

Follow A Dream/Permatex TA/FC team reaches Gatornationals quarterfinals, shows promise going forward

MARSTONS MILLS, MA (March 23, 2017) - The Follow A Dream/Permatex Top Alcohol Funny Car may not have won this past weekend's Amalie Motor Oil NHRA Gatornationals, but it made history nonetheless.



While the team fell short of victory lane, losing in the quarterfinals, it left Gainesville, Florida with heads held high. During qualifying, owner Jay Blake, driver Phil Burkart, crew chief/tuner Anthony Terenzio and the rest of the crew recorded the quickest elapsed time (5.42 seconds) and fastest speed (269.89 mph) in team history. "We were very pleased about both," Blake said. "We were hoping to break the 270 (mph) barrier, but 269 is still the

fastest we've ever gone. The conditions at Gainesville were awesome."

After defeating Tyler Scott in the first round of eliminations, Burkart (6.008 seconds at 221.82 mph) lost to Dan Pomponio (5.537 at 258.71).

"In the first round of eliminations, we won and had a good run," Blake said. "But the second round, we just didn't get after it enough, probably, and shook the tires and we got beat. "It's great to have set the team records, but it was a huge bummer that it shook the tires when we lost in the second round. We all felt we had a car to win."

Still, Burkart leaves Gainesville, where the team also raced the week before in the Lucas Oil Drag Racing Series regional event, first in the LODRS East Division standings and ninth in the LODRS National standings. "Every pass down the racetrack, you're learning," Blake said. "That's the reality. You're always learning and always trying to make it better. "The team worked together great. We keep building and getting better and there's even greater things ahead."

The Follow A Dream/Permatex TA/FC team now has nearly a month off before its next race, April 19-23 in the LODRS Division 1 race at Virginia Motorsports Park in North Dinwiddie, Virginia. In last year's race at Virginia, the team finished a very strong runner-up and Blake is hoping for an equal - if not better result this time around. "We'll massage things a little bit from what we learned (at Gainesville)," Blake said. "There's work to do, but there's no giant changes we'll make before Virginia. "You hope (to do well there again), but it's another year. So much

has changed between then and now. We ran really, really good there last year and we've only gotten better since then. "But the competition has too. There's a lot of good cars that show up. But we go in with high hopes and a strong desire to win it."

On the way to Virginia, Blake and the Follow A Dream/Permatex TA/FC Chevrolet Camaro will attend the New York International Auto Show at the Javits Center in Manhattan. While there, on April 18 Blake will be the keynote speaker at the Permatex-sponsored kickoff breakfast for the National Automotive Technology Competition, which brings together the top 30 high school teams in the country for an automotive competition.

"We do this every year and really enjoy it," Blake said. "We'll have the car on display and we'll meet some great kids. We always look forward to it."