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Coughlin and Johnson Right on Target, Qualify Strong in Dodge Dart Pro Stock Competition Debut at Gainesville

- New Mopar Dodge Dart impresses in its debut during qualifying at the NHRA Gatornationals
- Coughlin qualifies his Mopar/JEGS.com Dodge Dart in the provisional No. 3 spot and runs his career fastest pass
- Johnson drives to preliminary No. 4 position in the debut of his new 'Magneti Marelli Quality Auto Parts Offered by Mopar' Dodge Dart
- Beckman ends Friday No. 2 to lead the Mopar Dodge NHRA Funny Car contingent at Gainesville

March 14, 2014, Gainesville, Fla. - Team Mopar drivers Jeg Coughlin Jr. and Allen Johnson launched a historic new chapter in Mopar's motorsports legacy, racing to the provisional No. 3 and No. 4 qualifying spots, respectively, in the Dodge Dart vehicle's official competition debut at the NHRA Gatornationals in Gainesville, Fla.

Pietro Gorlier, President and CEO of Mopar, Chrysler Group LLC's service, parts and customer-care brand, was present for a special on-track reveal for fans and to witness the Dodge Dart Pro Stock car live up to the hype of its much-anticipated debut.

Coughlin, the defending Pro Stock series champion, was out of the gate first with his Mopar/JEGS.com Dodge Dart, claiming the provisional No. 3 spot in the car's maiden run with a 6.484-second pass at 214.01 mph. He remained third after a second-round 6.486/214.62 mark, but made the quickest pass of the session and earned three bonus points. The 214.62 speed marked Coughlin's career fastest run, and was just short of the 214.69 national MPH record set by Erica Enders-Stevens earlier in qualifying.

"We had a fantastic unveiling before a great crowd, 99 percent of which hadn't yet seen the new Dodge Dart," said Coughlin, a five-time Pro Stock champion and two-time Gatornationals winner. "I was excited sitting in the car with the black car cover over top of it and to feel the emotion and the cheers coming from the stands as they pulled those covers off was really cool. It fired me up, and then after the run when I heard that I went 6.48 at over 214 mph I had a grin the width of Florida on my face.

"I was really happy for the team because they've had a really long couple of weeks. A lot of effort has gone into getting these cars ready and to follow up that first run with Allen and I topping the second session was a really strong statement. I think we've got two really good cars right now. All we need to do is fine tune them for tomorrow."

Johnson, the 2012 Pro Stock champ, was also on target with his new Magneti Marelli Quality Auto Parts Offered by Mopar Dodge Dart, ending the day just behind his teammate, in the No. 4 spot. Title winner at the recent NHRA Phoenix race, and also the defending Gatornationals event champ, Johnson posted a 6.505/213.98 to take the fifth position.

In his first race with "Magneti Marelli Quality Auto Parts Offered by Mopar" as his primary sponsor, Johnson moved up a spot in his second attempt with a 6.487/213.94, earning two bonus points with the second-quickest pass of the round. Current Pro Stock points leader V. Gaines placed his Mopar-powered Dodge seventh after two rounds with a best effort of 6.518/213.30. Matt Hartford was listed 15th in his Pro Stock Dodge heading into Saturday.

"If we had made the first run like we did the second run, we would have both definitely had a chance at setting the (speed) record," said Johnson, owner of J&J Racing, which provides the Mopar HEMI engines for both he and teammate Coughlin. "We can only hope that the conditions for Saturday are just as good or better to be able to get another shot at it. I'm very happy with the runs so far. They're very consistent; we just have to make the right calls."

The race premiere followed a media unveiling of the Dart at Two Tails Ranch near Gainesville on Thursday, with

Gorlier, Johnson, Coughlin, Team Mopar NHRA Funny Car driver Matt Hagan and Luke, an Asian elephant and resident of the ranch, participating. As part of the year-long celebration of the 50th anniversary of the GEN II 426 race HEMI, Mopar also revealed at the media event a special paint scheme on Hagan's Dodge Charger R/T that includes a tribute to the HEMI "Elephant", a nickname given to the legendary power plant. Hagan will run the scheme later this year at the Mopar Mile-High NHRA Nationals.

In the Funny Car class, Jack Beckman topped the four-car Don Schumacher Racing Mopar-powered Dodge Charger R/T attack, clocking a 4.108/275.96 to earn the preliminary No. 2 spot, with teammate Ron Capps fourth in his Dodge Charger R/T with a 4.121/302.14. Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T pilot and 2011 NHRA Funny Car champ Hagan was listed tenth after Friday's two qualifying rounds with a best run of 4.189/288.95, followed by fellow DSR Dodge driver and No. 13 provisional qualifier Tommy Johnson Jr. Blake Alexander and Jeff Arend were listed 14th and 16th, respectively, in their Dodge Charger R/Ts.

The first of two final Pro Stock qualifying sessions for the NHRA Gatornationals will begin on Saturday at noon, with Nitro qualifying set to start at 12:45 p.m. Two hours of NHRA Gatornationals qualifying coverage are scheduled to be televised on ESPN2 and ESPN2HD on Sunday beginning at 1 a.m. (EDT). Two hours of elimination rounds coverage will be broadcast on ESPN2 and ESPN2HD starting at 7 p.m. (EDT) on Sunday.

About Mopar Motorsports

Mopar's commitment to professional motorsports competition was established in the 1950s when a partnership ignited with drag racing pioneer Don Garlits, resulting in the breaking of numerous speed and performance barriers in HEMI®-powered vehicles over the next several decades. In 2014, Mopar celebrates the 50th anniversary of the introduction of the GEN III 426 Race HEMI® and looks to defend back-to-back NHRA World Championship titles (2012-2013) in the Pro Stock class and battle for another Funny Car World Championship after wins in 2011-2012. While Mopar remains involved in a various professional motorsports series, it continues to honour its roots by being a proud supporter of amateur racing within the NHRA with its sponsorship of the HEMI Challenge and Mopar Sportsman Cup.

Mopar Brand

Mopar (a simple contraction of the words Motor and PARTs) was trademarked in 1937 with the launch of an antifreeze product but truly made its mark in the 1960s during the muscle-car era. From Mopar Performance Parts to enhance speed and handling for both road and racing use, the brand soon expanded to include technical service and customer support.

Today, Mopar is FCA's service, parts and customer-care brand and distributes more than 500,000 parts and accessories in more than 130 markets, integrating service, parts and customer-care operations in order to enhance dealer and customer support worldwide. Mopar is the source for genuine parts and accessories for FCA brands.

Mopar parts are unique in that they are engineered with the same teams that create factory-authorized vehicle specifications for FCA vehicles – a direct connection that no other aftermarket parts company can provide. A complete list of Mopar accessories and performance parts is available at www.mopar.com.

Mopar-first Features

Mopar has introduced numerous industry-first features including:

- **Vehicle-information apps:** first to introduce smartphone vehicle-information applications, a new channel of communication with customers
- **Electronic owner manuals:** first to introduce traditional owner manuals in a DVD and brief user-guide format. First to offer complete vehicle-information kits in Spanish
- **Wi-Fi:** first to offer customers the ability to make their vehicle a wireless hot spot
- **Wireless charging:** first to introduce in-vehicle wireless charging for portable devices
- **Electronic Vehicle Tracking System (EVTS):** first to market with interactive vehicle tracking device that sends owner a text when vehicle is driven too fast or too far based on pre-set parameters
- **wiAdvisor:** first to provide factory-connected tablet technology in the service lane for instant vehicle

diagnosis

- **wiTech:** first to support vehicle diagnosis and software updates leveraging off-the-shelf personal computers and a dedicated wireless tool network
- **2011 Mopar Challenger Drag Pak:** first to introduce a 500-plus cubic-inch V-10 drag-race package car

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