

Frank Hawley Enjoys Norwalk “Night Under Fire” Experience Both On and Off the Track

Two-time NHRA Nitro Funny Car Champion, Frank Hawley recently returned to some of his early drag racing roots when he took to the wheel of Troy Martin’s Chi-Town Hustler during the 34th Annual “Night Under Fire” at Summit Motorsports Park in Norwalk, Ohio.

Hawley, founder and instructor of the world’s first drag racing school twenty-six years ago, was quick to point out following his trip to the exceptional northern Ohio facility that his total experience during the long running event was above and beyond his expectations.

“It was a wonderful experience,” he said. “The Bader’s put on an absolutely first class show. I had personally never witnessed one of their “Night Under Fire” programs and it was spectacular. It is great family entertainment and I don’t believe I have ever seen that many kids and teenagers at a drag race before. They certainly know how to entertain folks of all ages in the Midwest and I was just happy to be a part of it.”

Hawley’s part came in the form of driving Troy Martin’s Chi-Town Hustler alongside many of the other “Historic” Nitro Funny Cars and drivers who were also on hand for the special shootout. “I appreciate Troy stepping out of the driver’s seat for the evening and allowing me to get into his car,” he noted. “It was really exciting to be back in the Chi-Town Hustler and to see a lot of my friends and to get the opportunity to race Dale Pulde. I think Dale is one of the best Funny Car drivers that ever held a steering wheel.”

One of only three cars to qualify in the five second zone, Hawley pointed out that it was his qualifying pass alongside Pulde that was one of his favorite moments of the event. “We got the



opportunity to qualify against Dale and although he beat me, I was able to make a pretty good run in the Chi-Town car. In fact, it was the quickest run the car had ever made.”

“The guys had done a great job in preparing the car for me to race,” he continued. “Unfortunately when we came back for our second run, it shook the tires, moved towards the center and I lifted off the throttle. There is not a chance in the world where I would want to jeopardize someone else’s equipment, so we didn’t get to make a full pass on the second run.”

In addition to Hawley getting behind the wheel of the Chi-Town Hustler, he also thoroughly enjoyed the numerous off-track activities such as the driver autograph session and other staples of the fan favorite event.



“Getting to see and visit with so many of my friends was great and I can’t even put a number to how many fans were roaming the pits,” he remarked. “I have no idea of how many photo cards I signed, but they had an autograph session with all the featured drivers lined up at a table. It was amazing that the folks stood in line for well over an hour to get autographs from all the drivers. It was really neat to be able to see the fans up-close and talk to them one-on-one and to hear their stories about how many years they had been attending the “Night Under Fire”. It was all pretty special.”

“Overall, it was just a wonderful experience,” Hawley continued of the event. “An absolutely out of this world fireworks display, it was all just really great. I just want to thank everybody that was involved in making the experience possible for me. I’m looking forward to the opportunity to do something there again next year.”