2016 NHRA MELLO YELLO

Feb. 11-14 Auto Club Raceway at Pomona • Pomona, CA

RAG RACING SERIES SCHEDU

Feb. 26-28 Wild Horse Pass Motorsports Park • Phoenix, AZ

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 CONTRACT 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

SPORTSNATIONALS RETURNS TO ITS KENTUCKY ROOTS:

The 2016 JEGS SPORTSnationals will make its triumphant return to Beech Bend Raceway Park in Bowling Green, Ky., May 27-29. The JEGS SPORTSnationals will comprise one event in 2016, moving back to the historic Kentucky facility owned by Dallas Jones and the Jones family on Memorial Day weekend. Beech Bend Raceway Park was the host of the original NHRA SPORTSnationals from 1974 to 1981. "We are excited to see the JEGS SPORTSnationals return to its roots in Bowling Green," said Eric Lotz, NHRA director of field marketing. "The event has become an integral part of Sportsman competition in the NHRA and we think Beech Bend Raceway Park is the perfect setting to showcase this great race. We know that Memorial Day weekend will be a rousing success for the Sportsman categories."

RAHAL AND FORCE WED AT BEACH-FRONT CEREMONY:

NHRA Mello Yello Funny Car racer Courtney Force and IndyCar racer Graham Rahal were wed on Nov. 21st at a beachfront ceremony in Santa Barbara. Force, a seven-time Funny Car winner and Rahal who finished fourth in this year's IndyCar standings were surrounded by friends and family during the event. "I married my best friend and the lady of my dreams," said Rahal on his Instagram account. "I couldn't be more excited for what our life has in store, and together I truly feel we can accomplish anything. I love you @courtneyforce, now Mrs. Rahal, and I can't wait to spend my life with you!"

He Said, She Said

"Luckily this year I learned from mistakes I made in the past and figured out how to focus my energy and my thoughts into where I needed to go and that paid huge dividends. I was able to take those situations and use that, and I had a killer string of reaction times in Vegas and Pomona, and I kind of thrived on the pressure this year. I don't know, I used it to my advantage, I guess, and used the experience that I had in those situations and pushed through it. As soon as the championship was locked up and we got done celebrating there in the burn-out box, I just -- as soon as the bike fired up, I just went right back in my racing mind frame and just kinda worked out from there. I went up there, did my normal job again and had a 27 reaction time and got the win light, so it was a great way to cap off getting the championship by getting the win light there at the end of the track." -- Pro Stock Motorcycle racer Andrew Hines on clinching his fifth world championship when teammate Eddie Krawiec defeated Jerry Savoie in the second round of eliminations at the Auto Club NHRA Finals.

Inside the Numbers

5: Number of first round losses Antron Brown had in his world championship season. He and Richie Crampton tied for the fewest number of first round losses in the Top Fuel category. Winning rounds is key to success and Brown admits each match-up this season was crucial in his championship march. "This whole year, I can honestly tell you that our team, we're on pins and needles every race first round because we always had a tough first-round matchup," said Brown. "Even if we qualified No. 1, we lined up against Shawn Langdon or something like that. It didn't make a difference where you qualified because that's how tough the field was. One car had a mishap, ended up being in the bottom half of the field, couldn't bounce back up because of the weather conditions on Saturday, you had to race them first round. Vice versa, we were on the bottom half of the field where we went rounds and won, too. It just shows you how tough it is." Did You Know



NHRA NGWS