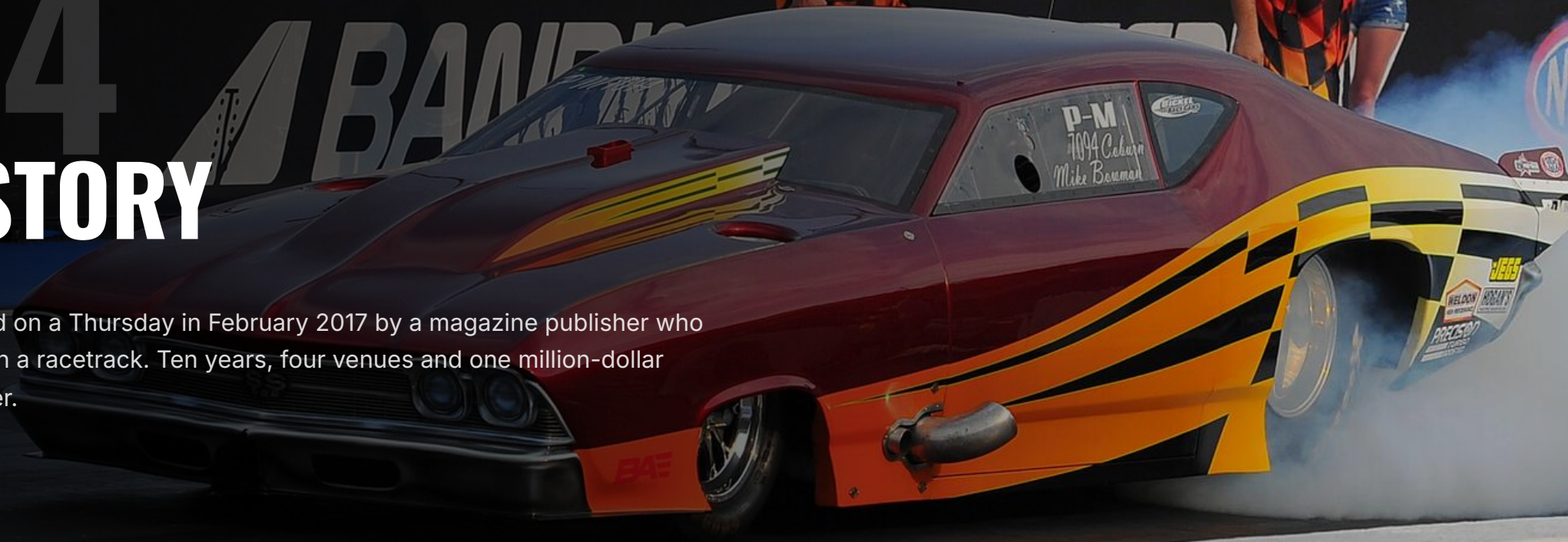


04 HISTORY

Announced on a Thursday in February 2017 by a magazine publisher who did not own a racetrack. Ten years, four venues and one million-dollar bounty later.



“ARE YOU GUYS READY TO DO THIS?”

On February 9, 2017, Drag Illustrated announced it was going to hold a Pro Modified race that paid \$100,000 to the winner and nothing at all to anybody else.

Pro Mod had never raced for that kind of money. Doorslammer racing had never raced for that kind of money. And the man announcing it did not own a racetrack, did not run a sanctioning body, and had spent the previous eleven years publishing a magazine.

“We feel the time is right to disrupt the industry, to try something fresh and new.”
WES BUCK - FEBRUARY 2017

The answers he gave that spring read now like a blueprint for everything the race became.

Why Pro Mod. Buck called it the universal language of drag racing - the class every racer in every other category will admit they would run if money were no object. Put it on center stage instead of in a support slot and you get a show.

Why invitation only. Because he was not building a race. He was building a drag racing entertainment property, and that meant controlling the cast.

2017 - THE FIRST RUNNING	
Announced	- February 9, 2017
Contested	- August 4–5, 2017, Bandimere Speedway
Field	- 16 drivers: 14 invitations, one fan vote, one Wild Card winner
Purse	- \$100,000, winner take all. No runner-up money. No points.
Qualifying	- none. Pairings drawn at random one month early.
Scoreboards	- off. Time slips cut in half.
Champion	- Mike Bowman



Why draw the pairings a month early. So the sport had thirty days to argue about them. He was right in a way nobody could have scripted. Mike Janis and Stevie “Fast” Jackson drew each other in round one, the matchup was argued about for a month, and Janis drove twenty-two hours without stopping to get there. He won.

Why no scoreboards. The clocks stayed dark all week and time slips were cut in half. What Buck got was a paranoia the class had never experienced. During testing, a crew member went headfirst into a trash barrel to dig out the shredded remains of his driver's time slip.

Why Bandimere. The family believed in Pro Mod as the headline act. And a mountain at 9,000 feet corrected took everybody's data and threw it away. That was the point.

THREE VENUES, FOUR ERAS

2017–19 THE MOUNTAIN

BANDIMERE SPEEDWAY
MORRISON, COLORADO

Three runnings on Thunder Mountain. Sixteen invited cars, \$100,000 winner take all, no runner-up money and no points. The scoreboards stayed dark.

Mike Bowman won the first as a fan-vote entrant. Carl Stevens Jr. won the second and ran 5.856 at 246.26, still the quickest Pro Modified pass in the history of the facility. Scott Oksas won the third after drawing the NHRA Pro Mod points leader in round one and watching him red-light it away.

We did not leave the mountain because Bandimere closed. We knew their days were numbered, but the move was about being smart geographically more than anything else.



BANDIMERE SPEEDWAY, MORRISON, COLORADO

2020–22 THE DARK YEARS

NO RUNNING

The world shut down and Bandimere's days ran out. For three years the World Series of Pro Mod existed mostly as an argument at other racetracks.

Three years without a running. The idea did not go anywhere, and neither did the appetite for it.

“When the pandemic struck, it put a halt to the event - which allowed us to pause and reimagine.”

WES BUCK

2023–26 BRADENTON

BRADENTON MOTORSPORTS PARK
BRADENTON, FLORIDA

The race came back bigger. The 16-car invitational became a 32-car field. The quarter-mile became the eighth. The ladder was thrown out entirely in favor of a chip draw. Qualifying for it became an achievement by itself.

Spencer Hyde won from 32nd. Derek Ward won after his car refused to fire for the final. Steve King won from 30th by one thousandth. Aaron Stanfield won on his third Pro Mod start. The purse climbed to \$150,000.

“The event took on a new life in Florida and caught fire.”

WES BUCK



BRADENTON MOTORSPORTS PARK, BRADENTON, FLORIDA

2027– TEXAS

TEXAS MOTORPLEX
ENNIS, TEXAS

On March 5–7, 2027, the World Series of Pro Mod runs at Texas Motorplex for the first time, standing alone as a single event rather than the finale of a three-race series.

The chip draw stays. The sudden death stays. And rather than chase a bigger number, the race drills down on exclusivity to a level it has not applied since Bandimere.



TEXAS MOTORPLEX, ENNIS, TEXAS