



NATIONAL

ISSUE 20 ★ VOLUME 61  
OCTOBER 23, 2020 ★ NHRA.COM



# DRAGSTER

## GOING 'BIG'

TORRENCE DRIVES GARLITS  
TRIBUTE CAR TO VICTORY AT  
REBOOTED GATORNATIONALS



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## RACING EXTRAVAGANZA!

Inside: Coverage of 15 unique events spanning four NHRA series



CAMPING WORLD PARTNERS WITH NHRA TO SPONSOR  
NHRA PROFESSIONAL SERIES; 2021 NHRA CAMPING  
WORLD DRAG RACING SERIES SCHEDULE ANNOUNCED

# NOTES FROM THE PRO MOD REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

BY JIM LUIKENS

New York's **Mike Janis** was one of the big winners at Gainesville 2020. Although he finished runner-up in the race, that was enough to propel him into the E3 Spark Plugs points lead. His 274 points are less than one round of competition ahead of second-place points man Stevie Jackson's 258 points.

Other close points battles abound all the way down the points leaderboard. Recent first-time winner **Chad Green** is in third place with 235 points, but that is only four points ahead of **Jonathan Gray**, 10 points ahead of Khalid alBalooshi, 13 points ahead of **Kris Thorne**, and 17 points ahead of **Brandon Snider**. In other words, you have five racers separated by less than one round of racing.

I never like to see anything bad happen to any Pro Mod racer, or any racer for that matter. At Indy we had two of our Pro Mod racers turn turtle and end up on their lids. I'm very happy to report that not only were both drivers OK but that they were already back in action at Gainesville with different cars.

**Steve Matusek**, a dedicated Ford Man, showed up the Gators with a ProCharged Camaro. And it was just not any Camaro, but the one that his former partner owned - the Gen 6 Camaro that **Danny Rowe** raced in 2018. Rowe had raced it in a supercharged form but sold



Steve Matusek

it when he retired at the end of the 2018 season.

Matusek proved that he is a quick learner by qualifying his new Camaro No. 12 at 5.944 seconds. However, his raceday was a short one as he was matched up with long-time Pro Mod series supporter **Jim Whiteley** in the first round. Whiteley's 5.856-second elapsed time and .032-second reaction time was enough to upend Matusek's quicker 5.850-second run. Matusek's reaction time of .068-second proved to be his undoing in this round.

Our other turtle from the U.S. Nationals, **Kris Thorne**, was also back on the scene. Thorne was driving what appears to be the ex-Jose Gonzalez 2017 Camaro. He transferred his turbocharged engine combo into the Camaro and qualified 14th. His qualifying speed was a booming 253.61 mph, almost four mph more than the next closest qualifier.

His raceday was a short one as well. Eventual event


runner-up Mike Janis sent him packing in the first round when his 5.880-second elapsed time was not enough to catch Janis' quicker 5.790-second elapsed time.

**Khalid al Balooshi** qualified a surprising 10th after qualifying first or second at the first three NHRA Pro Mod events of 2020. On eliminations day, he won his first-round matchup with **Clint Satterfield** and his second-round pairing with Jackson. During that second-round win, his .147-second reaction time was masked when Jackson slowed.

For the final four, alBalooshi

was paired with Janis, and there was no masking his reaction time this run. His 5.762-second run was defeated by Janis' slower 5.818-second run with the difference back at the starting line. Janis was showing a .091-second reaction time while alBalooshi left a .170-second hanging in his lane.

The only other real gatejob occurred in the other half of the final four. **Rickie Smith** used an otherworldly .015-second reaction time and a 5.815-second elapsed time to hold off Snider's 5.803-second elapsed time and .075-second reaction time.

**Brandon Pesz** was a DNQ for the third time out of the four NHRA events that have been held in 2020. Teammate **Jeff Jones** was also a DNQ while third teammate **Justin Jones** qualified 15th. I look for the Pesz/Jones trio to break through soon. They just have too much smarts and too much good equipment to qualify and run the way they have been running. 



Kris Thorne

## PRO MOD

1. Brandon Snider, Atmore, Ala. ('16 Corvette) ..... 5.813, 246.66
2. Steve Jackson, Evans, Ga. ('18 Camaro)..... 5.851, 246.62
3. Mike Janis, Lancaster, N.Y. ('20 Camaro) ..... 5.861, 244.07
4. Rickie Smith, King, N.C. ('20 Camaro) ..... 5.866, 249.63
5. Jim Whiteley, Grand Junction, Colo. ('63 Corvette) ... 5.866, 244.56
6. Chad Green, Midland, Texas ('17 Corvette) ..... 5.867, 249.35
7. Clint Satterfield, Albuquerque, N.M. ('69 Camaro) ... 5.867, 242.45
8. Jonathan Gray, Artesia, N.M. ('18 Camaro) ..... 5.878, 249.95
9. Jeffery Barker, Kathleen, Ga. ('18 Camaro)..... 5.885, 249.95
10. Khalid alBalooshi, Dubai ('19 Camaro) ..... 5.889, 246.26
11. Tommy Daprile, Port Charlotte, Fla. ('69 Camaro) ... 5.912, 244.03
12. Steve Matusek, Olathe, Kan. ('20 Mustang) ..... 5.944, 247.52
13. Doug Winters, Pleasant Garden, N.C. ('69 Chevelle) ... 5.979, 241.37
14. Kris Thorne, Mims, Fla. ('17 Camaro) ..... 6.003, 253.61
15. Justin Jones, Weatherford, Texas ('20 Corvette) ... 6.021, 199.91
16. Todd Tutterow, Yadkinville, N.C. ('20 Camaro) ..... 6.037, 244.69

ALTERNATES: Brandon Pesz - 6.129, 210.28; Jeff Jones - 7.042, 178.17; Jason Scruggs - 8.399, 113.67

