

Hot Gossip



For the first time in 10 years my touchdown at LAX was in daylight at 16.07, boarding the Alamo courtesy bus at 17.17; the type of data beloved by 21st century citizens that live by their digital footprint! Having worn an Omega since way



way back in the '70s, actually July 20th 1975, my mind finds it easier to say that sunset was about six that evening (shot from the bus), and my rental ride to Bakersfield was well and truly mired in traditional LA traffic jam, with no intention of any outlaw driving that might arouse any CHP Trooper out cruising; in fact I was j'st goin' with the flow, my mind already filling with thought of the NitroThunder that would fill the days ahead in what would turn out to be one of my longest, totally amazing and emotion filled weekends ever at Famoso, but being stuck in this vista of red and white lights I just found bitchin' music on the FM, goin' with the flow, hardly noticing when the lanes filling my GPS went from red to green, unlike the vanishing of traffic! Yeehaw; this time a gentle touch on the throttle took me up to speed, reaching the Motel 6 ol' Nitro Nostrils had booked a couple hours after leaving Alamo, thankful the good guys at [DialAFlight](#) upgraded my ride to an easy livin' car, feeling well rested when I found him as hungry as I was, slung my bags inside and we headed to Denny's for food. However, before we begin out tale, here are a tad more 21st digital data; the image below was shot at 17:16:17 Nikon time; Bobby Cottrell's posse hoping to celebrate big-time. Mendy Fry's stokin' up some AA/FD attitude on her chute at 16:02:53; hoping to take Tom Shelar's High Speed team to glory in celebration of his memory...



All thoughts of a laid-back day by the pool went out the window on waking early; feeling fit and ready to rock an' roll and we were soon off for breakfast en route to the Flying J, chosen as, once fed, the track's j'st down the road a small piece, with a great set of ess bends for me to indulge in some outlaw 3-figure thunder before chilling out on the short cruise to Famoso where, as ever we were met with smiles and soon parked in the empty staging lanes at the Patch. As you can see at right, Andy got down to the nitty-gritty, taking shots of the Famoso's father and son team of John an' Blake Bowser. My brief for the day was to meet up with the drivers an' teams that'd been so helpful with my March Meet tales; first stop being with Matt Menendez, driver of Cacklin' Critter, a Mopar fuel coupe. After saying thanks I questioned him about the lo-rise injector system at right.



Matt couldn't see around its old system so "Drive by Braille and the guard rail" or change injectors; simple! His 5.79 was 13th among 20 fuel coupes over a 5.89 bump spot;

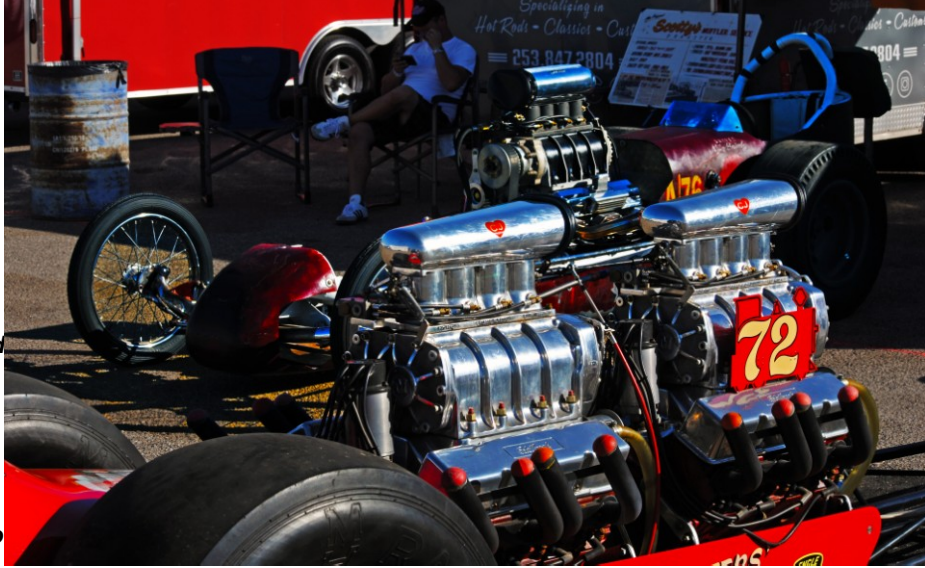


he was first round food for Bobby Cottrell's Bardahl express! Carrying a bunch of mini-mix images with March Meet hyperlinks to my EurodMix on the back; Art Chrisman, Adam Sorokin head the 1959-2019 mix with the original shield and 100% CalNitrofire! Heidi's husband Travis loved the two fuel coupes, with Heidi aiding the slowest move they ever make and Jason Rupert's Rolling Thunder at max-power, hoping to stop Bobby Cottrell and the Bardahl team from winning! When put up on line, the image at far right had these words added "Moments after watching [Mendy Fry's August 16 Spokane win](#) I was saddened to learn High Speed's tuner and owner Tom Shelar passed away on August 22. Condolences to his family, friends, Mendy and her High Speed team; God speed."



"When sadness comes to town, it's cool to have friends who ease the pain," the thought coming to mind walking the pits on October 24, the truth in these words proved true, filling the days with warmth and tears...

I'd walked off to get a beverage when Andy bumped into Jamie Shores, girlfriend of his long time best pal Tim Marshall, figuring they'd enjoy a quite time remembering Tim who'd passed away early in 2018. We met up again shortly later, paying a visit to Bob Muravez and the Freight Train gang, the twin engined monster positively dwarfing a classic early '60s "shorty," the unrestored Scotty's Muffler Service Special fuel dragster parked next door. [In his story for the Hot Rod Network](#) Dave Wallace wrote that it "made Mike Snively a local star in 1962-1963 at San Gabriel and especially Colton, which never buckled to the fuel ban imposed by other SoCal strips in 1957 and nationwide by NHRA a year later." Dave also wrote that "Snively's driving talent kept the car competitive well beyond its time. Drag News reported respectable ETs as quick as 8.17 in late 1963, with speeds consistently in the mid-180s." Maybe it was one of the NitroWarriors trying to fill the track for the Saturday night CackleFest along with this drop dead gorgeous slingshot, the 1971 dragster Iron Horse; it raced for only one season and had been "Perfectly restored and preserved by Sam Chastain. The car was originally owned by famous drag racer Dan Richens of Salt Lake City, who was a railroad engineer, hence the name. This car was amongst the first in the Western States (except CA) to break the 6-second barrier and was one of the last AA/FD (Data courtesy Readyabout at YouTube). Sadly NHRA had no list of Cackle cars on track, but one of the staff reckoned there were 80; we began at 40, then maybe 30 – guess I'll have to watch the video and let you know as all my shots and data from the Saturday were lost in the ozone – much like me right now! Not quite true folks but after enjoying a second Nitro warm-up of the day we headed for our cars, seemingly guarded by Sheriffs of the County, oops! "Looks like we're busted Andy," I chuckled, adding, "No worries mate, I'll take care of it," approaching the senior officer with a big grin and "Hope you're not going to bust my pal officer..." He chuckled and replied, "No sir..." as his young companion added, "I am!" Happily he too chuckled and we chatted for awhile, and then Andy said "Right follow me..." "Where are we going?" "To Mendy's do..." "Say what, I thought we were going to meet Ron Capps at..." Andy cut me off short, "No Jamie told me Mendy and Cole (her husband), have put together an evening at the Elks Club," already punching in the data to his GPS while I reminded Andy I'd not stayed for their chat which made him chuckle. Shortly later we arrived at a packed parking lot, a security guard holding two fingers and pointing "That way sir," so I took his advice and found two spots, but Andy was heading off into the night! Okay folks, he'll be back soon, and we'll return to our tale next month; now it's time for an ol' favourite called "What y'see is what you get..." like big pix, few words! My first port of call was with Billy "the kid" Morris, still stoked by his first NHRA HRHS round win with a 0.029 RT, a 17.843 way behind Tony Jurado's 5.53 (and 0.318 red light!), at the March Meet shown at right.



"Now we want another one..." Sadly that never happened, but he did qualify 2nd with a stout 5.631 and a booming 255.29 mph that put a smile on the team's faces...



New shoe Justin Taylor drove Rian Konno's old Kazanjian, Lemon, Konno Mustang ride to a 5.86 232 win over Billy the Kid's clicked off pass in the first round, going down to Tony Jurado in the second!

Yep, that's right, the same Tony J, only this time he more than improved, hitting 10th with a 5.78 at 250mph before marching through the field all the way to the final round; but as before, I still prefer the genuine nostalgia Camaro shape over the swoopy aero look ...



Love the kinda ghost flames on the fuel coupe, but you can't get much more colourful than this pair of ready-to-race cars; Matt Menendez and his Cacklin' Critter and Brendan Murry's Nostalgia AAFD



Know nowt of this beauty 'cept it had a Lincoln Zephyr steering wheel hub!



This plain Jane fueler being push started ol' school style before Cackling down track was a buzz for us all, love the push truck too!

Save some cash and visit Famoso-it's the best medicine on or off the planet...



Imagine finding this beautiful beast in your rear view mirror one night!



A hi-flyin' Ford

More than half-a-car! Now this is what you call a hole shot...

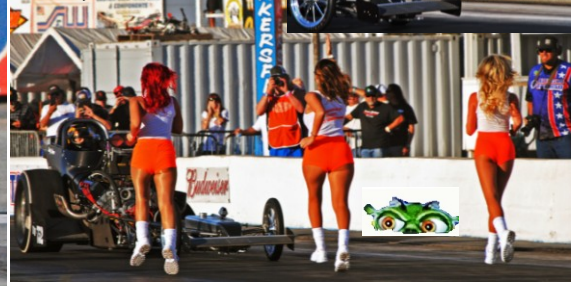


J'st came up a tad short, but a great race!

Not really out of shape; the Anglia driver won aged 81! Sadly no names as the promised results sheets are still stuck over at the NHRA!



Wow - three of 'em all in a row! with more next time, honest...



Despite the Sport Fury's 0.349 red light, beep-beep an' it's blown away!



J'st a few of the friends who took some sadness away. Back to normal next time Minimalist Mike