

Volume XII, Number 2 - February 2010

# DRAGRACING

MAGAZINE

## *Online*

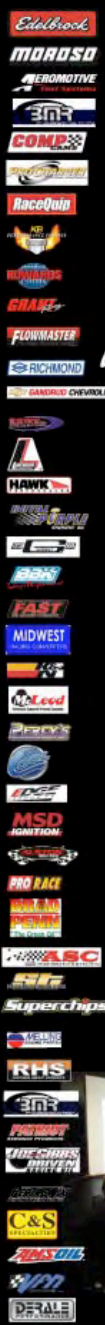
**So long, Snake: A look at  
Don Prudhomme  
over the years**

**Pro Stock  
Showdown**

**Jim Baker saw  
Karamesines  
go 204 at Alton**

**PSCA  
begins season  
at Las Vegas**





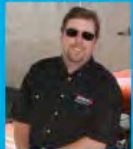
# PRESENTS

## The 3rd Annual Race & Performance Expo "Getting Back to the Grassroots of Performance" March 6th & 7th, 2010 @ Pheasant Run Resort, St. Charles, IL.

### SPECIAL GUEST APPEARANCES BY



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## BROWN JOINS THE ARMY



Actually the headline should read 'Army joins Brown.' The U.S. Army has been named a major associate sponsor of Antron Brown and the Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) Matco Tools Top Fuel team. The Matco Tools dragster will sport U.S. Army branding during the 2010 NHRA season and Brown will participate in the Army Youth and Education Services (YES) Program.

"This is an awesome deal to bring the (U.S.) Army to our Matco Tools team," Brown said. "I had a very good relationship with the Army when I was riding the (Pro Stock) bike for DSR for many years. Who can't get excited about joining forces with the great soldiers that protect us at home and abroad each and every day. Our racing family now gets even stronger with all the Matco distributors and Army soldiers supporting our team." (Ron Lewis file photo) [02/09/10]

## BENDER HEADS FOR EUROPE

Donnie Bender, late of Don Prudhomme's team has been engaged as a consultant by Finnish Top Fuel Dragster racer Anita Mäkelä for the 2010 FIA European Top Fuel Dragster Championship, which begins at Santa Pod Raceway, UK, in late May. Anita and husband Tommi Haapanen are in fact both licensed Top Fuel Dragster racers. Tommi drove the dragster for a few years while Anita raised children Hanna and Heikki but Anita took back the keys at the start of the 2009 season and finished fifth in the FIA European Championship.

Bender will not be the only US consultant on the 2010 European Top Fuel tour as Jim Brissette has again been engaged by Denmark's Andersen Racing to advise on the dragster driven by 2009 Champion Andy Carter, Wayne Dupuy who tunes Urs Erbacher, and John Smith who consults for Denmark's Stig Neergaard.

[02/09/10]



(James Drew file photo)



Anita Makela (photo by Tog)

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## PITTMAN FUNERAL SERVICES SET

Services for K.S. Pittman, who passed away on Jan. 31, will be held Wednesday, February 10, at 11 a.m. in the Baum-Carlock-Bumgardner Chapel (302 W. Hubbard St., Mineral Wells, TX 76067) with burial in Woodland Park Cemetery.

K.S., 82, was born in Mineral Wells, but he and his wife had been residents of Springfield, Mo., since 2004. He is survived by his wife, LaVaun, four daughters, one son, eight grandchildren, a sister and a brother. [02/09/10]

## CORY MAC HOPES SLIMMER TEAM WILL MEAN QUICKER TIMES



McClenathan looked this way at the end of last season. We'll show you how he looks this weekend. (Jeff Burk file photo)

Here a pound, there a pound. Cory McClenathan and the FRAM Top Fuel dragster have spent a busy off-season losing weight as they both prepared to contend for a championship in the 2010 NHRA Full Throttle Drag Racing Series.

"We knew we needed to shed some weight both with the driver and the race car," said McClenathan, who ended the 2009 season fourth in the standings with one victory in four final rounds. "We needed to be 35 pounds lighter and have more power with our package. The FRAM guys (including crew chiefs Todd Okuhara and Phil Shuler) went to work on that and I went to work on myself, and it's been a win-win situation for everybody.

"We have a brand-new chassis, a great looking paint scheme, with the FRAM orange back as the primary color, and it turned out really well. It's all hand-painted; no wraps for us. We liked the FRAM Tough Guard colors we ran last year, but FRAM wanted to switch it up, and we're all for that."

As for his rivals this season, "I think the toughest competition is sitting right here at Don Schumacher Racing: my teammates Tony Schumacher and Antron Brown," said McClenathan. "And obviously Larry Dixon. He's going to be right there from the beginning. I think everybody is going to be looking at these four cars as being the top four. There's some other good cars out there, but I think on a consistent basis we have to look at our in-house cars the most." [02/09/10]

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**Strange Engineering, Morton Grove Illinois, introduces housings and complete 9" bolt-in replacement rear ends for 2005-present Mustangs to the public.**

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## JEGS U.S. OPEN BRACKET CHAMPIONSHIP SCHEDULED FOR JUNE

The JEGS U.S. Open Bracket Championship will be held June 17-20 at O'Reilly Raceway Park in Indianapolis. The sixth edition of bracket racing's premier event will feature four great days of competition, and a purse in excess of \$200,000.

Action will kick off with the American Race Cars Thursday Warm-Up. Racers will compete for a winner's purse of \$10,000 cash along with a 2010 American Race Cars Patriot Chassis. Friday and Saturday feature back-to-back \$20,000-to-win events presented by DragstersForSale.com and the Fab Shop, respectively. Sunday, the weekend concludes with the Sullivan's Tire \$10,000-to-win event.

"The JEGS U.S. Open has established itself as one of the premier big dollar events in the country," said co-promoter Dave Szerlag. "We're not going to mess with a good thing. We've added a Door Car Only shootout, and we're happy to have increased involvement from new sponsors; but for the most part the structure of the event is unchanged from 2009. Our goal, as always, is to provide a great racing environment and give racers the opportunity to compete for huge purses without a monumental investment. Plus, I think we've succeeded in creating one of the most enjoyable, fun-filled events in all of sportsman racing."

As has been the staple of the JEGS U.S. Open Bracket Championship since its inception, the four-day event features incredible deep payback for a low weekend entry fee. Third round winners get paid each day of the event. All purses are 100% guaranteed by promoters Dave Szerlag and Mike Fuqua. The weekend entry for the three main events (Friday-Sunday) is only \$500. Entry for the American Race Cars Thursday Warm-Up event is \$200. A first round only buyback will be offered if there are fewer than 256 entrants (the same clause the event has always offered), but the JEGS U.S. Open has featured NO buybacks since its inaugural event in 2005.

Familiar feature events include the Racecraft Chassis Dragster Shootout and Steve Schmidt Competition Engines Bracket Buster Shootout, which take place Friday and Saturday nights, respectively, after the main event. New for 2010 is a special Door Car Only Shootout presented by Masta Performance. This special event for the door car crowd features a 32-car shootout, with the winner taking home \$5,000 and a complete Masta Performance Powerglide Transmission. The Masta Performance Door Car Only Extravaganza will take place on Saturday night in conjunction with the Steve Schmidt Competition Engines Bracket Buster Shootout.

For more information, contact D&M Motorsports Promotions representatives Dave Szerlag (517-376-0361) or Mike Fuqua (615-207-4125), or call O'Reilly Raceway Park at 317-291-4090. [02/09/10]

## BOAT RACER TOM WRIGHT DIES UNEXPECTEDLY

Reader Mitch Myers informs the Agent that Tom Wright, owner/driver of the "Cuckoo's Nest" Top Alcohol Hydro drag boat and former IHBA world champ, passed away early on Feb. 7 due to a blood clot. Tom and his son, Tom Jr., ran a very competitive program. Our condolences to the family. [02/09/10]

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## BAKER ADDS TO THE GREEK 204 DEBATE

DRO's new columnist, Jim Baker, has a few words to say about Chris Karamesines in his latest column, but he also sent an addendum to editor Jeff Burk:

"There is no doubt in my mind that Chris and Don Maynard ran 204 that day at Alton, if you want to add to my story. There is probably no doubt from any of the several hundred folks that saw the 'run' that it was faster than any other run we had ever seen.

"It was either Ron Leek, hisself, or Bob Johnson, long-time manager of Des Moines Dragway, that told me Chris and Don were trying 'hydrazine'.

"Since this has become such an issue, I want to be very clear; those of us who were there at Alton, that day in 1960, all believe the run. And as a point of order, my '32 Ford altered coupe ran 128.75 MPH that day. Two weeks prior it clocked 128.52 MPH at Cordova. If the clocks were 'juiced' it should have gone over 130... Find a doubter who was a witness. 'Nuff said again." [02/09/10]

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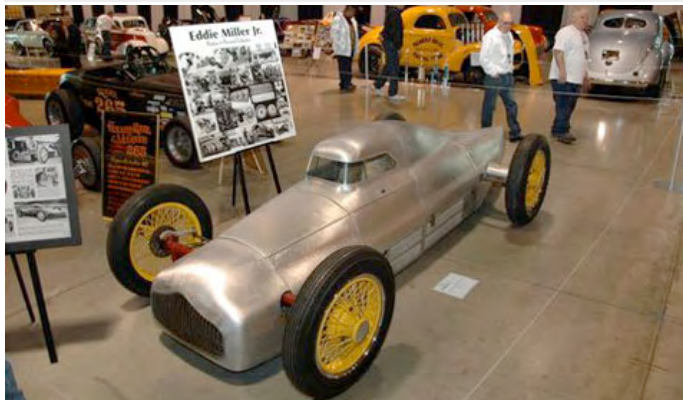
Photographer Tom Schiltz took a tour of the 61st Grand National Roadster Show held Jan. 29-31 at the Fairplex in Pomona, Calif. He sent these photos of a few drag racing classics.



Dick Kraft's "The Bug" is generally recognized as the first dragster. It's on loan from the Wally Parks NHRA Museum.



The Murray and Waters Roadster. This car was the first drag car to run the new Chevy V-8 engine.



The Eddie Miller Lakester won Best Engineered car at the 1952 Bonneville Speed Trials. The car has been in a private collection and was shown for the first time in 50 years.

[02/09/10]





**SEARS RETURNS TO DRAG RACING WITH HAGAN FC SPONSORSHIP**



Sears, Roebuck and Co.'s iconic brand DieHard will be the primary sponsor of the Dodge Funny Car driven by Matt Hagan in the 2010 NHRA Full Throttle Drag Racing Series. Sears' Craftsman brand previously was a major sponsor with the NHRA.

The DieHard brand has been marketed by Sears since 1967. To help promote the DieHard battery chargers, portable power and inverters, Don Schumacher Racing will campaign the DieHard Dodge Funny Car, with associate sponsorship from [shelor.com](http://shelor.com), in the 2010 NHRA series.

"The agreement between DieHard, one of the most trusted names in the automotive industry, and Don

Schumacher Racing is a perfect match," said Erik Rosenstrauch, general manager of DieHard brand business unit, "Our involvement with one of the premier racing teams in NHRA further enables us to drive our business and engage consumers about the excitement behind DieHard."

Crew chief Tommy DeLago will continue to tune the DieHard Dodge in 2010, as the 23-event NHRA season begins in Pomona, Calif., this Thursday.

(photo courtesy Don Schumacher Racing) [02/09/10]

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## THE YOUNGER FORCE GIRLS GET READY FOR RACE SEASON



Jim Whiteley leads Courtney Force down the track last year. (James Drew file photo)

Courtney Force capped her most successful racing season last year by reaching the finals round at the Auto Club Finals at Auto Club Raceway making a run at her second Lucas Oil event win. She came up just short but that just gave the 21 year-old Cal State-Fullerton student more motivation for the 2010 season.

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Heading into the 50th annual Kragen O'Reilly Winternationals Force will be eager to get behind the wheel of her BrandSource/Ford Drive One A Fuel Dragster. Her first qualifying lap on Thursday, Feb. 11, will get the season underway for John Force Racing. Once again Courtney will be sharing the Top Alcohol Dragster category with her older sister Brittany, who drives the BrandSource A Fuel Dragster.

"I am still learning and it is great to have my sister Brittany also in an A Fueler. We talk a lot about what is going on in the dragsters and we learn from each other. The key for me this year will be to just continue to be consistent and keep learning. I am hoping to make it to more winner's circles this year too."

## DRAG RACERS INDUCTED INTO KENTUCKY MOTORSPORTS HALL OF FAME

The 2010 Kentucky Motorsports Hall of Fame Inductees have been announced and several drag racers were among

those honored.

**Darrell Alderman** of Morehead, Ky., was a three-time NHRA Pro Stock World Champ. **Austin Myers** of Valley Station, Ky., was the last Top Gas NHRA World Champion. **Morris Smith** of Bowling Green, Ky., was the former track manager of Beech Bend Raceway Park in Bowling Green from the 1960s to the '80s. **Billy Campbell** of Columbia, Ky., was the former driver of the "Goldigger" Top Fueler, which won IHRA national events in the 1970s and other big events; and **Bill Stebbins** of Louisville, Ky., a champion dragster and sprint car builder.

Other inductees are **Andy Hampton** of Louisville, Ky, an ARCA Daytona Champion and many time Kentucky Track Champion; **Milt Hartlauf** of Jeffersonville, Ind., the former Fairgrounds Motor Speedway Promoter in Louisville, Ky. Milt was also a racer and raced stock cars on the beach in Daytona; **Billy Howell** of Hodgenville, Ky., a many-time track champion in Stock cars; **The Owensboro Boys**, the creators of Indoor Tractor Pulling and Monster Truck Pulling, and the Founders of TNT Motorsports; **Danny Sullivan** of Louisville, Ky., who won the Indy 500 25 years ago in the famous Spin and Win 500; and **Harry Hyde** of Brownsville, Ky., who won over 50 NASCAR cup racers as a crew chief.

The inductions will take place on August 15 at the Swope Museum in Elizabethtown, Ky. Check out [www.kentuckymotorsportshalloffame.com](http://www.kentuckymotorsportshalloffame.com) for more info. [02/09/10]



Darrell Alderman (DRO file photo)

# Burk's Blast

By Jeff Burk

## WONDERING IN THE SNOW

**Just Wondering...** Why not allow NHRA-legal Nostalgia nitro Funny Cars to compete with T/AF in LODRS races? They won't outrun the good alky cars but they would give the LODRS promoters a reason to pay the extra \$16,000 required to have alcohol classes at those races. They already have injected nitro dragsters, so why not add AA/FC and start attracting fans at those events?



**Just Wondering...** Why do professional racing series keep going outside of racing to select a president? Tom Compton was one example, as was Dallas Gardner before him. Now the Indy Racing League, which is owned by the Hulman family (Indy 500/ the Brickyard), has hired a man to run that troubled organization who was the CEO for the Professional Bull Riders circuit and admits he has never even seen an Indy Racing League event. Unbelievable!

**Just Wondering...** If the NHRA packs the seats at the Pomona Fairgrounds for the 50th annual Winternationals -- and there are many who think they will -- what will they do to bring those fans back in 2011?

**Just Wondering...** Will Warren Johnson be the next iconic drag racer to announce his retirement from the sport? I suspect the K&N sponsorship really isn't large enough to support Warren's Pro Stock operation for 23 races.

**Just Wondering...** Will this be the year that the NHRA and its track operator partners significantly cut the prices of tickets like NASCAR has? The average number of actual seats at their national events is around 20,000, so the answer is no! NASCAR's tracks are trying to fill from 50,000 to 250,000 seats and can afford to do so while the NHRA tracks need to sell every ticket they can.

**Just Wondering...** Did the NHRA give salary bonuses to its VPs last year? Will they do it again in 2010? What, are you kidding with that question?

**Just Wondering...** How many of the IHRA's core sportsman racers can afford to go to the early races in Florida, Louisiana, and then Utah? The answer is not very many.

**Just Wondering...** How long will the IHRA keep their sportsman program if the number of entrants remain the 140-150 they had at their Palm Beach International Raceway event? I'd bet big money the entries at PBIR didn't come close to covering the payout purse.

**Just Wondering...** Will the time come when NHRA's policy that forces sportsman racers to attend divisional points meets if they want to have enough grading points to get an entry to national events fades away?

**DRAGRACING Online** will be published on the 8th of each month and will be updated throughout the month.

**DRAGRACING Online** owes allegiance to no sanctioning body and will call 'em as we see 'em. We strive for truth, integrity, irreverence and the betterment of drag racing. We have no agenda other than providing the drag racing public with unbiased information and view points they can't get in any other drag racing publication.

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**Just Wondering...** Did you know that F-1 and the IRL actually pay their premier class teams a yearly sum to attend the races? Some NHRA owners would like to see that program in the NHRA. That's easy to do when a sanctioning body has way fewer than 25 teams total to pay like the IRL and F-1 have. It's an entirely different matter when you are dealing with as many as 43-100 pro teams per race like NASCAR and NHRA do.

**Just Wondering...** Is it just me or are the NHRA's current Pro Stock bodies looking more and more like a lowered and stretched version of the new Volkswagen Bug?

**Just Wondering...** How strange the current Pro Stock bodies are going to look if they do away with carbs and the big scoops that are needed for a carbured engine?

**Just Wondering...** Why isn't Bruton Smith running the sportsman classes four-wide at his Charlotte track? We all know that for most fans sitting through 50 or more pairs of 8.90, 9.90, or 10.90 qualifying or eliminations can be boring, but if they ran them four-wide it would sure speed things up, wouldn't it?

**Just Wondering...** (1) How many fans who weren't going to buy a ticket to the NHRA drags at Charlotte will because of the four-wide eliminations, and (2) If the first Charlotte race sells out, how long before all the races at Smith's tracks are run four wide?

**Just Wondering...** Will we ever see four-wide pro eliminations at an NHRA-owned track like Indy or Pomona?

**Just Wondering...** If Bruton Smith can put on a race for his legends circle track cars at Charlotte Motor Speedway with \$150,000 to win, now that legend cars are legal for drag racing at NHRA tracks can a Bruton Smith-backed drag series for those cars be far off?

**Just Wondering...** Since bracket racing can only get around 200 cars to race for a supposed \$1,000,000 winner, what makes anyone think an NHRA-sanctioned Top Fuel or Funny Car race is going to attract more racers and fans than what is paid now? I can tell you from personal experience that a race with a qualified eight-car Top Fuel field and a guaranteed \$100,000 to win didn't attract huge crowds and barely got eight Top Fuel cars.

**Just Wondering...** If there were a worldwide series for Top Fuel cars with, say, eight races in the States, four each in Europe, Australia, and the Arabian peninsula, would the worldwide mainstream media then give drag racing the coverage it deserves?

**Just Wondering...** Why nitro Funny Cars aren't as popular in the rest of the drag racing world as they are here in North America?

**Just Wondering...** If something (God forbid) were to happen to Tom Compton or he chose to retire, who would decide on his successor?

**Just Wondering...** If the NHRA adds another date to their schedule to replace the Memphis race, is there any chance it would be Columbus?

**Just Wondering...** Why not allow turbocharged or under-the-hood supercharging in Pro Stock? You can buy plenty of Detroit-built two-door sedans with turbocharged and supercharged engines. [DRO](#)

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# Then & Now

## A couple of Chicagoland racers and some other things

**THE ODYSSEY CONTINUES...** My first article mentioned my fire engine red 1957 Oldsmobile J-2 that won several trophies in early Arizona Drags. A fellow student at Ariz. State Univ. wanted the Olds and paid me \$3,500 for it, which was a lot of money for a car in '57. Phil Billingsley lived in the same frat house at ASU and he immediately set out to inspire me to obtain the new 'A' engine 1958 Pontiac that had just been introduced by GM. Woudenberg Pontiac of Mesa, AZ, sponsored Phil's Green '58. The team was an Arizona legend during 1958-59. After waiting six weeks for my order to arrive, I took possession of a gleaming white 1958 Pontiac Chieftain, stick shift, 'A' engine, tri-power machine. It was fast and now I was really 'hooked' on drag racing.

**CLEAN CAR/DIRTY CAR...** My family had business ties in Iowa and Arizona, so I migrated to the Midwest during the winter of '57-58. When the snow and ice cleared, a group from Kahoka, Mo., and I went to Cordova Raceway near Moline, Ill.

At the time, I knew Arnie Beswick had won Stock Eliminator at the U.S. Nationals held in Oklahoma City, driving a 1954 Olds. I did not know that he too had switched to Pontiac. When I pulled to the line in A/S class eliminations, I heard the announcer state, "watch the clean car on the inside lane, that is Arnie Beswick." In the other lane was an identical 1958 'white' Pont. Not only was it 'cleaner' (we had driven 175 miles), it was just a fender quicker that day too; but it signaled the start of a long friendship with Arnie 'The Farmer'!

**CHICAGO, CHICAGO, THAT TODDLIN' TOWN!** While California was a 'hot bed' of early Drag Racing action and development, no place has ever resonated with the promotional excitement of Ben Crist and Jon Lundberg at U.S. 30 Dragway. The goose bumps would jump up on my arms with Jon's thundering SATURDAY NIGHT at beautiful U.S. 30 Dragway! Not to be out done, was Jan Gabriel's SUNDAY, SUNDAY, SUNDAY at Union Grove!

**It's called CHICAGOLAND.** Chicagoland stretches from western Indiana at the tip of Lake Michigan to the east, across Illinois to the Mississippi River on the west, north into Wisconsin, and south to Peoria, Ill., the home of Caterpillar.

My perspective is from outside the area looking in. While I can write volumes about the little 1/8th mile track in Kahoka, Mo., this column is about some of the myriad of deserving racers, who in the 1960s called Chicago home. Certainly two names share Number 1: Chris Karamesines and Don Schumacher! These two 'superstars' have done much for the sport, and current racers know that.

I was at Alton (Ill.) Raceway in 1960 when Chris and the late Don Maynard went 204 mph on some sort of rocket fuel.



*"Chizler"* Alton Dragway  
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Chris Karamesines - Don Maynard World Record 204 Feet

Recap of an Alton Dragway handout used after Chris Karamesines astonished the drag racing community of 1960 with his famous 204 MPH run.

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The exhaust was in the air and I was on the starting line -- 'nuff said! It was the first time anyone had run over 200. (Note: I read Chris's interview in DRO and can appreciate that the valve springs of 1960 had a lot to do with his performance, but I know first hand that many people crowding the starting line, just like Chris said, were sickened by his exhaust, including myself.)

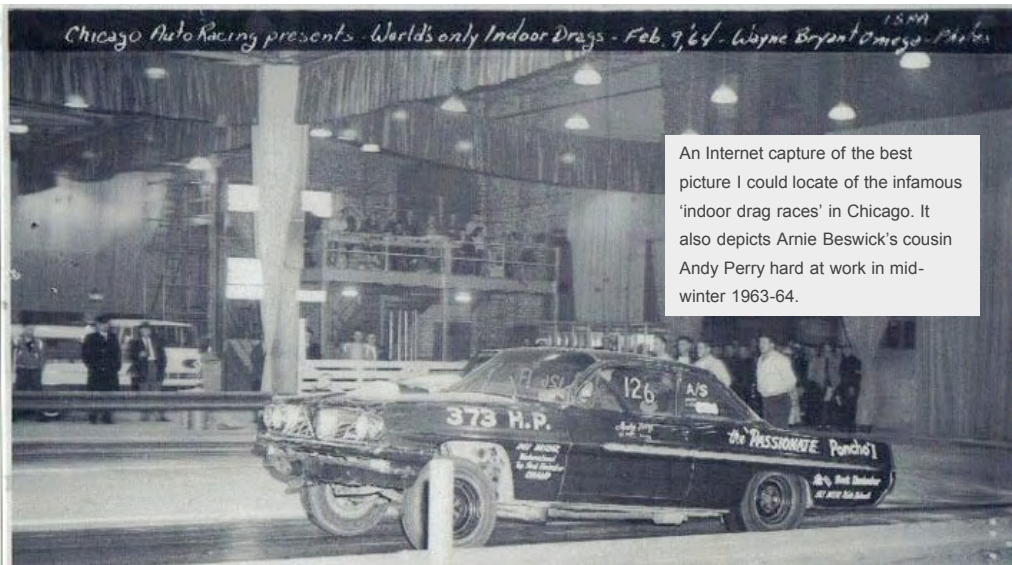
There were hundreds of great Chicagoland racers, I'll leave many out, but in this time of maximum nostalgia for racing, do you remember: Palmer Lazarus's blown 1956 Chevy with a four speed; Gabby Bleeker's Bantam Fuel Altered; Jack Sharkey's Dodge Super Stock; John Kranenberg, Don Mattison and Bud Roche's 'Guzler' top fueler; or Don Schumacher's ground breaking 'Funny Car' effort?

Continuing to step into the present, how about Farkonas, Coil, and Minick's 1962 Dodge wedge 11-second machine (That's John Farkonas, *Austin Coil*, and Pat Minick); and finally, one of drag racing's foremost writers of the era, Ben Brown, who penned a column for Doris Herbert's Drag News? (Note: Research for this article brought the sad news of Palmer Lazarus's passing on Jan. 4, 2010. He was a great early drag racer!)



Palmer Lazarus's plain green 1956 Chevy at Tri State Dragway. As to 'sounds of the strip' this plain looking car of the early '60s was Numero Uno! The high-pitched squeal of the small block at 9,000+ RPM, hitting every shift with perfection, is etched in my brain forever.

Chicagoland tracks that my group attended included *Cordova Dragway*, Cordova, Ill; *Great Lakes Dragway*, Union Grove, Wisc; *Oswego Dragway*, Oswego, Ill; *Route 88 Dragway Strip*, Sterling, Ill.; *U.S. 30 Raceway*, Gary, Ind.; and in order to keep racing all winter, an indoor raceway (440' in length with a 660' shutoff).



An Internet capture of the best picture I could locate of the infamous 'indoor drag races' in Chicago. It also depicts Arnie Beswick's cousin Andy Perry hard at work in mid-winter 1963-64.

It was called *Chicago Area Raceway* and operated briefly in 1963-64. I was there once, and can attest that it was noisy, difficult to breath, and like racing on ice! The track was sponsored by USAC and billed as the INDOOR DRAG RACES!

It was located at 42nd and Halstead at the International Amphitheater. Built in 1934 as a livestock show place, the building no longer exists; in addition to hosting the drag races, it also housed the Democratic National Convention in 1968, and at least one mega concert by the Beatles.

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**A NOSTALGIC CHUCKLE...**

The picture of the indoor drags I found features Andy Perry's Arnie Beswick-prepared Pontiac trying to find traction on the Amphitheater's waxed concrete floor. This may have prompted the popular area racer to always carry plenty of powdered resin with him to future races.

Andy was a frequent visitor at Tri-State Dragway in Kahoka, Mo. He always had the valuable golden powder. Some racers who did not have any asked to borrow it from Andy.

A 409 Chevrolet driver (sorry, I cannot recall the name) who lost to Andy after spinning out at the start, was furious and challenged Mr. Perry at our starting line ala 'Pinks: All Out'. Andy then brought out a box from his truck marked, *COMPETITOR'S POWDER!* Perhaps Andy started drag strips preparing their own tracks as they all do today.

**PRO STOCK VALVE SPRINGS...**

While putting this issue together, and considering the disclaimer by Chris Karamesines mentioned above, I recalled the extreme focus we gave valve springs during the early Pro Stock years. There were many new materials and designs offered constantly in the 1970s. The springs had to be perfect for the high revving Pro Stock engines or they would 'float' on every shift. I doubt if Chris had valve springs which were even close to the dynamics we were using. Therefore his report about the valve springs is totally believable.

**NEW FOR 2010...**

A new quarter-mile track is set to open in March. They broke ground Friday, Nov. 20, 2009, in Hurricane, Utah's Quail Creek Industrial Park for the *Red Hills Raceway* drag strip. It will be just the first in a group of automotive-related projects expected to fill the area. Located adjacent to the Washington County Fairgrounds, the \$1.8 million drag strip will have seating for more than 2,500 spectators. Jon Brazeau, popular Comp and Super Gas racer will serve as track manager. For additional information contact Felissa Ferrill at (435) 688-1573, Jon at (435) 229-9588, or visit their web site at [www.redhillraceway.com](http://www.redhillraceway.com).



Construction equipment hard at work on the new Red Hills Raceway quarter mile in Southern Utah.

Until next time, *Be on Time!* **DRO**

# SHOWDOWN AT THE STRIP

Words by Jeff Burk

Photos by Tim Marshall and James Drew



Defending Pro Stock Champion Mike Edwards. (Tim Marshall photo)

This year's Pro Stock Showdown at the Strip saw 13 of the NHRA's very finest drivers and teams in attendance including past NHRA World Champion Jeg Coughlin Jr. and defending 2009 World Champ Mike Edwards. All of the teams and their drivers came to Vegas to get ready for the 2010 NHRA season this weekend.

The race was scheduled to race to completion last Saturday but the torrential rains that plagued the West Coast for a week moved into Vegas on Saturday and caused the race to be postponed until Super Bowl Sunday. Like the Super Bowl itself, the final results didn't follow the experts' picks. In fact, none of the top qualifiers were around for the Pro Stock Showdown final round, instead it was the "underdogs" that went to the pay window.



Pro Stock legend Bob Glidden (left) is working with Justin Humphreys (right). Later this year the team will get Roush Yates 500-inch Pro Stock engines. (James Drew photo)



Johnny Gray (near lane) and V Gaines. (James Drew photo)

All of the hitters were gone when the cars driven by Justin Humphreys and Johnny Gray came to the line to determine a winner. Out of the 13 Pro Stocks that qualified for the event, Humphreys and Gray qualified next to last and last. Despite their poor qualifying, the two teams made it to the finals due in part to the fact that many of the winners from round one pulled out of the lanes before the semi-final ran.

At the green Gray moved first and had the better RT by two-thousandths of a second with a .050 light to Humphreys'.052. But Gray's mount went into severe tire shake almost immediately, and he shoved in the clutch while in the other lane Humphreys motored up the track recording a 6.974/204.05 lap for the win.



## HEADS-UP CLASSES

The weekend also featured many heads-up categories including a Stock/Super Stock shootout and a Super Comp race that paid the winners \$5,000. There was also a Super Gas category that paid the winner \$2500.

The heads-up Super Comp class delivered one of the very best races in recent history at the Strip. Super Comp runs on an altitude-corrected index of 9.04 and, as usual, a couple of dragster drivers met in the final round.

In the semi-finals Jack Freckman's .017 RT got him moving .001 before Thomas Bayer and then Freckman ran dead-on at 164.07. In the other lane Bayer took the chance and charged through the stripe at 171.12 mph but his ET was a 9.056. Freckman (Woodacre, Calif.) broke the win beam just .0074 seconds (approximately 22 inches) ahead of Bayer.



Jack Freckman (James Drew photo)



Jeff Blackwell (James Drew photo)

In the final Jeff Blackwell lined up against Freckman and perhaps was a little intimidated. Blackwell pushed the tree and got a .013 bulb for his effort. Freckman had a .016 light and ran a 9.065/163.81 to take the \$5500 winners money.

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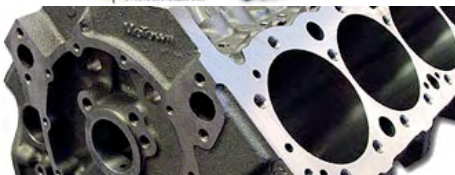
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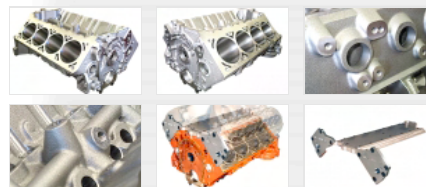
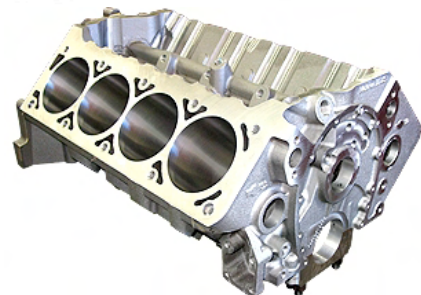


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Brad Plourd (James Drew photo)

In the ultra-tough Stock/Super Stock division it took five hard rounds of racing for Brad Plourd to drive his SS/BM into the winners circle over Don Thomas's GT/CA in a well earned win. Plourd had a great .005 light and ran a respectable 8.987/141.47. Thomas was never a factor as his .101 light gave Plourd a basically unbeatable package to work with.

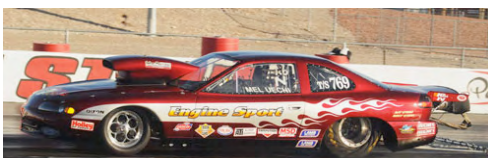
Plourd had a great day as he also went to the quarter-finals in the dragster-dominated 8.90 Super Comp class before losing to eventual winner Jack Frickman. Plourd, from Maple Valley, Wash., scored the \$5,000 purse by beating Dan Thomas of Overton, Nev., in the Stock/Super Stock Combo class.



Charlie Waggoner Jr. (James Drew photo)

Charlie Waggoner Jr. of Los Angeles went home \$2,500 richer when he won a double breakout final round race with fellow Californian Ryan Herem of Quartz Hill, Calif. Waggoner ran a 10.039 on the 10.05 index and Herem was slightly quicker with a 10.031 clocking.

Jason Dawson of N. Las Vegas won the \$3,000 Top Dragster first-place check by defeating Val Torres Jr. of Valinda, Calif. In the Super Pro bracket class Dave Morgan of Concord, Calif., defeated Nevada favorite Justin Lamb from nearby Henderson NV. The Pro Eliminator winner was homeboy Scott Horsley of Las Vegas who defeated Mark Miyashiro from Torrance, Calif.



Mel Uechi of Las Vegas won \$3,000 in Top Sportsman competition over Dave Zewe of Hesperia, Calif. (Tim Marshall photo)

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5. Jeg Coughlin	Delaware, OH	'09 Cobalt	6.712	206.70
6. Greg Stanfield	Bossier City, LA	'09 GXP	6.715	205.66
7. Rodger Brogdon	Houston, TX	'10 GXP	6.742	204.60
8. Bob Yonke	Burleson, TX	'08 GXP	6.758	204.54
9. V. Gaines	Lakewood, CO	'10 Avenger	6.769	203.74
10. Rickie Jones	Galesburg, IL	'10 GXP	6.771	203.86
11. Shane Gray	Artesia, NM	'10 GXP	6.774	204.39
12. Justin Humphreys	Monrovia, MD	'09 GXP	6.786	204.11
13. Johnny Gray	Artesia, NM	'10 GXP	6.897	201.70

### PHOTO EXTRA



Midwest Stock Eliminator hitter Alex Denysenko. (James Drew photo)

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Lyle Burnham heats the hides as the sun slowly sets in the West. (James Drew photo)



Jay Payne was getting his new TA/FC ready for Pomona. Check the trick spoilers on his car -- and not even a wickerbill for down force. (James Drew photos)



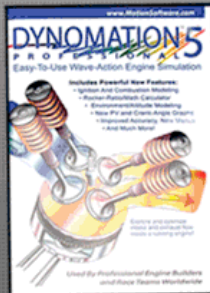
The Coughlins brought more than just their Pro Stocker to test at Las Vegas. (Tim Marshall photo) **DRO**

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# Tranny Tech

by Mike Stewart

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I have a r.e.d. 250" wheel base running in the mid 7's. I just changed my rear end gears from 4.86 to 4.29. I wanted to know if this takes too much off the bottom. If my trans first gear is from 1.76 to a 1.96 ratio with out changing every thing in the trans. input shaft, drums, or maybe 1.80 ratio.

Kelly Paeramain, Grand Junction, CO

Kelly,

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# ASK THE EXPERTS TECH Q&A

## Check Out That Chassis

By Scott Woney of S&W Racecars

I have a '65 Malibu SS bracket car. It has been back halved w/ladder bars and coil over shocks. I have a 355 sbc w/pg and transbrake, 5600 stall, 5.13 gears. I run M/T 12.2 x 31.25 radials. I recently weighed the car with 4 wheel scales. Total weight w/driver is 2993. What I'm concerned about is the front to back bias. Front weight 1684 or 56.3 percent, rear 1309 or 43.7 percent. The car runs 10.50's @ 125. 60ft times are 1.43. The car hooks good and straight, pulling front tires equally off the ground approx. 5 inches. How much would moving the engine back 2 inches help? The engine is in the stock location and could easily move back without cutting up the firewall. I would like to lighten up the front weight or get it closer to 50/50. Currently the ladder bars are mounted in the level position, what will raising the bars do to this combo?

Slick, Canada

Slick,

If you can move the motor back it will help, the weight % change I don't know. If you lighten the front you need to check your front spring rate and possibly change springs if you take weight off and move the motor. You don't want to lose the front end travel that you have now. Now moving the ladder bars up in the front will make it hit the tire harder, you may need to go to an adjustable rear shock to be able to control the hit and keep the tire planted. In making all of these changes you should video tape your runs as you change things and make adjustments base on what the car is telling you in the tape. If you have any questions or tapes you need help with please call me.

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# IT'S SHOW TIME

Words and photos by Gordon Columbine

The 35th O'Reilly Auto Parts World of Wheels presented by Super Start Batteries wrapped up this past weekend at the Georgia World Congress Center in downtown Atlanta and mixed in amongst the garish customs, four-wheeled works of art and cheap trinket vendors were a few bona fide drag racing machines. DRO's man on the scene sent back a few snapshots of proof.



Not exactly drag racing, but close enough to be fun. Gearheads of a certain age were getting all misty eyed upon being greeted at the Atlanta show's entrance by these relics of a bygone era. It was a short-lived success story for MPC's Zingers, but for a time in the early '70s, these pint-sized cars with full-sized motors were all the rage with plastic model builders everywhere.



Part of the Drag City USA exhibit, featuring machines from Don Garlits' Museum of Drag Racing in Ocala, Florida, was the 1967 "Bounty Hunter" dragster owned and driven in the day by current NHRA Top Fuel and Funny Car owner Connie Kalitta. Behind Kalitta's ride is Don Prudhomme's Wynn's Winder from 1970.



Pert and Betty Guidry hauled their beautiful '41 Willys Gasser entry in from Madisonville, Louisiana.



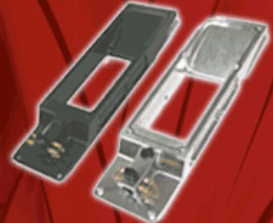
Another Willys, this time a 1938 model belonging to B.B. Brown of Dalton, Georgia.

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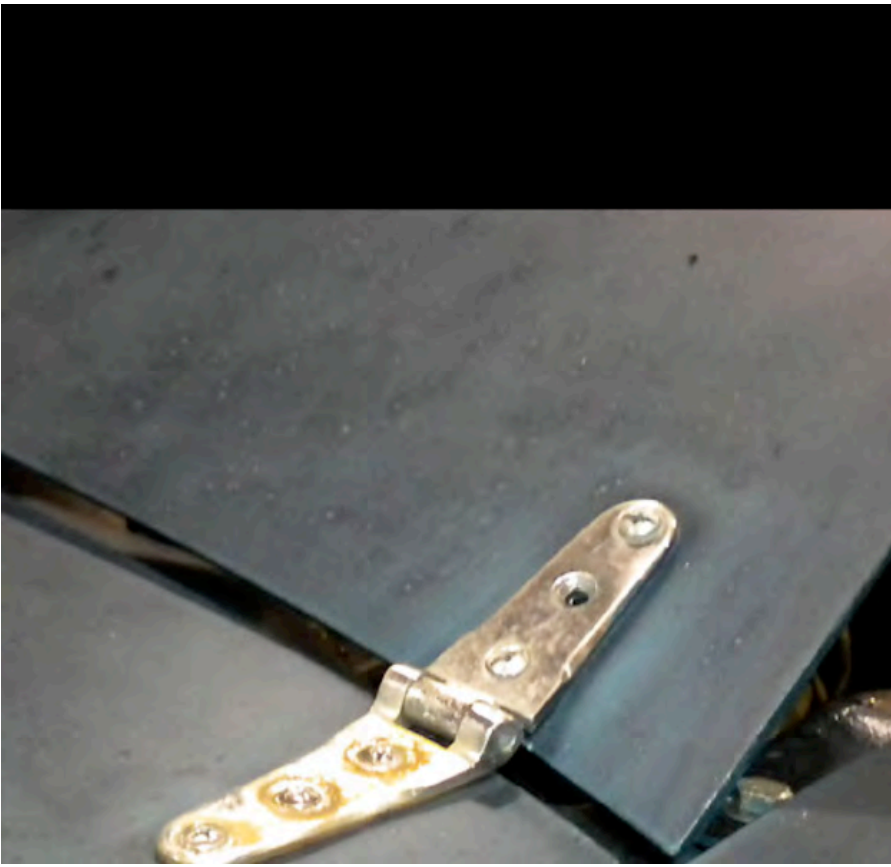
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Tony Morse of Grantville, Georgia, races this 632-equipped, nitrous-ingesting '68 Camaro at the Friday-night drag races held on pit road at Atlanta Motor Speedway.



Picked up in a middle-Georgia estate sale a couple of years ago, this time capsule is an original '65 AFX Falcon once campaigned nationwide by Georgia drag racing legend Hubert Platt, who actually was on hand to sign autographs and reminisce with old timers on Saturday at the show. Practically everything on the car is original, down to the scuffed Goodyear slicks and all the way up to the rusted chains holding together the injector stack plugs.

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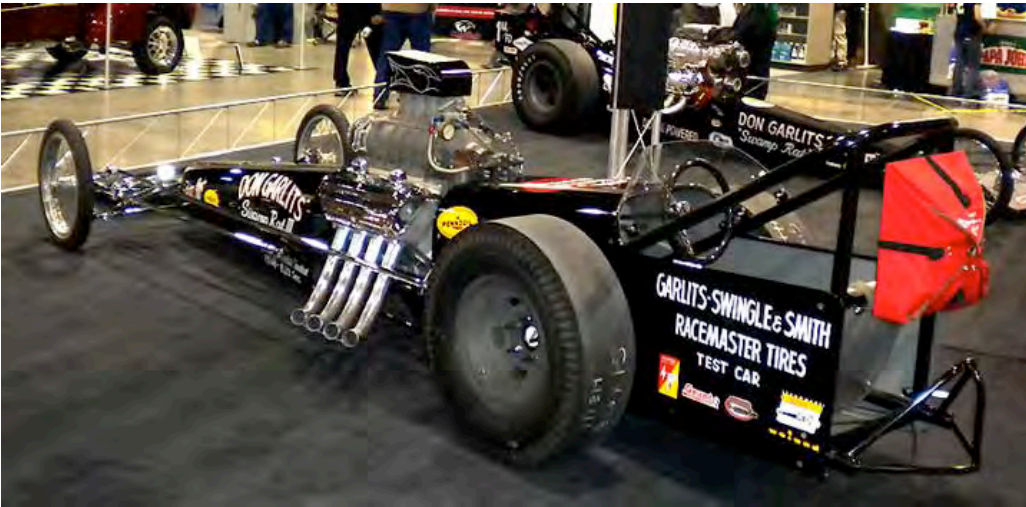
<b>JAN. 29-31</b>	<b>LAS VEGAS, NV</b>	<b>THE STRIP AT LWMS</b>
<b>MARCH 12-14</b>	<b>FONTATA, CA</b>	<b>CALIFORNIA SPEEDWAY</b>
<b>MAY 1-2</b>	<b>LAS VEGAS, NV</b>	<b>THE STRIP AT LWMS</b>
<b>MAY 21-23</b>	<b>FONTATA, CA</b>	<b>CALIFORNIA SPEEDWAY</b>
<b>JUNE 18-19</b>	<b>LAS VEGAS, NV</b>	<b>THE STRIP AT LWMS</b>
<b>SEPT. 10-12</b>	<b>FONTATA, CA</b>	<b>CALIFORNIA SPEEDWAY</b>
<b>OCT. 8-10</b>	<b>PHOENIX, AZ</b>	<b>FIREBIRD INT. RACEWAY</b>
<b>NOV. 5-7</b>	<b>FONTATA, CA</b>	<b>CALIFORNIA SPEEDWAY</b>

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This B/Gas '39 Chevy is owned by Rick Price of Pine Lake, Georgia.



track and not on the streets.

ABOVE: Another of the Drag City USA entries was Don Garlits' 1960 Swamp Rat III powered by a 392 Dodge motor. "Big Daddy" also had his Swamp Rat IV from 1962 on hand, and 1964's Swamp Rat VIII, the first dragster to carry a 426 Hemi between its frame rails.

LEFT: Officer Joe Warren of the Chattanooga (TN) Police Department had his '88 Mustang drag car on display as part of the department's Beat the Heat program to promote racing at the

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NHRA 6-time Pro Stock World Champion Warren Johnson chooses the 16 volt Rock Racing Battery in his Pro Stock NHRA Cars.

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According to a nearby sign, this '55 T-Bird is not intended as a restoration of any particular race car from the past, but replicates "what could have been." Nevertheless, the sign claims, "Often, people think they remember watching this car race in the 1960s." Built by Rex Marshal and owned by Eric Ondras of Ranger, Georgia, the 'Bird now carries a 406 Chevy mill backed up by a 4-speed automatic that delivers the power to a Mopar posi rear end. And it's street legal!

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Andy Sarratt's Nostalgia Super Stock '63 Polara (below) is equipped with a 426 Chrysler Wedge motor and Torqueflite transmission.

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The "Dixie Twister" '70 Camaro Funny Car was on display courtesy of Randall Davis from Loganville, Georgia.

Ondras also owns the "Auburn Weed Burner Special," a front-engine digger from 1966 now driven periodically by former Outlaw 10.5 racer Blake Wilder.

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Super Gas racer James Ladwig of Dahlonega, Georgia, displayed his wild-looking '75 Pinto Wagon at the show. **DRO**

# So long, Snake

By Jeff Burk

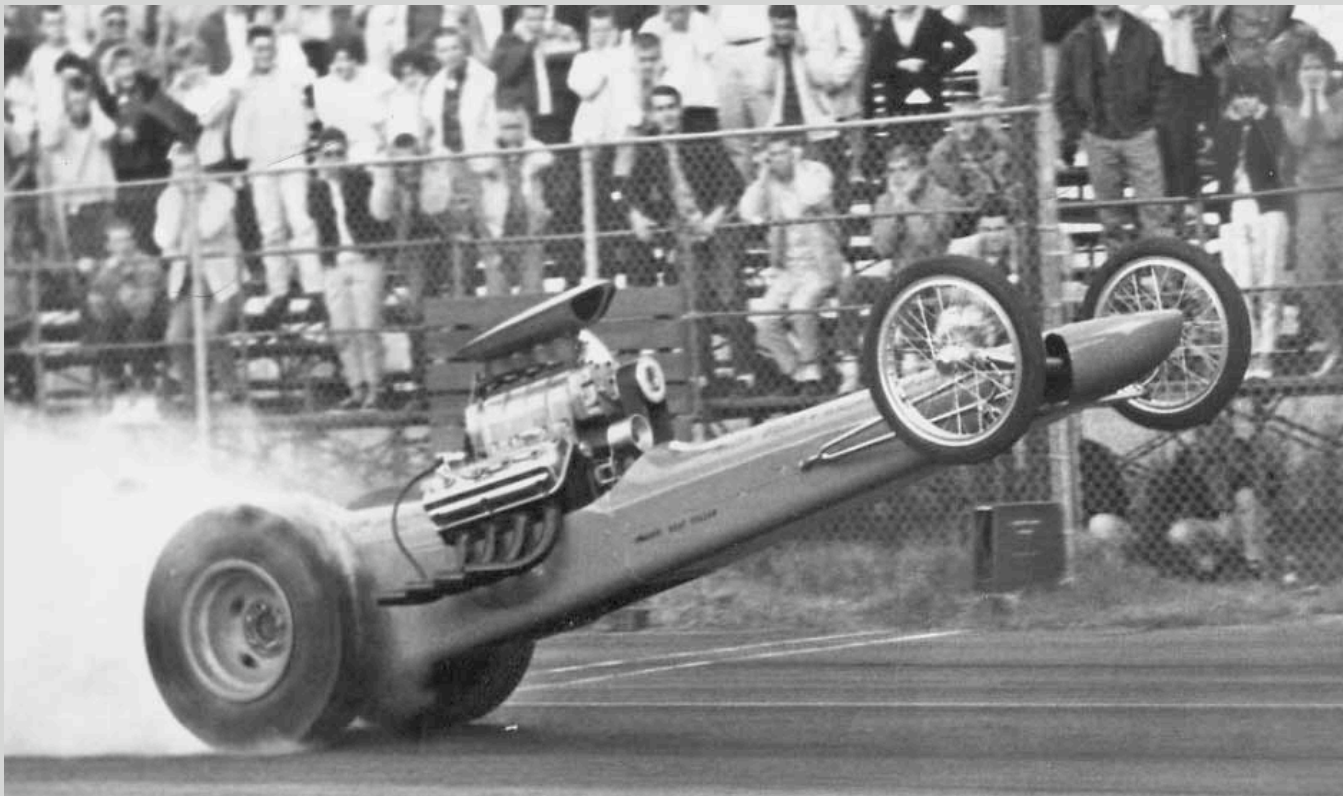


Don Prudhomme called it a career in January of this year when it became apparent that he couldn't secure a sponsor with enough money to allow his team to compete at the level of excellence he has shown in a nearly half-century career as a driver and team owner.

In my almost 35 years as a motorsports journalist there are exactly two professional racers that I had a chance to interview that I considered to be pure racers. By that I mean men who put racing and winning before anything else. Those two men are A.J. Foyt and Don Prudhomme. Both of these men were racers' racers. At their prime as drivers and team owners they had no peers. Truly, to these two racing icons winning was all that counted and they were focused on that job.

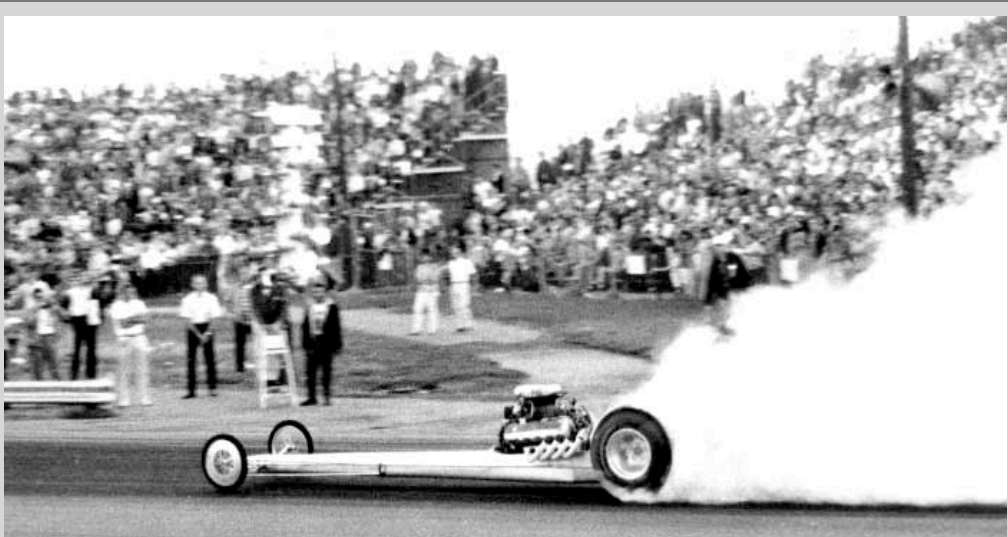
I've had the distinct pleasure of interviewing these men both at the track and away from it and the difference between the two interviews was night and day. When these two men were at the track they were there to race and win and nothing that didn't relate to their task at hand got their attention. If you were stupid enough to interfere with them while they were working you had to be prepared to suffer their wrath. They were men who didn't suffer fools well.

Away from the track I found both men to be great company for conversation, especially Don Prudhomme, who has a really great sense of humor and is known to be kind and gracious and to pick up the check.



Rather than review Prudhomme's career here in words, which is a task that couldn't be done in a book of several thousand words, we decided to just review his career with the photos we have accumulated over the years, as well as some from the archives of our Senior Photographer Ron Lewis. Prudhomme always seemed to prefer action to talk anyway.

All photos are by Ron Lewis unless otherwise credited.



This is Prudhomme at the first PDA race at Lions Drag Strip, an event he went on to win. DRO Senior Photographer Ron Lewis took this shot of Prudhomme at the age of 12. He says the PDA race remains the greatest dragrace he ever attended.



The yellow Snake "Hot Wheels" fueler makes some flames at Orange County.

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It didn't take Prudhomme long to transition into Funny Cars. This is one of the Hot Wheels 'Cudas with which he and Tom McEwen barnstormed around the country match racing each other.



Prudhomme and McEwen.

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In the early '80s Prudhomme could be seen at the AHRA races. Here he is racing Murph McKinney's "The Sting." (DRO file photo)



In this car Prudhomme was at his peak. With Prudhomme driving and Bob Brandt as crew chief, this car was virtually unbeatable.

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**Kurt Baue**

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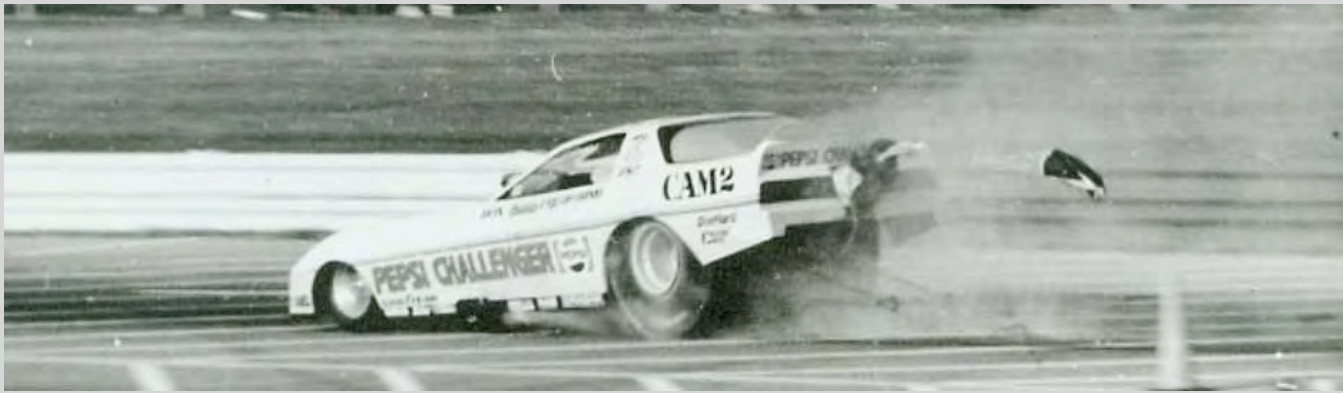
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Prudhomme eventually got Skoal as a long-time sponsor for his fuel teams.



Prudhomme went 5.63 at the U.S. Nats in 1982 and shocked the drag racing world. (Jeff Burk photo)

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In 1989 both Prudhomme and rival Kenny Bernstein retired as Funny Car drivers. This photo from the 1989 World Finals was Prudhomme and Bernstein's last qualifying laps in fuel coupes. (Jeff Burk photo)



The Snake's transition back to Top Fuel wasn't all that smooth. He had a blow over testing at Bakersfield the first time he got back in a Top Fuel dragster.



But the blow over didn't stall his return and he was a winner almost as soon as he got back in the dragster.

Here's the link to Don Prudhomme's InnerView in the August 2008 DRO.

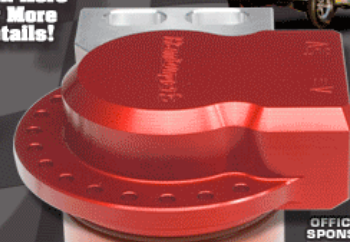


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The SG4 is the result of this vigorous three-year testing program. The SG4 is available for purchase and is being offered with the same low-cost five-year warranty program which requires an annual overhaul. Included in the SG4 package is a perfectly matched converter. Don't miss the special introductory price!

The Superglide line of transmissions developed by ATI have gained the reputation of being the most consistent and durable Powerglide transmissions on the market with the capability of handling 3,000 HP while increasing reliability with parts custom designed by ATI for endurance and performance.

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This improvement in underhood thermal management helps keep more heat inside the turbo to assist in faster spool-up while reducing radiant temperatures resulting in cooler air intake temperatures for improved performance *and* a boost in horsepower. Less heat circulating in the engine bay also means reducing the chances of "heat soak" conditions on vital underhood components.

An added advantage of the T4 Turbo Shields ability to reduce underhood heat also means less heat entering the vehicles interior which can have a negative impact on the driver and occupants. Plus, DEI's Titanium T4 Turbo Shield offers a very cool carbon fiber look!

Anchoring hooks have been incorporated and strategically located on the shield as a way for fastening it securely to the turbine housing. The T4 Turbo Shield is sold separately or as a kit that includes a 2 inch wide by 15 foot roll of Titanium down pipe wrap, two 14 inch stainless steel Locking Ties and 5 feet of fastening wire. Everything is included for a quick and simple install.

For more information on Design Engineering's new Titanium T4 Turbo Shield, Titanium Exhaust Wrap and other DEI thermal tuning products, visit: [www.DesignEngineering.com](http://www.DesignEngineering.com), call 1-800-264-9472 or email: [sales@DesignEngineering.com](mailto:sales@DesignEngineering.com). 



# WE'VE GOT MAIL

## REJUVENATED BY MARCH MEET

I spent half my morning getting all the reservations booked for my three-day weekend trip to Bakersfield in March. I can hardly wait! I have not been this excited to attend a drag race in so many years that I can remember!

I will tell you... I spent about \$500 for airfare, four nights stay at (I think) a decent hotel, rental car, and a \$75 admission ticket for three days to see what I now understand to be 40 nitro floppers, a car show, and swap meet; and I already know hundreds of great hot rods and dragsters from all over the country!

This whole nostalgia concept has brought a new spark of interest back to this life long race fan. I hope to see you there!

**Randy Oliver**  
Redmond, Washington

## NOTHING 'NOSTALGIC' ABOUT THE COST

Thinking about team costs.

Do you know how much it costs (ballpark figure) to field a AAFC/AATF at, say, Famoso? Just the cost of getting the car to the track, fees, fuel, food, lodging, and tires (un-paid crew). And say two qualifying passes and three rounds of racing (no major damage).

Last year I saw a whole bunch of "brand new" funny cars at Famoso with transporters, decked out crews, the whole deal. I have an idea of how much all that costs and it's a bunch. The economy might be bad but there seems to be a lot of folks that have enough money to field a "Top Notch" AAFC. This year there are even more new cars coming.

Now if we could get the track management (FAMOSO) to upgrade the stands and maybe even sell some reserved seats so you don't have to fight to watch the fuel racing (I would gladly pay \$50.00/day) it would make things even better. I think this best thing that has happened to drag racing for a long, long time and this deal is just going to get bigger and bigger. I really hope that the "atmosphere" of the races stays the same though because right now it is really "FUN" to go. Everyone in the pits are friendly and approachable, the food is pretty good, enough restrooms (we call 'em "BLUE" rooms). You can park for free (come real early) and the track staff are very helpful. And the crowd is very "COLORFUL".

I am looking forward to attending the March Meet once again (started going in the early '70s). Maybe I like 'em 'cause I am just getting old, but a five-second 250-MPH pass is really hauling ass. Just ask one of the drivers.

And best of all these cars are louder than the originals (more HP, more noise).

Hope to see you all there. We will all have a "BLAST".

**Bry Schmidt**  
Fresno, California

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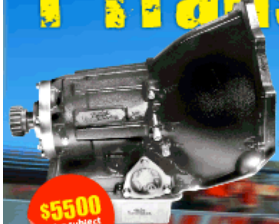
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## A WARM AND FUZZY FEELING

Burk!! Great comments about "Our Nostalgia Racing" as it is today. You hit on ALL thee points that make it so great; I'm glad you've come around. As a 30-year Nostalgia racer and crew chief, I'm thrilled every time I come to the track. Wherever I race it's like HOME! I get that warm feeling of family and friends and competition: win, lose, or draw, it doesn't get ANY better.

I could go on and on and on but I think you got "that feeling." I can't wait to see forty F/Cs at the MM, just like the old days, ten wide all the way to the end of the staging lanes. The colors of all those cars at one time will be historic to say the least. As a photographer also, I can't wait to shoot this historic event. I'll send you a photo or two from my take as I race with my team to be part of this historic event.

I am a crew chief for Duke Racing, Woody "Pops" Duke family of racing from the '60s, currently racing a NE/3 NE/2 car this year as Steve Duke prepares for next year NE/1 Altered! Thanks again, Burk! Keep up the GOOD words for our sport! See you at the MM!

**Bill Rogers**  
"NitroSalsa" Duke Racing,  
Canyon Country, California

## JUST A COUPLE MORE THINGS TO MAKE IT PERFECT

Jeff, I agree with you pretty much with the fun that nostalgia funny car and TF brings. What is lacking are header flames on the burnouts and at idle, and dry hops. Bring those back and you add 50% more excitement.

**Peter Kumble**  
Amherst, Massachusetts

## DOWNSIZING AT THE COUNTRY CLUB

Jeff, I always enjoy your "Blast." Thanks. In your most recent one you kinda touched a nerve when you talked about "country club" racing circuits. Now then, I've never been to an F1 event and I have "broken up" with NASCAR but I do attend a few endurance races.

Just last week I drove over to Daytona for the Rolex 24. I enjoyed no country club perks as I took a couple of sandwiches and soft drinks for dinner and brunch and slept in my cold car for a bit in the wee hours of Sunday morning. It was worth any discomfort to get to roam the track and watch the action, and on Sunday to see my friend Terry Borcheller hoist the trophy in Victory Lane with his three co-drivers.

Like you say, the racing is not bad, and just like John Force bellows (in a good sort of way) in the local radio commercials as we approach the Gatornationals, the same is true for sports car racing as the NHRA: every ticket is a pit pass.

So the weekend following the Gainesville event, stay over for another week and I'll take you to Sebring for the 12 hour race. But if you want to grab a nap, it will have to be in my 1996 Honda Prelude. Sorry.

Keep up the good work.

**Tim Stewart**  
Pastor, Burnt Store Presbyterian Church  
Punta Gorda, Florida

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## IF IT DIDN'T HAPPEN IN CALIFORNIA...

I enjoyed your remarks about the Golden Greek. I would have to agree with you about the 205 mph pass having watched him race at US 30 many times.

I have seen a lot made about the passes that were made in California. It always seemed that anything done in the Midwest was not good enough.

Thanks,

**Mike Troth**  
LaPorte, Indiana

## THE GREEK WAS A PRETTY GOOD DRIVER TOO

More Greek stuff. The first time I ever saw the Greek race was at Pomona in 1963, in a two out of three race for the #1 spot. Opponent was Norm Weekly in the Frantic Four car of Weekly-Rivero-Fox & Holding. If I remember right, Weekly had a "red flag" start on one of the races (what would be a red light today), and then Greek lost round two due to a "power stand".

In those days, the cars would smoke the tires off the line and sometimes, when the car hooked up, the car would do a mid-course wheelie. This is what happened to the Greek, as he did a big wheelie around half track. I think Weekly won the final round and took the #1 spot from the Greek. Both cars ran very low eight second ETs at around 190. The race was on a Sunday, and we were hoping to see a seven-second ET, but it wasn't to be.

I still remember that race. Pomona didn't have guard rails then, just hay bails along side the track. I also remember seeing photos of the wheelie in the drag mags of the day. Just wanted to share that. It's a great memory.

**Cliff Morgan**  
Phoenix, Arizona

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## TICK-TOCK CLOCKS

The Fosdick timers were unreliable. They ran on house voltage 110-120 volts and operated with relays. Chrondeks stepped down the voltage and were transistorized. Any variance in voltage would skew Fosdick timers.

That said, the one wild card in Karamisines' run was hydrazine. The power that chemical could unleash was awesome. Maynard had been using hydrazine for a while and knew the deal.

If that run had happened in CA or been made by a Californian, Wallace would be the biggest proponent. Any accomplishment East of AZ does not fly in CA and never has. Garlits & Mr. Norm are just two who were not given credit by the Western poobahs.

**Norman Hechtloff**  
WAY east of the Valley



## MUTTERING FROM THE MIDWEST

Burkster, I agree with your Greek statements 100%, but I see Dave Wallace just had to spout out the California point of view as I said in my letter.

Ask Dave to comment on Gary Dyer and Mr. Norm's Charger. I'll bet he goes silent.

California is NOT the only state in the Union.

John Martin  
Nixa, Missouri

## HERE'S THE ANSWER

Letter writer Cliff Morgan asked "Although, if ya wanna argue those figures, who ran the first 300 speed and four-second ET in a non-wheel driven car (jets or rockets)?"

It was the Pollution Packer, a hydrogen peroxide-powered rocket dragster. Owner Tony Fox, piloted by Dave Anderson. Ran fours at over 300mph in 1973.

Malcolm Dyer  
Barcelona, Spain

## PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

After looking at all the times for the IHRA event in the three top classes, I'm glad I didn't pay good money to see the event. It looks like one good run in ProFuel Dragster on day one. The Prostagia Funny Cars did better, but not a lot of good close races. Forget Top Fuel; I don't think they had a decent race in two days.

IHRA is going to have to do a lot better than this to attract paying spectators.

Wayne Loomer  
Massachusetts

## MAYBE IT WASN'T SO BAD

IHRA & West Palm: Looks like it went very well, pictures and talk are all positive. Pretty good show for the price, think the Nazis will lower their prices? Me neither.

Michael Dakin  
(Not Pat)  
Tipp City

## KEEP THE SHOW MOVING

I was at Nitro Jam Friday night at PBIR and sorry to say, was much less than impressed with the format. While a certain amount of down time is to be expected, I'd guess we spent four hours to watch less than one hour of actual racing.

While there is no doubt the number of spectators set a new record for the track, it also probably set a new record for numbers that left before it was over. We were able to sit anywhere including in reserved seating as very few people were left. My problem is, if everything had gone smoothly, the race would have been over in less than three hours. I'm not sure you'll see those record crowds a second time at least for a Friday night deal.

Sorry, but two winners just doesn't cut it. How about a real race?

Bob  
Florida

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## ARE YOU SERIOUS?

If you cover the IHRA booked shows, then you should cover all booked in shows at all tracks in the country in 2010. Wouldn't that be fair to everyone?

**Stu Lord**  
South Carolina

## BAKER HAS JUST THE RIGHT RECIPE

I have from time to time gone online, but since 1968 drag racing has been little more than a memory. Your new writer Jim Baker reminds me of an associate of mine during the late 1950s and into the 1960s at our local 1/8th mile dragstrip, but he was much older than I so it cannot be the same person. If you would be so kind as to pass this along to Mr. Baker, we here at the home would love to hear from him.

Also, Baker forgot to mention the 1959 Pontiac Chieftain.

**Head Wheelchair Inspector Dan Hobbs**  
Kahoka, Missouri

## WILL WE STILL NEED DRIVERS?

Re: the NHRA Safety Shut-off Transmitter/Receiver system. What's next? How about putting servos on the steering wheel and throttle? Make the cars completely radio controlled. That way the driver can safely standing next to the crew chief on the starting line during each run!

Gotta love how the lawyers and insurance companies run things at the NHRA. Do they even wonder why I stopped renewing my membership years ago?

**Cary Seabaugh**  
Placerville, California

## MAYBE THEY SHOULD CALL IT NHRA 'LEASHED'

NHRA Unleashed-"The eighth-mile drags." Sounds like an oxymoron to me.... Will not be attending if any portion of it is eighth mile. I wish IHRA had a quarter mile track in Ga. Would like to see the "new show".

**Stephen Lamphier**  
Atlanta, Georgia

## DON'T EXPAND THE DISTRIBUTION UNTIL THE PRODUCT IS IMPROVED

So NHRA is going "worldwide" in a time when sixteen car T/F and F/C fields are becoming hard to fill? WTF? How about getting domestic grassroots drag racing going and growing first?

NHRA's priorities seems to flow with the \$ and oil.

**Steve Cody**  
Lakeside, California, USA

## DAVE'S NOT HERE, MAN...

I would like to say to all the whiners about the ticket prices to an NHRA event. Have they priced a NASCAR ticket lately? How about and NFL ticket? NHL? How close can you get to the cars and drivers at a NASCAR race?!

Hands down, an NHRA event is still has the best entertainment per dollar value. Dave, thanks for helping Lions Drag Strip history come alive in the three-disk DVD set.

**Douglas Rempel**  
Hebron, Nebraska

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## DOES WORLDWIDE RACING COUNT AS TESTING?

Jeff, I just read about the creation of the Yaz Marina teams and their goals of touring the teams worldwide, including stops in the U.S.

My question is: Will TJ and Hot Rod appear at NHRA-sanctioned events here in the States and complete – limitedly- on the Championship circuit? If so, will their participation in other international events count as "test days" and put them immediately at risk of not being accepted at NHRA's national events? Could they possibly even be banned?

It would be a shame of course; TJ and Hot Rod are such popular drivers, and heaven knows the NHRA could use with every competitor possible at each and every event. But it does illustrate a potential short coming to NHRA's testing restrictions.

Thanks for any investigating you can do along this story line!

Ed Golden  
Michigan

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## STILL ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT DRAG RACING IN OZ

You know Burk, I was wondering how come we manage to scrape up ten fuel cars (all four second cars), nineteen Pro Stockers and twenty-odd Pro Mods (and you will need a 6.0 to make the cut) for our Summernationals, but we have only 22 million people in a land nearly as big as yours with only three championship drag strips and our dollar is worth only 90% of yours....

Have you guys lost the will to race or has the NHRA just stuffed it all up?

Maybe you should get off your insular backside and get a passport (bet you haven't got one) and come and have a look and maybe learn!

Rob  
Australia

## DEFINING 'NOSTALGIA'

Nostalgia funny car racing is the hottest thing going in drag racing today, but I'm bothered that some teams are allowed to use streamlined body shells giving them a distinct advantage. Let's keep the "nostalgia" in the sport and demand that no one be allowed to use a shell later than 1970.

If we wanted to watch shapeless blobs running down the track we would just tune into any NHRA national event and watch the current funny cars run.

Larry Bova  
Dyer, Indiana

## IT'S A GOOD THING THE NAMEPLATE IS ON THE CAR

Awright, 'nuffs enuff. Are those Pro Stockers? Funny cars with carbs? Or what?

They don't resemble ANY kind of car I've seen on the street... EVER!

If you're gonna put the word "Stock" on a class of racer, the damned car probably ought to start out as one, somehow. When the guy that built it has to tell you what it is, then IT AIN'T!

**John Largent**  
Pueblo, Colorado

## IS EDWARDS THE RODNEY DANGERFIELD OF PRO STOCK?

Why show these Pro Stock pics when you should be showing the champion Mike Edwards and his new wrap for this year? Why does everyone pass him by and always show Jeg? MIKE IS THE CURRENT CHAMPION!!! Give him the respect he has earned!

**Michael S. Phillips**  
United States

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## WELL, WE'D SURE LIKE TO SEE IT

Why is NHRA allowing Pro Stock teams to race a defunct brand of car (Pontiac)?

Does this mean someone can put together a Studebaker Pro Stock team?

**Bill Pinkston**  
So Cal

## GOOD QUESTION

Has there been any other update on the Jungle Jim movie since 2008?

**Ilija Kovacevic**  
Minnesota **DRO**

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# Whaddya Know?

## Test Your Drag Racing Knowledge

I was really going to stay retired. I don't like to work. I'd rather get bailouts. But I went over to Burk's house one day to borrow some mustard plaster and next thing I know I'd been shanghaied. Locked in the windowless downstairs bedroom with just a TV, bed, toilet, and uncooked frozen dinners slid under the door. O the horror!!!! "American Idol" (Geezus!!) "I'm the Fattest Loser" (Bleeeccch!!) "Are You Sexier Than a Fifth Grader"(Rrrretch!!), Howie Long on 50 times in six hours. Endless re-runs of "Mash" ... PLEASE GOD, MAKE IT ALL STOP.

"Martin, crank out a quiz and I'll let you change your shorts."

A leap through the suddenly opened door. A return to Valley Village and this your first quiz for 2010 and maybe the last if the scars don't heal soon.

### #1 Don Prudhomme's first NHRA win occurred at the ...

- A, 1965 Winternationals
- B, 1964 World Finals
- C, 1963 U.S. Nationals
- D, 1966 Springnationals

### #2 John Force's first win came at the ...

- A, 1987 Molson Grandnational
- B, 1986 Chief Nationals
- C, 1987 Keystone Nationals
- D, 1989 Winternationals

### #3 The lowest Top Fuel ET in IHRA quarter-mile Top Fuel history was a 4.48 and run by ...

- A, Clay Millican
- B, Doug Herbert
- C, Paul Romine
- D, Shirley Muldowney

### #4 In the 1990s, popular New York Funny Car racer Jerry Caminito ran a series of Funny Cars under the name of ...

- A, "Blue Thunder"
- B, "Holeshot"
- C, "Twilight Zone"
- D, "The Brooklyn Bomber"

### #5 Now here's the easiest one. Don Garlits' middle name is

- A, Glen
- B, Alan
- C, Evan
- D, Julio

Full name:

Email address:

Congratulations to our January quiz winners, Bill Cummerow, JD Culbertson, Greg Lovell, John Largent and Robert Butts, who were the first to answer 6/7 questions correctly! Below are the January answers.

## JANUARY QUIZ ANSWERS

1. B, Don Garlits, 2. D, James Warren , 3. A, 1967, 4. D, 5.37, 5. C, Don Garlits, 6. C, 1959, 7. D, The Smokers **DRO**

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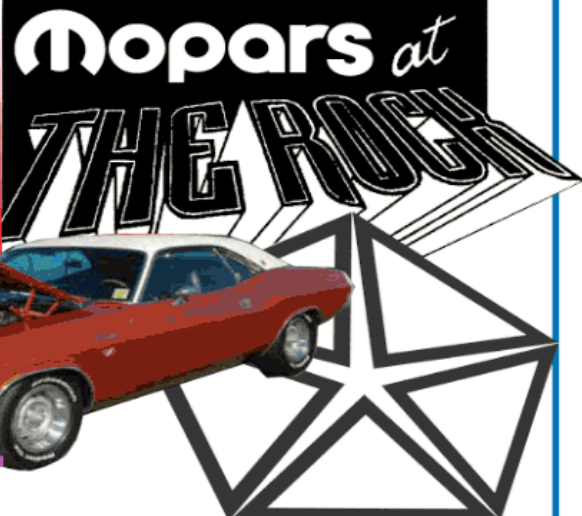


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# At The Back Door

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## AND THE WINNER OF LAST MONTH'S CONTEST IS

**" We're all out of VHT! This left over Full Throttle should do the trick!"**

- John Blasko, Cleveland, OH

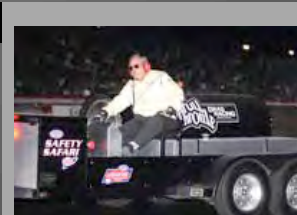
## HONORABLE MENTIONS

"Man if this thing only had a steering wheel!" - Ronald Sherry, Austin , TX

"Oh jeez.....Tim Marshall is taking a photo of me...with sun glassed on at night, please don't let it end up on DRO's at the back door with a dumb caption on it." - Will Heritage, Minnetonka

"The Safety Safari demonstrates what a jet car would look like if safety rules had not been implemented." - Don Rosenberry, Illinois

" Oh Man. When he offered a keg for the tail gate party he wasn't kidding." - Larry Olm, Port Colborne, Ontatio, Canada **DRO**



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