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B-D-R Transport News

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Latest news and bulletin updates

by Deb Hamel

**B-D-R Transport President & Co-owner Greg Gay WINNER!
2021 Superstock Champion
NHRA Northeast Division**



Greg Gay, of North Walpole NH, won the NHRA Northeast Division 2021 Superstock, driving his 1980 Mirada. He has won Class in 6 of the 7 Classes it fits in and set the National Record in all 7 Classes.

In September 1999, Greg won his first National event in Stock Eliminator at Maple Grove Raceway, Mohnton (Reading) PA. What do you do at that point? You move to Super Stock Eliminator, where you are allowed more modifications, and the cars go faster.

When asked to explain how the races he runs work, Greg replied, "Now, the way that we race is not all out drag racing in the classic sense of first one to the finish line wins. There are about eighty different classes in Super Stock Eliminator. When two cars of the same class race, then it is a classic drag race. However, when cars from different classes race, they both pick an estimated time that they must win the race without going quicker than that time. Also, the timer does not start until your tire leaves the starting line, NOT when the green light comes on. That being the case, if one driver gets a second better reaction time off the starting line, but the second driver runs half a second closer to his estimated time (or dial in), the first car will win the race."

It generally takes 6 or 7 wins in order to win the whole race. Lose once, and we will see you next race. "I have only been doing so-so for the last couple of years. I have not raced as much as I used to, and you need to be sharp. In addition, I was having some consistency problems. I _

did get to the third round at the national event at Epping, NH back in June, and I made it to the fourth round at one of our local races.

In addition to national events, NHRA (the National Hot Rod Association) requires drivers to run Divisional races in order to acquire grading points. The more grading points that a driver has, the more opportunities they get to enter national events the next year. And at Divisional races, drivers primarily race the same people as they do at national events, but there is only about 30% as much payout, "so I have always raced just enough Divisionals to get me into Nationals the following year," Greg reflected.

Since it had been hectic at work, Gay had not been accomplishing much racing, and it was a Divisional race at Epping in late August, he wasn't all that excited about going, "In fact, I had even said to someone that I was more excited about seeing Matthew and Scott while I was at Epping than the actual race itself. I have known Scott Bugbee since high school. Scott lives seven miles from Epping and lets me stay with him and his son when I am racing a multiple day race. I have known Matthew Jurkoic since kindergarten. Matthew lives two miles from Scott, and all three of us had several math classes together, so we try to get together at least once a year when I am racing at Epping," he says with a grin.

First round at the race, and Greg ended up racing Will Kennedy in his Pontiac Firebird, "I don't know Will, but I know based on the number 13 on his window that he was #3 in division points last year in Division 1. This is a good racer. Will gives me a head start of .170 seconds. I have a reaction time of .003 seconds; Will has a .014 second reaction time. Will beats me to the finish line but runs .007 seconds too quick. I am "safe" by .031 seconds."

Second round, he had to race Patrick Glade with a Buick, stating, "as the number 5 guy in points last year, he is no "push over". I also have the better reaction time in this race, and Patrick has to run too quickly trying to catch me, while I am once again safe."

Third round, Greg had to race Duane Hoven's Ford Maverick. Asked if he was familiar with Duane, he says, "I know this guy. He and I had a "knock down, drag out" race in Lebanon Valley NY earlier in the year, which I won. I don't remember the times, but I was perfect to the thousandths of a second at our LV race, while Duane was one one hundredth of a second away from his prediction. Our cars also run about the same times, so we were side by side all the way down. Neither of us was quite as good at Epping, but I came out the winner.

Now we go to the 4th round, and Greg has to race against a red Camaro with "2" on the windshield. Excitingly, he adds, "I know this guy all too well, as it is none other than the second-place guy in World Champion points last year, Byron Warner. I have known Byron, his twin brother, and his father for 20 years. Good guys and good racers. There is one other little item that makes this race even more interesting: whoever wins this race has a bye run in the semi-finals. Two for the price of one!"

He goes on to describe the details of the run, "I take off with a .027 reaction to Byron's .033. He is much faster than me and gives me a fairly big head start. My car is running like a scared rabbit! Byron just nips me at the finish line by twelve inches, but his .012 too quick of a time is a bigger infraction than my .001 too quick time, and I get the win.

In the semi-finals, even though I do not have anyone to race, I run the car flat out. The performance of your car changes with the weather, and even though we carry weather instruments to predict these things, you are never sure, and we ARE dealing with hundredths and thousandths of a second.

We pull up for pairings for the final, and I have to run Lincoln Morehead. Another good guy, and a tough racer. In fact, almost everyone in this game is a good guy. He's another one that I've known for 20+ years, and past Division Champion. At this point, the dew is setting in. You can look up at the big streetlights and literally SEE the water in the air. The Division Director deems it too unsafe to race, and rain is predicted for the next day. We discussed it, and the only race that we both intend to be at for the rest of the year is the National Event at Reading PA in 3 weeks. The decision is made that we will run the final there.

At Reading, we get three qualifying runs on Thursday, followed by another Friday morning, then first and second round of eliminations. The decision is made that we will run the final round as the last pair of cars on the Friday morning qualifying run. That way, we will get familiar with the track and how our cars will perform, but not get additional time on the track than everyone else.

In the final round, I figured that my dial in is really close. In fact, I might even be able to run up to .005 quicker than my dial in. I take off with a .016 reaction to Lincoln's .018. We get down near the finish line and Lincoln is right there beside me and coming on. I am going 125 mph, and he is at 132. I tap the brakes right at the finish line, probably hardly affecting my time at all. Actually, I thought that I had screwed up and he had gotten by me. It ended up that my time was .025 to the good, while Lincoln's was .032 to the good, giving me the win by .009 seconds, or 21 inches."

After the race, the drivers must have their cars scaled to make sure they are at legal weight. Then, a gasoline sample is taken to make sure that they aren't running any "funny stuff." The trophy is presented, and pictures are taken. They have forms to fill out claiming the contingency awards on the racing parts that they are using, and someone verifies that they have the proper stickers on the cars for those contingencies.

By the time Greg got back to his trailer, it was almost time to go up for the first round. "I don't even know who I am paired with, but cool the engine down, put a little fuel in, and check my air gauges. I now have a "dial it in" mind for the next race. When I get to the staging lanes, I ask the girl pairing up the cars who I "have." She shows me the clipboard in her hands, and I see "1 Werner". Oh good, now I have to race the World Champion and twin brother to Byron, Brian Werner!

Believe it or not, I beat the World Champ! My reaction time is .010 to his .007. Now, I should have mentioned this earlier, but it takes you .070 to blink your eyes. If your reaction time is .070, you might win a round, but you are not going to win a race. I'm telling you; these races are brutal these days. Basically, we both miss our dial-ins by a little bit, but I am closer to getting the win light.

It is here where one storybook ends and another begins. In the second round, I have to race Bobby Fazio. I have never met Bobby, but we are pitted very close to each other. Bobby does podcasts on our type of racing. The race with Bobby is a fun race because once again, our cars run very close to the same time. In this race, I am "late" with a .040 reaction and Bobby wins the round. Bobby goes on to win the race in the same car that his father almost won the same race in 30 years ago!"

In 1986, Gay won the Heavy Eliminator Championship at New England Dragway, and was also awarded the Competitor of the Year Award for amassing more points than anyone else in any other class.

It all started when Greg was 16 years old driving the 1971 Road Runner that his dad owned. In 1992 he bought the 1969 Super Bee and went on to win the IHRA national event in 1998 and 2008, and the NHRA national event in 1999. In 1999 Greg purchased the 1980 Mirada, he has won Class in 6 of the 7 Classes it fits in, and set the National Record in all 7 Classes. Gay is a native of North Walpole, NH and serves as President and Co-owner of B-D-R Transport in Westminster, Vermont.

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