



BATTLE

By John Kiewicz

BURNOUTS, WHEELSTANDS, and sunburns. Just three of the more common sights found at the fourth (and final) round of the NMCA Flowmaster Muscle Challenge 1993 series held at the Memphis Motorsports Park in Memphis, Tennessee. The crowd, which came in droves, was treated to a wide array of quarter-mile contenders. Whether a vintage 340 Six-Pack cruiser or tubbed-out, nitrous-fed big-block monster, the action was intense.

As the most packed NMCA event of the year, spectators were kept busy with racing (both quarter mile and bench), a swap meet, manufacturer displays, and a car show. There was something for everybody. While Friday's activities were limited to tech inspection and underhood tuning for most competitors, those entered in the Pro Street class were put through a grueling ride and drive as part of their qualifying for the NMCA "Fastest Street Car in America" shootout covered by our sister publication, *Hot Rod* magazine. Although no racing was allowed on Friday, crowds packed the stands to see which cars could hack the 25-mile cruise. As cars rumbled by, fans cheered and did the "wave" as their favorite contestant passed, thus completing another lap on the twisty 1.77-mile MMP road course. Throughout the drive, which consisted of both cruising and stop-and-go, contes-

tants dropped out due to various ailments. A thrown fan belt here, a puking radiator there—they all took their toll, narrowing the field to 22 competitors.

Saturday morning festivities started early as the crowd packed in. Parts vendors were swamped, food sales were rabid, and NMCA memorabilia was a near sellout. In the stands, fathers attempted to explain to their children how things were in the "good ol' days" as Nostalgia Super Stocks screamed down the quarter mile complete with tranny-crashing shifts. While drag racing has continually advanced with mind-boggling e.t.s, the Nostalgia Super Stockers still captivate bystanders with their consistently low 10-second elapsed times.

Once again the EFI classes proved to be a torrid battleground as "holeshot" reaction times were the key. With e.t.s generally ranging from low-10's to high-13's, the crowd never quite knew what to expect from any of the stock-appearing EFI entrants. While turbo Buick Regals dominated at the NMCA Maple Grove meet, hordes of 5.0-liter Mustangs stepped up to protect their honor this time. Four of the eight cars in the final round of the EFI classes were indeed Mustangs with the fastest posting a blistering time of 9.52 seconds.

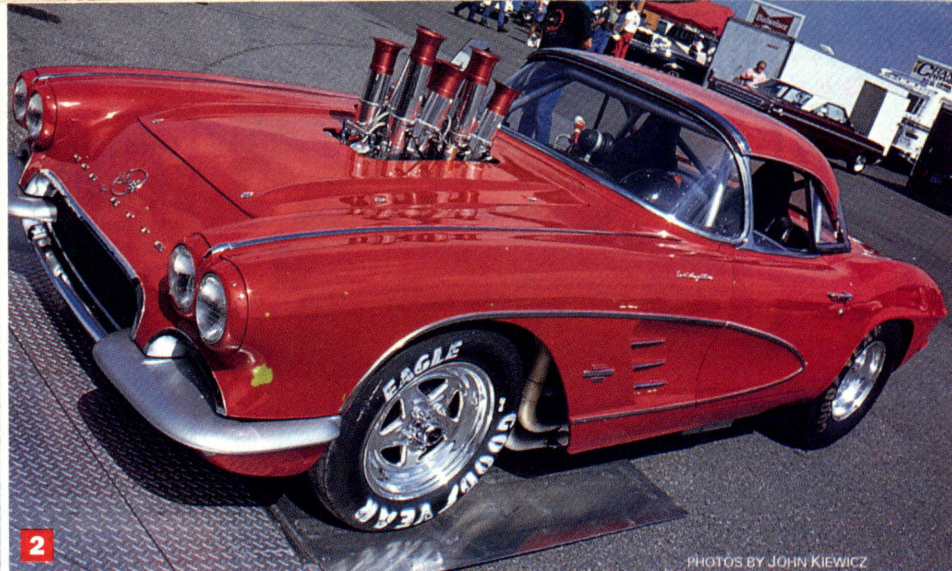
Another popular class, Super Street, was a fan favorite with its wheelstanding activities. Chevrolet dominated as nine of the top 10 qualifiers wore a Bow Tie. With the top 10 elapsed times within a



half second of each other (ranging from 9.48 to 10.03), you didn't see dad getting little Johnny another gut-wrenching racer steak (aka hot dog) during this popular class of racing. Super Street is definitely the class to watch next season.

A total of 29 cars successfully registered in the Pro Street class to give their best efforts at winning both the \$3100 (awarded to the first "legal" car to run in the 7's) bounty and the Fastest Street Car title. While nobody within rule guidelines snatched up the cash, a winner was determined for the "fastest" title. For 1993, Mark Tate has the dubious honor of telling friend and foe alike that he is the owner/driver of the quickest

1 Kevin Duet boils the hides before waging battle against another Super Street competitor. This class is quickly becoming the rage among drivers and is loved by the fans for its wheelstanding action. 2 Besides being extremely fast, most of the cars at the Memphis NMCA event were gorgeous. This beautiful '61 Vette, owned by George Poynter, was running 9.20s at 145-plus mph. 3 Not all was well in racerland on Sunday. Tons of broken engines, locked-up rearends, and oil-downs played havoc with track officials. 4 Resident wild man Rick Dyer leaps off the starting line in his Lenco-shifted, Eagle 632-cubic-inch monster. Note the extra squirrely burnout patches left moments earlier from his half-track mega smoky-burnout. 5 Tuning for weather and track conditions was critical. Pulling a few extra tenths out of an engine was needed during this super competitive weekend. Next to a hammer, duct tape has long been recognized as a racer's favorite tool. And, no, it won't fix broken rods. 6 As each NMCA event progressed, judging in the Editor's Choice car show became increasingly difficult. The '69 COPO Camaro in the background took home the super huge Editor's Choice trophy along with a plethora of sponsor-donated gifts. With plenty of "factory correct" cars entered, this ultra competitive category was almost too close to call.



PHOTOS BY JOHN KIEWICZ

The Finale In The NMCA Flowmaster Muscle Challenge 1993 Series

GETTING



BATTLEGROUND



1

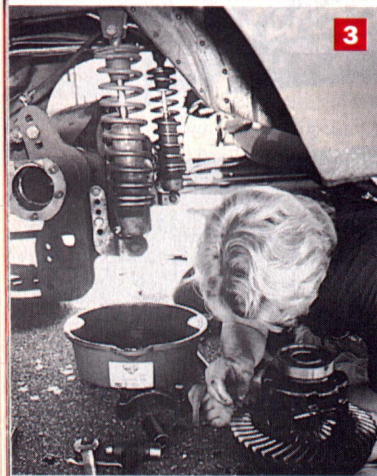
Overall Eliminator Winners

Class	Driver	Car/Engine	E.T.@MPH
Stock	Mark Walters	'74 455 Trans Am	13.15@105.86
Top Stock	Jim Turner	'72 455 Buick GS	11.34@117.47
Modified Production	Kevin Chapman	'69 440 Super Bee	9.87@136.21
Super Street	David Henninger	'71 402 Camaro	9.56@142.09
Pro Street	Mark Tate	'67 570 Camaro	8.28@166.45
Consolation	Tom Hammonds	'69 615 Camaro	7.76@168.72
EFI Stock	Cliff Sebring	'91 135(T) Spirit R/T	14.58@ 94.70
EFI Stock Appearing	Mike Kurtz	'81 231(T) Regal	12.17@110.01
EFI Modified	John Hamer	'89 302 Mustang	12.88@105.32
EFI Super Modified	Jon Bennett	'90 306 Mustang	9.52@146.38
Nostalgia SS	Donnie Chapman	'65 426 Hemi Belvedere	10.51@129.29



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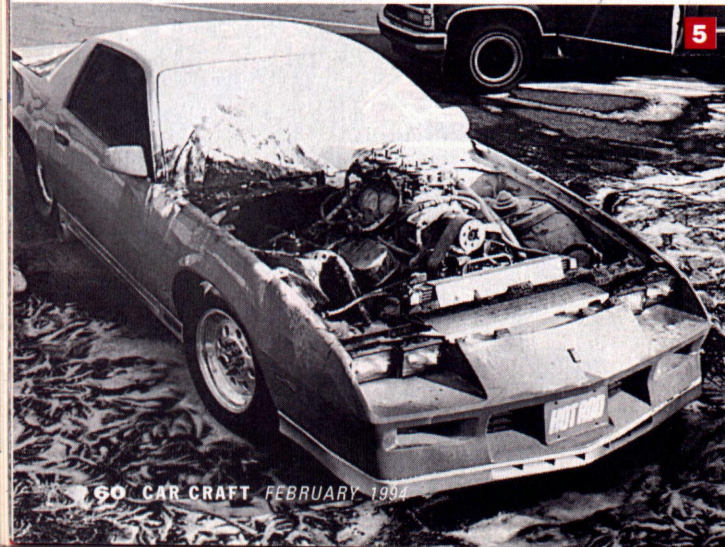
1 This super radical blown '78 Malibu was a crowd favorite all season. Its forced induction 572-cubic-inch big-block motivates the looks-like-a-brick car to awesome top-end speeds, not to mention a respectable 8.73 e.t. that garnered the number five seat in the "Fastest" shootout. 2 This front-wheel-jerking '91 GMC Syclone was scouted out by CAR CRAFT to be an upcoming "Strip Tech" feature. However, after a few passes the wheezed V6 blew a head gasket and its chances at a feature. Maybe next season we'll catch up to this 10.20-second, Randy Eakins-owned super sleeper. 3 Problem after problem seemed to plague racers during the weekend action. With help from friends, Clinton Cranston got things back together properly and later ran a personal best of 9.88 at 135.60 mph. 4 While not satisfying eligibility requirements for the "Fastest Street Car" shootout, Tom Hammonds of the Denver Nuggets did lay down a blistering 7.76 e.t., which earned him one of the 10 coveted Flowmaster 7-second club jackets. Any chance of a CC staffer getting one? 5 During the "Fastest Street Car in America" ride and drive, participant Roy Chaney's '82 Camaro caught fire. No doubt the front Hot Rod license plate hampered cooling, resulting in an engine meltdown. Take note that a CAR CRAFT plate, besides being much more handsome, has never caused such an incident. 6 Super Street participant Greg Csernai had no problem "skying the fronts" during the weekend. On one occurrence, a bumper scraping wheelstand resulted in the front end slamming to the ground, damaging the headers, and tearing off the exhaust system.



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4




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6

street-legal car in the land. For his efforts, he received a plaque, a custom embroidered "#1 Fastest Street Car in America" jacket donated by C.A.R.S. Inc., and his mug shot (or at least a photo of his car jerkin' 'em) in both CAR CRAFT and *Hot Rod* magazines.

Although some entrants in the shootout failed to qualify (for whatever reason), the NMCA let them run in exhibition grudge matches. The crowd was bummed-out that race favorites Monty Berney ('55 Chevy 210), Danny Scott ('67 C.A.R.S. Camaro), and Rick Dyer ('69 C.A.R.S. Camaro) were ineligible for the "show," but the drivers did get roaring applause complete with a standing ovation as they wowed spectators with mammoth, extra-smoky half track burnouts. James "Augie" McCallie, chief Christmas Tree operator, was not amused.

For 1993, the NMCA quarter-mile activities are finished, but expect more fender-to-fender racing action in 1994. With the tentative addition of two extra races in the series (thus making a total of six), next year's heated points battle will begin in early spring. And yes, the 3100 bucks will likely be up for grabs again. For more information on race dates and rules, contact NMCA, Dept. CC, 3404 Democrat Road, Memphis, TN 38118; 901/365-3779. 



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