

2016 NHRA Season Travels to the Eastern US

By Phillip Prichard, MSA

As Spring approaches, the 2016 NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series will compete at three eastern venues – Gatornationals, 4 Wide Nationals and Southern Nationals.

The 47th Annual Gatornationals at Gainesville, Florida will be held on March 17-20. The AutoPlus Raceway event sponsor is Amalie Motor Oil. Visit their website at www.autoplusraceway.com for more details.

The 7th Annual 4 Wide Nationals will be at ZMax Dragway in Concord, NC will be April 22-24. This unique event is the only time that NHRA runs four wide instead of the normal two side competition. Visit their website at www.charlottemotorspeedway.com for event information.

The 36th Annual Southern Nationals will be at Atlanta Dragway in Commerce, GA on May 13-15. Visit their website at www.atlantadragway.com for information.

Fans will notice a significant change in the Pro Stock Series with a major rules revision including the mandatory use of fuel injection, flat hoods (the hood scoop is gone), a 10,500 rpm rev limiter and shortened wheelie bars. The Elite Team expanded to four cars using two different manufacturers. Eric Enders and Jeg Coughlin Jr will be in Dodge Darts and Drew Skillman and Vincent Nobile will in Chevrolet Camaros. Shane Gray was the first to test the new rules package with a 6.58 second pass.

There are no major changes in the Funny Car Series and drivers and crew chief remain virtually unchanged from 2015. There will be new looks for all four Don Schumacher entries as well as Alexis DeJoria and Cruz Pedregon. Brandon Welch is expected to run all of the 2016 events.

In the Top Fuel Series, Shawn Langdon joins Don Schumacher Racing full time and J. R. Todd of Kalitta Motorsports got a full time sponsor of SealMate. Leah Pritchett replaced Larry Dixon at Bob Vandergriff Racing. Pritchett raced to her first Top Fuel victory at the CARQUEST Auto Parts NHRA Nationals in Phoenix. Capco Contractor's driver Steve Torrence will have Alan Johnson advising the team on tuning.

In the Pro Stock Motorcycle Series, the drivers will be attempting to break the 200 mph mark. Hector Arana Jr. came close at the 2015 Spring event at ZMax with 199.88 mph. Hector Sr., Eddie Krawiec and Andrew Hines have all run the 199s.

In the Pro Mod/Pro Class, drivers are no longer permitted in more than one Pro class at an event.

NHRA joined FOX Sports in a new TV deal and most events will be on FOX Sports 1. In March, NHRA will launch a premium live streaming service on internet devices -NHRA All Access. It will be available globally for a subscription of \$99.

To stay abreast of NHRA information, join the organization at www.nhra.com.



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2016 NHRA MELLO YELLO DRAG RACING SERIES SCHEDULE

March 17-20
Auto Plus Raceway At Gainesville • Gainesville, FL

April 1-3
The Strip at Las Vegas Motor Speedway
Las Vegas, NV

April 22-24
zMAX Dragway • Charlotte, NC

April 29-May 1
Royal Purple Raceway • Houston, TX

May 13-15
Atlanta Dragway • Atlanta, GA

June 3-5
New England Dragway and Motorsports Park • Epping, NH

June 9-12
Old Bridge Township Raceway Park • Englishtown, NJ

June 17-19
Bristol Dragway • Bristol, TN

June 23-26
Summit Motorsports Park • Norwalk, OH

July 7-10
Route 66 Raceway • Chicago, IL

July 22-24
Bandimere Speedway • Denver, CO

July 29-31
Sonoma Raceway • Sonoma, CA

Aug. 5-7
Pacific Raceways • Seattle, WA

Aug. 18-21
Brainerd Int'l Raceway • Brainerd, MN

Aug. 31-Sept. 5
Lucas Oil Raceway at Indianapolis • Indianapolis, IN

COUNTDOWN TO THE CHAMPIONSHIP

Sept. 16-18
zMAX Dragway • Charlotte, NC

Sept. 23-25
Gateway Motorsports Park • St Louis, MO

Sept. 29 - Oct 2
Maple Grove Raceway • Reading, PA

Oct. 13-16
Texas Motorplex • Dallas, TX

Oct. 27-30
The Strip at Las Vegas Motor Speedway • Las Vegas, NV

Nov. 10-13
Auto Club Raceway at Pomona • Pomona, CA

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