



Mike Bowles Chosen As COMP Cams® Top Performer For March

Memphis, TN – In 2012, weekly racers are being randomly recognized as the COMP Cams® Top Performer of the Month. The winner for March is Tennessee competitor Mike Bowles.

Mike Bowles from Mason, TN, is the March COMP Cams® Top Performer of the Month. Bowles, 38, has raced for a total of eight years. He first competed as a beginner in the Hobby Stock division before eventually progressing into the Street Stock class, and he currently pilots the #66 Street Stock, primarily at Riverside International Speedway (West Memphis, Arkansas). The car is a 1981 Camaro, and his Frazier Motorsports team utilizes power plants produced by Walker's Engine Service.

Mike first jumped behind the wheel of a race car at the end of the 2001 season at Riverside, where he competed in the Hobby II class, a division for beginners.

"I had always enjoyed going to the races, and I had always wanted to try driving," Bowles remembers. "The first time I got behind the wheel I was hooked instantly, and I knew it was something that I wanted to do."

After entering a few events late in the 2001 season, Bowles made a full assault on the class in 2002. It proved to be a great year, which ended with him claiming the Hobby II track championship. After winning the championship in the division track rules dictated that a driver had to move to Hobby I, so Mike advanced to the tougher class.

"While I had some tough competitors in Hobby II, it was nothing like Hobby I, and I learned quickly that I had a lot of work to do if I was going to be competitive," he notes.

The competition may have been tougher, but Bowles rose to the occasion quickly by claiming two championships in three years, and five feature wins in the Hobby I division, driving primarily for Richard Gray. Despite his success, Mike decided to step away from the sport at the end of the 2005 season, and wasn't really sure if he would drive a race car again.

"I enjoyed racing, but I just needed a break. I told most people I wasn't sure that I would drive again, but deep down inside I knew better," he laughs.

His racing hiatus lasted until the 2009 season, when some of his good friends with Frazier Motorsports put a new Street Stock together. The team asked Mike to drive the car for a few nights to get the setup right and to help work out the bugs. Not only did Bowles help the team find the setup, he also found victory lane quickly. What started as a two or three race deal suddenly turned into a full-time ride.

"I was really honored when the Frazier family asked me to drive their car on a full-time basis. Those folks have great equipment and do whatever they can to make sure the car is in winning form. I'm definitely indebted to them," Bowles says.

While Mike found victory lane in 2009 and several times in 2010, his biggest win came at the end of the 2010 season, when he claimed the \$1,500 win in the COMP Cams® Grass Root Nationals at Riverside International Speedway.



"The paycheck and the contingencies were great, but that was probably the toughest field of Street Stock competitors I've ever faced," he remembers." I mean there were probably 20 guys there that night that had a chance to win the feature. To be able to beat a caliber of drivers like that in the biggest race of the year was a real big deal and to me it felt like the Daytona 500."

For the first half of the 2011 season Bowles split his time between the Frazier Motorsports entry and a car for George Washington Motorsports, but by the end of the year he was back with Frazier Motorsports on a full-time basis. The 2012 season will find Mike again challenging for the Street Stock track championship at Riverside, but when his schedule allows he plans to enter special events at other area tracks.

"While I was driving for George Washington we traveled to a few specials at other tracks, and I quickly realized that to truly get better you need to go to different tracks and take on different competition," Bowles explains. "It's amazing how much more there is to be learned."

Mike is quick to note that while he gets the accolades for the team's performance, that there are a lot of great people who help keep him at the front of the pack.

"First I have to thank Mike Frazier and Diane Frazier and everyone at Frazier Motorsports, as they go above and beyond to keep my hotrod running at its best," he says. "My girlfriend, Janice Brown, is an unbelievable help to me. Not only do I get moral support from her, but she tapes my races each and every week, so that I can go back and watch them to see where I need improvement. That's been a big factor in my success. Also I have a great crew including Eddie Harvell, Brian McWilliams, Brian Bowles, Jeff Rice and Wes Hardin. Without the help and support of all of these people, I would not be so successful."

Mike says that he has learned a lot about racing from watching some of the Memphis area's top drivers, but he has one racing hero that sticks out in his mind.

"When I was driving for Richard Gray, he introduced me to Sprint Car competitor Eddie Gallagher. After meeting Eddie I started watching the Sprint Car division more, and I was just in awe of what he could do with a car on a dirt track. Watching him drive definitely inspired me," Mike says.

Yet of all the wins and championships in Mike Bowles' career, there is one special moment in his racing career that really sticks out.

"My third year of racing, I was getting ready to run the feature, and a lady motioned me over to the catch fence," he says. "When I got over there she asked if I could sign something for her son because he really wanted my autograph. It blew me away that someone wanted my autograph, and I was so nervous I could barely spell my name."

As the COMP Cams® Top Performer for March, Bowles received a \$50 gas card, a COMP Cams® \$100 product certificate, and a COMP® Swag Pack.

Racers who wish to enter the COMP Cams® Top Performer contest should complete the entry form on the forum at www.MidSouthRacing.com. Drivers only need to enter once to be eligible to win each and every month.

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3406 Democrat Rd, Memphis TN 38118
www.compcams.com • PH: 1.800.999.0853 • FX: 901.366.1807



Mike Bowles of Mason, TN, is the COMP Cams Top Performer of the Month for March 2012
Photo Credit: Riverside International Speedway

About the COMP Cams® Top Performer of the Month

COMP Cams® is long-time title sponsor of www.MidSouthRacing.com, and over the years has sponsored several different promotions for racers. For 2012, COMP Cams® created a new program to reward a random lucky driver each month during the season. A competitor is randomly chosen on the last day of the month to receive the title of Top Performer. The driver receives a profile story, which will be posted around the net and made available for the winning driver to use. In addition, each month the winning driver will receive a prize pack from COMP Cams® and its family of companies. The prize packs include everything from engine components and product certificates to apparel and other items, and will vary each month.

About COMP Cams®

Founded in 1976 and based in Memphis, TN, COMP Cams® has become the automotive performance aftermarket's "Absolute Leader in Valve Train Technology." With an ISO 9001:2008 Certification, our mission is to produce the highest performing products possible, provide superior customer service and lead the industry in technological development. Additional information about COMP Cams® and its products can be found at www.compcams.com or at 1.800.999.0853. Or, visit us on Facebook (facebook.com/COMPWins), Twitter (twitter.com/COMPcams) or YouTube (CPGNationTV.com).

Media Contact: Dan Hodgdon, dhodgdon@compcams.com, 901.795.2400, ext. 637.

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