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Double Dose of “Pac Man Fever” Strikes Grand Bend



Harrod, OH – July 21, 2009 – Tony “Pac Man” Elrod literally gobbled up everything in sight this past weekend at the IHRA Mopar Canadian Nationals at Grand Bend Motorplex in Ontario, Canada. For the second time during the 2009 season, the second generation Elrod Racing driver scored victories in two Pro-Am classes at the same event, this time scoring in Hot Rod and Super Rod.

After qualifying both Dave Elrod Racing Hot Rod and Super Rod entries with 10.90 and 9.90 E.T.’s respectfully early in the sessions, all Tony needed to do was zero in on his reaction times for a killer combination heading into eliminations.

Elrod’s first round package in Hot Rod would put him at number one on the ladder and earn him a bye in the second round, where his luck of the draw would continue throughout the rounds. Combining consistent green lights and his understanding of the art of driving the stripe, Elrod wheeled his way to the final to take on David Surmatchewski.

Not only did Elrod better his final round competitor from the get-go by almost two hundredths, but carried his magic though to the stripe, taking only what he needed, a narrow seventeen inches for the win light and victory number one of the weekend.

Over in the Super Rod category, Elrod made his way through the first two rounds of competition before finding himself paired up with a former class World Champion, Brian Folk.

“I figured if I could get past Brian, everything else would fall into place,” Elrod said. “It was all really weird because I can usually look at the ladder and say, ‘OK this is what I’m going to do this round and then this round’ and so on. But once I started getting into both cars, I just didn’t really notice I was in two different cars. It all just felt like making a bunch of time runs. Maybe that’s what made it all feel so much easier and helped me through both classes.”

Just as the one hit wonder duo Buckner and Garcia say in their 1982 hit, Tony “Pac Man” Elrod had “them on the run” and was “looking for the high score” after keeping it tight at the stripe and pushing Folk to the wrong side of a double breakout for the win light during the third round.

“My lights in the Super Rod car were junk during qualifying, but come eliminations they were on, right through the rounds. I almost felt like a machine driving both cars all day,” he reflected. “It all just feels so surreal to have won the event in both classes.”

Winning one IHRA National event, let alone two, is always a fantastic feat. Now with the added incentive for the 2009 season being an entry into the “Tournament of Champions”, which will take place as part of the IHRA World Finals, Elrod now has earned himself a spot in both classes.

“You know it never even crossed my mind,” he said referring to his chance to secure his spot at Rockingham in the fall. “My brother Jake and my sister Shelly were the first people to greet me after my final in Super Rod and Shelly said ‘You just locked up two spots in the tournament!’ I was like wow, I had forgotten all about that.”

“That’s what I mean about my day and my rounds. It wasn’t on my mind about anything other than getting in those cars and making those laps. I was numb to absolutely everything else,” he added.



“These wins are for my grandma, Jetta. I love her very much and she has been rather ill over the last week or so and these are for her,” continued Elrod. “Really, I have such a great extended family that makes all of this even better. First, all praise to the Lord, because none of this would be possible without Him. **Sunoco and Bazell Race Fuels** have become super partners this year and we are so happy to be able to take them to the winner’s circle again, right along with **Abruzzi Transmissions** and **TCI Converters** with their race proven products. You know there was a lot of humidity in the air, but the **Quick Fuel Carburetors** were flawless. I also want to thank Tom Fisher for the way both motors ran in the cars. He did a nice job building winners for us. We were hot lapping pretty good there near the end and you need to be able to count on what you’re running in the car. You can do that with all those folks.”

“The support from all of my family who were there was great. I have to say that they made a lot of trips up to the staging lanes to watch me run. We couldn’t have done that for all those people all at once without the relationship we have with Pittsburgh, PA based **FayetteGolfCarCo.com**,” he chuckled. “That extra pit transportation really came in handy.”

Elrod’s very first national event win came in Hot Rod and took place in Canada several years ago. “Every win is special but I just love racing in front of the Canadian fans. They have got to be some of the best anywhere and they make us feel very welcome every time we race there.”

The entire Dave Elrod Racing stable of entries in Top Dragster, Quick Rod, Super Rod and Hot Rod will soon head for their next event planned for US 131 Motorsports Park in Martin, MI. Qualifying for the IHRA Northern Nationals will begin on Friday July 31st with eliminations to commence on Saturday August 1st.

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