

Line doubles, Worsham wins in Top Fuel at Tire Kingdom NHRA Gatornationals

Sunday, March 13, 2011: Del Worsham became the 15th driver in NHRA history to win races in Top Fuel and Funny Car when he defeated seven-time world champion Tony Schumacher in the Top Fuel

in both classes. I actually had a chance at the U.S. Nationals in 1993, could have won in Top Fuel, and I made a huge mistake, red-light against Kenny Bernstein, and he went on to win. I felt bad about

straight in Gainesville.

It was almost a perfect weekend: “We could have got the record,” Line said.

The national record, which Line missed by two-thousandths and Anderson by a thousandth, went to Rodger Brogdon with a 6.495 from Friday qualifying.

In Pro Stock Motorcycle, Karen Stoffer red-lighted to hand the event title to Screamin’ Eagle Vance & Hines Harley-Davidson rider Krawiec, who nonetheless ran a near-perfect 6.847 at 197.08. The win came on a blistering quick



here, you know you’re going to go fast,” said Krawiec, who won his second straight Gatornationals. “This track had some killer, some killer conditions; it was meant to



final round of the 42nd annual Tire Kingdom NHRA Gatornationals Sunday at Gainesville Raceway.

The other winners at the second



of 22 races in NHRA’s 60th Anniversary season were Mike Neff (Funny Car), Jason Line (Pro Stock), and Eddie Krawiec (Pro Stock Motorcycle).

Worsham was four-thousandths slower (.044 to .040) on the Tree in his Al-Anabi dragster and eight-thousandths quicker (3.858 to 3.866) on the track for a finish-line winning margin of an almost imperceptible .004-second. It was the first win in Top Fuel for Worsham after compiling 25 wins in a Funny Car career that dates to 1990.

“It feels great [to have won

that, and it’s kind of weighed on me for 20 years,” Worsham said half seriously.

“It is almost surreal, I’m driving [2010 Top Fuel champion and teammate] Larry [Dixon]’s car from last year; it won 12 races last year, now it’s won 13. It shouldn’t surprise anyone [that it’s back in the winner’s circle but] it surprises me,” he said.

In Funny Car, Cruz Pedregon (7.819, 99.32) spun the tires of his Snap-on Tools Toyota at the hit of the throttle and was no match for Neff (4.092, 310.48), whose Castrol GTX Ford Mustang was the best-performing car in the class all day.

“Just a great day for our whole



team. We needed this to keep the Force string going; that’s four in a row for Team Force,” said Neff, who’s in John Force’s car that won the 2010 championship. “The hardest part is just trying not to mess it up as a driver.”

In Pro Stock, Line (6.554, 211.96) defeated Summit Racing teammate Greg Anderson (6.545, 212.43) to win his second straight to open the 2011 season and second



track on which Hector Arana had set the national record for elapsed time (6.777) and Krawiec set the national record for speed (199.26).

“Gainesville, when you come

go fast.”

Also on Sunday, 2004 NASCAR champion Kurt Busch made his first NHRA Full Throttle Drag Racing Series start in the ultracompetitive Pro Stock class, and he acquitted himself well in his Shell Dodge Avenger, losing by less than a car length (.031-second) in the first round to seventh-year pro Erica Enders, the subject of the Disney original movie Right on Track.

“It was the best graph we’ve put together in all of our testing, in all of our rounds here in Gainesville – we hit all the shift marks,” said Busch, who was pleased overall with his performance. “We just came up short.”

Busch trailed at the start with a .049 reaction time to Enders’ .021,

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