

Musi Powers Franklin to PDRA Pro Nitrous Championship and ET Record

Story by Mike Carpenter

After settling for runner-up in the championship standings at the conclusion of the first two seasons of the Professional Drag Racers Association (PDRA), Tommy Franklin was tired of playing second fiddle. This season he decided to do something about it. Not only did he win the 2016 Pro Nitrous championship, he did so by winning the final event of the year and smashing the national elapsed time record in the process, all with power from Pat Musi Racing Engines.

Musi engines dominated the 2016 Pro Nitrous Wars, but the points battle was still largely undecided heading into the last two events of the season. Franklin put himself in the final round of the postponed Bradenton event to take a slight lead in the points over Jay Cox. The two stayed neck-and-neck during the PDRA World Finals at Virginia Motorsports Park until they met in the semi-final round of competition. The winner would be the 2016 Pro Nitrous world champion. Franklin knew conditions were prime and laid down a 3.699 at 204.20 MPH to Cox's off-pace 5.76. At that point, the championship was his, but there was still work to be done.

"A lot of emotions were going around," Franklin said of the momentous run. "The conditions were ideal for setting records. We don't get that too often – at the beginning of the year and the end of the year. We knew we were going to have some good air. We made it into the final after winning the championship. As much as we wanted to win the race, the pressure was off, and we decided just to see what we could lower the record to. We don't always get that opportunity, so we swung for it."

Franklin swung and knocked it out of the park. In a repeat of the Bradenton final round matchup, Franklin got revenge on "Stevie Fast" Jackson when he put down an explosive 3.677 run at 204.70 MPH, effectively demolishing the current ET record of 3.703 held by Travis Harvey.

"We couldn't be happier," said an elated Pat Musi, owner of Pat Musi Racing Engines. "We lost the ET record there for a while and we've been trying to get it back, but we just didn't have the conditions. We now have the speed record, the ET record, won the Pro Nitrous wars, and the championship - I don't know what else we could do. Like I say all the time, it's just from hard work and dedicated people like the Franklins."

Musi's own daughter, Lizzy Musi, retains the national

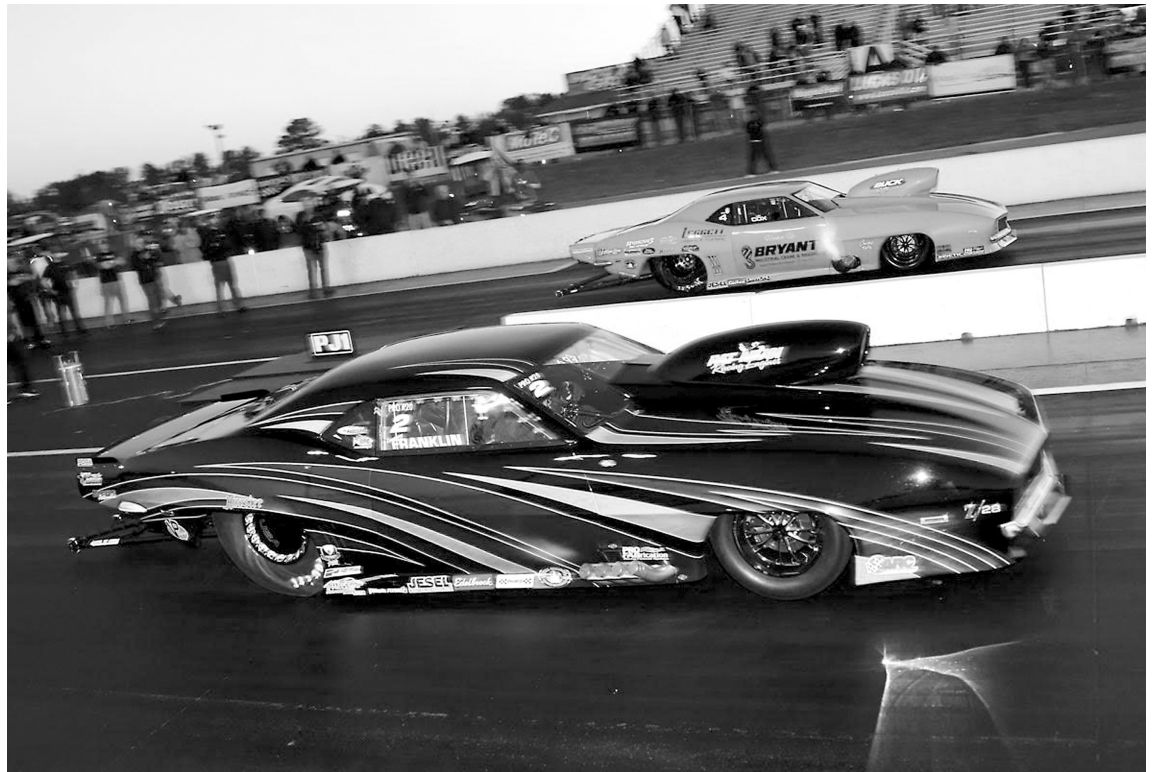


Photo by Roger Richards / CompetitionPlus.com

speed record at 204.98. Franklin's championship marks the fourth won by a Pat Musi Racing Engines-powered car. Musi believes his decades of experience as a driver give him an edge in engine building and design.

After his incredible season, Franklin wished to thank the Lord, his wife Judy, and daughters Amber and Ashley. "We have great horsepower, a great car, and a great crew to put this thing together every pass," he continued. "My crew works hard to ensure we don't have the little problems that cost you a race and my family supports me in everything I do. Our engine program is unreal right now. We went all season without burning up any parts, which is a testament to how good our engine program really is. For us to be able to run as well as we have in all conditions speaks volumes for the hard work and dedication that Pat

Musi Racing Engines has put into the program, in addition to how well our '68 Camaro from Jerry Bickel Race Cars performs. I am very grateful to be in this position and really can't wait to see what we can accomplish next season."

Although the racing season is winding down in the United States, Musi's recent partnership with Al-Anabi Performance (AAP) means another season is just beginning. He and Lizzy will soon head to the Middle East, where Lizzy will drive her familiar 2015 Dodge Dart and Pat will tune both Lizzy's car and Mahana Al-Naemi's during the winter series. The additional data from an expected 150 runs or more will continue to push Pat Musi Racing Engines forward, and, as Musi warns the competition, "they better be ready."

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