

The 38th Annual NHRA Southern Nationals at Atlanta Dragway

Story: Phillip Prichard / Photos: MSA Staff

Female NHRA nitro racers dominated Top Fuel and Funny Car as Leah Pritchett and Courtney Force were victorious in their respective categories Sunday at the 38th annual NHRA Southern Nationals Powered by Mello Yello at Atlanta Dragway.

Pritchett locked in her first Top Fuel win of the season as she piloted her FireAde dragster to a pass of 3.874-seconds at 322.42 mph during the final round of eliminations to defeat Blake Alexander. This is her first Wally since Brainerd 2017, first event victory at Atlanta Raceway, and sixth overall. Pritchett is the first of Don Schumacher Racing's Top Fuel drivers to go to the winner's circle this season.

Blake Alexander, who raced to his first career final round, started from the No. 10 position and defeated Antron Brown, defending world champion Brittany Force, and points leader Steve Torrence before the final round.

Courtney Force claimed her second Funny Car victory this season with a pass of 4.046 at 313.73 in her Advance Auto Parts Chevrolet Camaro against Matt Hagan. After earning the No. 1 qualifier on Saturday, Force secured her 10th career victory making her the most victorious female Funny Car driver in the history of NHRA.

This was, also, was the 10th anniversary of Courtney's sister, Ashley winning at Atlanta. It's great to be able to get a win at the track my sister [Ashley Force-Hood] got her first win at.

In Pro Stock, Vincent Nobile powered his Mountain View Tire Chevrolet Camaro to a victory run of 6.599 at 209.72 to defeat Tanner Gray in his Valvoline Chevrolet Camaro in the final round. This is his first career victory at Atlanta and second Wally of the season.

Nobile is now the points leaders for Pro Stock after defeating Alan Prusiensky, Chris McGaha and No. 1 qualifier Greg Anderson prior to the final round.

Defending world champion Eddie Krawiec rode his motorcycle to winner's circle with a pass of 6.922 at 194.91 on his Screamin' Eagles Vance & Hines Harley-Davidson. This is his fourth event victory at the NHRA Southern Nationals and 45th of his career.

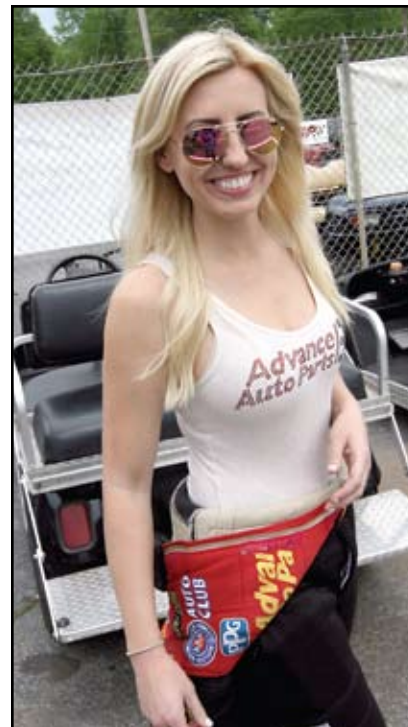
Krawiec was the No. 5 qualifier and was victorious against Angie Smith, LE Tonglet, the No. 1 qualifier Hector Arana Jr., and Scotty Pollacheck in the final round.

In a sad note, Randy Alexander of Harvest, Alabama, passed away at a local hospital after sustaining injuries in a Top Sportsman on-track incident at the NHRA Southern Nationals.

The 2018 NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series season continues with the Menards NHRA Heartland Nationals presented by Minties at Heartland Motorsports Park May 18-20 in Topeka, Kan.



STANDS WERE FILLED ALL WEEKEND



HE'S NOW THE WINNINGEST FEMALE FUNNY CAR WINNER IN NHRA HISTORY!



LEAH'S FIREADE RIDE GETS HER 1ST WIN THIS SEASON



BLAZE ALEXANDER CAME UP SHORT IN HIS 1ST FINAL RD



COURTNEY #1 QUALIFIER AND 10TH CAREER WIN



NOBILE PUT DOWN #1 QUALIFIER ANDERSON ON HIS WAY TO FINAL RD.



4 TIME SOUTHERN NATIONALS WINNER TOOK OUT SCOTTY FOR 45TH CAREER WIN



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