

Dixon takes Super Pro win at Atlanta Dragway

Story and photo by Tim Glover

Racers gathered again at Atlanta Dragway in Commerce, GA on August 24 for the second to last Summit ET Series event on the 2013 schedule. Although some racers had problems with their cars powertrains, the rest of the racers hung right in through the delays, and completed the event.

"I love this hobby!," exclaimed Super Pro winner Danny Dixon after defeating Jeremy Hancock's Commerce, GA based '05 Undercover dragster in the final. Dixon's Cleveland, GA based '81 Malibu was on a tear all day, and continued that trend in the final against Hancock with a dead-on 6.791 second pass at 101.25mph (6.79 dial). Hancock actually had a slightly better reaction time (0.008 seconds to Dixon's 0.019), but was 0.0048 seconds (a few inches) behind Dixon where it counted at the big end stripe. Hancock's times were 4.746 at 146.10mph (4.73 dial). J.D. Reid ('06 Undercover dragster – Conyers, GA) was the lone semi-finalist. Dixon bracket raced a 12 second '69 Chevelle many years ago in his teens, but then took a long hiatus to raise his family, returning eight years ago.

John Norris returned to the front of the class with his trusty Tri County Chevrolet backed '86 Camaro, which is based in Royston, GA. Shortly after leaving the starting line, his opponent, Troy Fortner from Nicholson, GA left the starting line too soon, lighting up the bright red foul bulb, handing the automatic win to Norris. Norris ran his car on out to a 7.33 at 93.94mph (7.37 target), and Fortner chose to lift off the throttle and coast through the finish line with a 9.24 at 57.40mph (7.30 dial). Eric Lewis ('82 Mustang – Commerce, GA) ended his day in the semi-final round. "It's been a rough year," added Norris (but it certainly was a good day for him). He then thanked Rocky Ridge Trucks and all the friends who stayed and helped.

"Hopefully that's the last time

this truck sees the track," said Sportsman winner Steve Wagner from Braselton, GA after defeating Baldwin, GA racer Austin Smith's '70 Nova in the final round. Wagner had to press his '98 Dodge RAM into service after his '71 Duster hit the wall during the Night of Fire event. He controlled the final from the starting line to the finish line with a slightly better reaction time and a very close (0.01 seconds over) 11.44 at 59.09mph pass (11.43 dial). Smith's Nova fell off the pace a little to an 8.16 at 85.87mph (8.06 dial). Nick Wagner (Steve's brother) took home the semi-finalist portion of the purse with his Jefferson, GA based '04 Neon. Steve Wagner mentioned he has transplanted the Duster's powertrain into a '69 Dart and hopes to have it ready by the final Summit ET event of the season. He then thanked God first, and also his family for their help.

After repairing his 1989 Suzuki, Super Pro Motorcycle winner Tim Sutton returned to the winner's circle again. He had to get past David Fletcher ('84 Kawasaki – Lawrenceville, GA) in the final to claim the win, and although Sutton did a great job with a 0.011 second reaction time aided 5.63 at 120.88mph (5.61 dial), Fletcher's -0.003 second red light gave the automatic win to Sutton. Fletcher's ride was otherwise flawless, posting a dead-on 5.775 at 118.04mph (5.77 dial). Howard Bowman ('02 Harley – Homer, GA) ended his day in the semi-final round. Sutton mentioned he still had some mechanical problems, but this time they were with his motorhome (house battery failed). "The motorcycle was fine, didn't break anything," added Sutton.

Dallas, GA racer Jeff Shropshire hasn't had a lot of opportunities to race his '08 Kawasaki in 2013, but he made it count tonight with the Street ET Bike win against Paul Lee of Mt. Airy, GA. Shropshire actually broke out in the final with a 5.997 at 111.68mph (6.00 dial), but Lee, who was trailing by 0.04 seconds at the



finish line stripe, broke out slightly more with a 5.694 at 125.38mph (5.70 dial). Brian Wilson ('01 Suzuki – Tallapoosa, GA) earned the semi-finalist portion of the purse. "I haven't got to come to the track much this year, but am pleased to do well.... for a change," added Shropshire with a smile.

Thirteen year old Chris Kittle of Oxford, GA scored the 8-12 Jr Dragster win at the first 2013 Atlanta Dragway Summit ET event, and returned to the winner's circle again tonight. Kittle used a good reaction time advantage over Maddie Kate Halsey (12 – Gainesville, GA) to take the win stripe by a mere 0.013 seconds. Kittle's times were 9.01 at 70.08mph (8.91 dial) and Halsey's times were 9.01 at 71.52mph (8.97 dial). Macey Ludolph (12 – Snellville, GA) became the semi-finalist. "First, I want to thank God, and second I want to thank mom, dad and the rest of my family and friends who helped fix my engine," added Kittle.

Fifteen year old Maddie Lee from Campobello, SC added another trophy to her collection with the 13-17 Jr Dragster win against seventeen year old Cole Sheriff (who is also racing competitively in Super Pro). Lee ran a little closer to her numbers, posting a 7.94 at 82.46mph

(7.90 dial). Sheriff turned in an 8.03 at 79.29mph (7.96 dial). Austin Solesbee (15 – Sautee Nacoochee, GA) fell a little further behind points leader Maddie Lee with his semi-final finish. "I want to thank my parents for always supporting me, and dedicate this win to my angels. I know that no matter what, they will always be there for me," added Lee.

The first round "runner-ups" in the main Jr Dragster competitions were allowed to enter the Jr Dragster Consolation race, and Adrian Wilson (13 – Tallapoosa, GA) earned the final round win for the second time in a row, this time against 8-12 points leader Nate "Hot Rod" Halsey (10 – Gainesville, GA). Although both racers went red, Halsey was the first one, giving the automatic win to Wilson. Wilson ran a dead-on 7.919 at 82.78mph, while Halsey's machine slowed a bit to 9.24 at 71.76mph (8.95 dial).

Sanctioned by the National Hot Rod Association (NHRA), Atlanta Dragway is located just off I-85 at Exit 149 in the Banks Crossing area of Commerce, Georgia. Information on all 2013 events may be obtained by calling the track office (706-335-2301) or logging on to www.atlantadragway.com.



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