

Robert Hight Stuns Sonoma Crowd with a 339.87 mph pass

Story: Phillip Prichard, MSA/Photo: NHRA

John Force Racing's Robert Hight stunned the crowd at the 30th annual Toyota NHRA Sonoma Nationals at Sonoma Raceway on Friday night when he clocked the fastest speed in history by a wheel-driven vehicle in 1,000-feet, lighting the boards with a 339.87 mph blast — the fastest in NHRA history and the first run in excess of 339 mph in either a Funny Car or Top Fuel. Hight also carded the third quickest elapsed time in Funny Car history in doing so with a 3.807-second shot.

The speed, a mere .13 mph short of 340, places the Funny Car eliminator on the brink of surpassing yet another speed milestone. "We know that 3.7 seconds is out there, and I think we could see it this year," Hight said. "I want to be the first driver to do it."

Hight was coming off a victory at Bandimere Speedway and was seeking to becoming only the second driver in Funny Car history to sweep the annual Western Swing. The Alturas, CA, native won his first-round matchup against No. 16 Tim Gibbons before falling to No. 8 Tim Wilkerson in the second round.

More history was made in the Final Round on Sunday. J.R. Todd picked up his first NHRA Funny Car victory. Todd clinched the victory with a 4.049-second pass at 323.27 mph in his DHL Toyota Camry against Tim Wilkerson who went



up in smoke in his Levi, Ray & Shoup Ford Shelby Mustang during the final round.

The victory makes Todd the first African-American to win in the NHRA Funny Car category. He also becomes the second driver in NHRA history to win at

Sonoma Raceway in both nitro categories, the first was Don Prudhomme.

Todd sits ninth in the standings, while Ron Capps stays in first despite his first-round exit.

Other Final Round winners were: Steve Torrence (Top Fuel) Tanner Gray

(Pro Stock) and LE Tonglet (Pro Stock Motorcycle).

Torrence piloted his Capco Contractor / Torrence Racing dragster past Antron Brown's Matco Tools dragster in the finals with a pass of 3.784 at 329.42. He now has six victories on the season and 14 in his career.

In Pro Stock, rookie Gray drove to victory with a 6.572 run at 210.05 in his Gray Motorsports Valvoline Chevrolet Camaro to defeat points leader Bo Butner in the final. This is his third victory of the season and fourth final round appearance.

Gray remains third in the standings, while Butner stays in first following his runner-up showing.

Tonglet finished atop the Pro Stock Motorcycle field with a 6.783 pass at 197.02 on his Nitro Fish Racing Suzuki to narrowly defeat Matt Smith in the final round. After securing his first Mickey Thompson Tires Pro Bike Battle on Saturday, he notched his fifth national event victory of the season and 15th of his career.

Tonglet remains the points leader, while Krawiec continues to hold on to the second position.

The drivers travel from Sonoma to the NHRA Northwest Nationals at Pacific Raceways outside Seattle. Check out www.nhra.com for more NHRA info.

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