

The Eighth Annual NHRA Four-Wide Nationals at zMAX Dragway

Story by Phillip Prichard/Photos by MSA Staff

In the Eight Annual NHRA Four-Wide Nationals at zMAX Dragway - Ron Capps (Funny Car), Steve Torrence (Top Fuel), Chris McGaha (Pro Stock) and L.E. Tonglet (Pro Stock Motorcycle) and Mike Castellana (Pro Mod) were winners.

Capps, the defending NHRA Funny Car champion, outran his Don Schumacher Racing teammates Matt Hagan and Jack Beckman as well as the Kalitta Motorsports entry of J.R. Todd for his 51st career Funny Car victory. This was Capps second-straight NHRA Funny Car victory.

The NAPA Dodge Funny Car piloted by Capps got to the finish line first thanks to a 3.933 elapsed time at 322.65 mph. His DSR teammate Beckman was the runner-up with a 3.959 elapsed time at 320.05 mph.

"Some of the drivers were saying they don't like it (racing four wide). Well they should just stay home next time," Capps

of his crew members, who lost his mother less than 24 hours before Sunday's final eliminations.

Chris McGaha ended a drought dating back to the U.S. Nationals last season with his victory in the Pro Stock final. McGaha defeated the red lighting Drew Skillman, Greg Anderson and Shane Gray for the victory.

En route to his fifth career Pro Stock victory, McGaha got off the line first and was the fastest down the strip. His .011 reaction time combined with a speedy 6.591 elapsed time at 201.44 mph was more than enough for him to get the victory over runner-up Anderson.

L. E. Tonglet rode his Nitro Fish Racing Suzuki to a 6.864 at 195.00 pass to earn his 10th career victory and first of the season. He defeated three-time world champion, Eddie Krawiec and, Andrew Hines on his way to his first four-wides win.



said. "This is a fun race. It's the beginning of the season, it doesn't impact the Countdown later in the year. It would be cool to have an all-star four-wide.

Steve Torrence put an end to the domination of Don Schumacher Racing in the Top Fuel division this year with his first victory of the season. Torrence outran two Don Schumacher dragsters driven by Leah Pritchett and Tony Schumacher and independent racer Terry McMillen.

Schumacher actually got off the starting line first with a .40 reaction time compared to Torrence's .50, but Torrence chased him down on the track. Torrence flexed his muscle with a 3.783 elapsed time at 323.89 mph, which bettered Schumacher's 3.874 at 309.13 mph, leaving Schumacher to settle for second.

Torrence dedicated the victory to one

This win also marks the first victory for Tonglet since joining the White Alligator Racing headed by Pro Stock Motorcycle world champion Jerry Savoie.

The NHRA J&A Service Pro Mod Drag Racing Series raced at the NHRA Four-Wide Nationals for the first time in the history of the category and Mike Castellana powered to the event win. This is the third of 12 events on the schedule and the weekend's Pro Mod event was co-sponsored by JEGS.com and Plugfones.

This is the first win of the season for Castellana and his second final round appearance.

Castellana defeated Troy Coughlin, Michael Biehle II and Jonathan Gray in the final. Castellana retains his points lead in the category.

Other Winners were:



Top Alcohol Dragster - Shawn Cowie, 5.328, 272.94 def. Justin Ashley, 5.362, 273.39.

Top Alcohol Funny Car - Johan Lindberg, Chevy Monte Carlo, 5.551, 260.66 def. Steve Gasparrelli, Chevy Camaro, 5.602, 261.93.

Competition Eliminator - Bruno Masel, Chevy Cobalt, 7.024, 179.35 def. Patrick Ross, Pontiac Grand Am, 7.749, 174.68.

Super Stock - Peter Biondo, Pontiac Firebird, 9.680, 127.86 def. Joe Lisa, Chevy Camaro, 10.356, 128.48.

Stock Eliminator - Kyle Kohr, Chevy Camaro, 10.737, 117.25 def. Jeff Hairrington, Ford Mustang, 10.165, 130.78.

Factory Stock Showdown - Peter Gasko Jr, Chevy Camaro, 8.262, 164.23 def. David Barton, Camaro, 8.227,

164.91.

Super Comp - John Labbous Jr, Dragster, 8.909, 167.43 def. Franklin DiBartolomeo, Dragster, 8.916, 164.61.

Super Gas - John Labbous Jr, Chevy Corvette, 9.895, 156.50 def. Matt Tankersley, Pontiac GTO, 9.883, 154.63.

Top Dragster - Ivey Brannon, Dragster, 7.148, 183.37 def. Alan Kenny, Dragster, 6.243, 218.41.

A special highlight of Sunday's event was the Nostalgia AA/GASSERS running 4 wide.

The first race of the six-race NHRA Mello Yello Series Countdown to the Championship will be the Carolina Nationals at zMAX Dragway on September 15-17. Check out <http://www.charlotte-motorspeedway.com/> for more details or www.nhra.com.

