaro) . . . . . **5.882, 247.66**
14. Mike Castellana, Muttontown, N.Y. ('69 Camaro) . . . . . **5.909, 244.34**
15. Clint Satterfield, Albuquerque, N.M. ('69 Camaro) . . . . . **5.914, 204.08**
16. Chip King, Roxboro, N.C. ('70 Charger) . . . . . **5.917, 244.47**

ALTERNATES: Brandon Snider - 5.931, 195.05; Justin Jones - 5.948, 226.92; Todd Tutterrow - 6.019, 243.50; Doug Winters - 8.103, 112.98

