

2017 NHRA Champions

By Phillip Prichard, MSA

As the 2017 NHRA season ended at the Auto Club NHRA Finals at Auto Club Raceway at Pomona. John Force Racing captured two of the championships with Brittany Force winning the Top Fuel and Robert Hight winning the Funny Car Series. Bo Butner won the Pro Stock Series, Eddie Krawiec won the Pro Stock Motorcycle Series and Troy Coughlin Sr. clinched the Pro Mod Drag Racing Series.

Brittany Force was crowned the Top Fuel Champion after she clinched the championship at the Auto Club NHRA Finals at Auto Club Raceway at Pomona. In her championship year, Force raced to four wins including the season ending event. She also had two runner-up finishes and two No. 1 qualifying positions during the year. Force, daughter of 16-time Funny Car world champion John Force, became just the second female to win a Top Fuel world championship. The other female to win a championship in the category was legendary racer Shirley Muldowney.

Robert Hight raced to his first championship since 2009 and his Jimmy Prock led team, who set a national E.T. record for the category at Brainerd, found a tune-up that would propel him to the points lead in the NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Countdown to the Championship. In the six-race playoffs Hight won two events and was the No. 1 qualifier at three consecutive races. Hight raced to a runner-up finish at the season-ending event.

Bo Butner powered to his first world title in the same season he recorded his first career Pro Stock win in Houston. Butner and his KB Racing teammates, Greg Anderson and Jason Line, finished one-two-and three in the points, respectively. Starting at the Norwalk event, Butner raced to four final-round appearances in



six events and could enter the NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Countdown to the Championship as the No. 1 seed. He defeated Tanner Gray at Pomona in the finals to clinch the championship by seven points over Greg Anderson.

Eddie Krawiec won his fourth championship starting with season opening win for the two-wheeled category in Gainesville. The team hit their championship stride beginning in Indianapolis when he won his second Chevrolet Performance U.S. Nationals. In the NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series Countdown to the Championship Krawiec cemented his crown with four wins in the first five races and took the points lead starting in Charlotte. Krawiec closed out the year with a runner-up finish at the season finale.

Troy Coughlin Sr. clinched his third E3 Spark Plugs NHRA Pro Mod Drag Racing Series presented by J&A Service championship in dramatic fashion at the NHRA Toyota Nationals in Las Vegas, beating his only remaining title challenger, Mike Castellana, in a dramatic, head-to-head second-round encounter at the season finale. Coughlin reached his first final round of the season in Englishtown, the sixth event of the Pro Mod schedule. From there, he reached four straight final rounds, winning his first race in Bristol (the seventh race on the schedule). Coughlin went on to win the 11th race on the schedule in St. Louis, one of six final-round appearances on the season for the veteran Pro Mod driver. Coughlin previously won the championship in 2012 and 2015, and he finished second in 2013, 2014, and 2016.

The 2018 NHRA season will begin on 8 February at Auto Club Raceway at Pomona. In March, April and May the NHRA will be in the southeast starting at Gainesville Raceway (March 15-18), zMAX Dragway (April 27-29) and Atlanta Dragway (May 4-6). Visit www.nhra.com and www.facebook.com/NHRA for more information.

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