

Contact: Tom Blattler
Darren Jacobs

Third Consecutive Semifinal Performance for Hagan and Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat in NHRA 'Countdown to the Championship' at Midwest Nationals

- Tony Stewart Racing (TSR) Funny Car driver Matt Hagan drove his Baja Vida Snacks Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car from the No. 4 qualifying position to a semifinal performance at the 11th annual National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Midwest Nationals near St. Louis, the third of six "Countdown to the Championship" playoff series events
- Hagan's third consecutive semifinal appearance in the playoffs keeps him third in the Funny Car championship hunt and within 103 points of category leader Robert Hight
- TSR pilot Leah Pruett qualified her Sparkling Ice +Caffeine Dodge//SRT dragster 11th for eliminations at the World Wide Technology Raceway for her 190th career Top Fuel start and ran her quickest pass of the weekend in a close first round elimination battle but came up short of advancing
- Funny Car driver Cruz Pedregon qualified sixth by recording the Snap-on Tools Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat's quickest speed of the season to date and then drove to the team's second quarterfinal appearance of the playoffs

October 2, 2022, Madison, Illinois - It was a third consecutive semifinal result for Tony Stewart Racing (TSR) driver Matt Hagan and his Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car in the National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) "Countdown to the Championship" at the 11th annual NHRA Midwest Nationals at World Wide Technology Raceway, the third of six playoff series events.

Hagan, last year's Funny Car event winner at the St. Louis area dragstrip, collected three bonus points in qualifying by recording the third best time on Friday, and then was second quickest in the final session with a best lap of 3.867 seconds at 335.48 mph to put the Baja Vida Snacks Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat fourth on the eliminations ladder.

An opening round win over No. 13 seed Jim Campbell set up a quarterfinal matchup with No. 5 qualifier Bob Tasca III, against whom Hagan earned his 20th round win at the NHRA Midwest Nationals, the most for any Funny Car at this event.

Hagan's opponent for the important semifinal showdown was Funny Car points leader Robert Hight, against whom the Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat had the advantage on the tree and maintained the lead to the halfway point, but while the two had a good side-by-side battle, Hagan (3.945/330.31) saw his opponent (3.913/327.59) slip past him to reach the stripe first.

Hagan's third consecutive semifinal appearance in the Countdown keeps him third in the hunt for the Funny Car championship crown, within 103 markers of the category leader and event winner Hight, and 57 points behind second place, Ron Capps, with three events remaining in the season.

TSR driver Leah Pruett came into the race weekend sporting the Sparkling Ice +Caffeine livery on the Dodge//SRT dragster for her 190th career Top Fuel start and with a good track record at the Midwest Nationals event after having advanced to the semifinals in three of her last four appearances (2018, 2019 and 2021) at the St. Louis area dragstrip. A best qualifying lap of 3.729 seconds at 329.18 mph put her 11th on the eliminations ladder and paired her with No. 6 seed Tony Schumacher for the opening round.

The two were nearly even on the launch and while Pruett battled next to Schumacher the length of the track and recorded her best pass of the weekend with a 3.716-second/327.03 mph run, it wasn't enough to beat her

competitor's 3.701 sec./332.02 mph lap to turn on win lights. While the team has shown steady improvement, it has not been reflected in their playoff results with three consecutive first round exits that have Pruett sitting in eleventh place in the Top Fuel playoff standings, 179 points behind category leader Justin Ashley.

Funny Car driver Cruz Pedregon debuted a new "Socket to Breast Cancer" livery for October on his Snap-on Tools Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat in support of the Pink Fund® in the U.S. and the Kelly Shires Foundation in Canada. Pedregon's best qualifying run of 3.897 seconds at 331.36 mph, the team's top speed of the season, put his HEMI®-powered machine in the top half of the eliminations ladder.

The sixth place qualifier had No. 11 seed Dale Creasy Jr. in the opposite lane for the opening round and while both battled tire smoke, Pedregon came out on top and advanced to his second quarterfinal elimination of the playoffs to meet up with No. 3 qualifier Capps. The pair had clean passes with Pedregon battling hard with a solid 3.938 sec./322.81 mph effort that ultimately wasn't quite enough to match his opponent's 3.927 sec./328.30 mph run. With the result, Pedregon maintains his ninth place standing in the Funny Car playoff rankings but sits 245 points behind the top spot.

After a one week break from playoff action, the fourth of six NHRA "Countdown to the Championship" events, Texas NHRA FallNationals at Texas Motorplex, will take place Oct. 13-16, near Dallas, Texas. FS1 will present qualifying highlights on Sunday, Oct. 16, at 10 a.m. ET with race day coverage beginning at 10:30 p.m. ET.

ADDITIONAL NOTES and QUOTES:

Leah Pruett, Sparkling Ice +Caffeine Dodge/SRT Top Fuel Dragster

(No. 11 Qualifier – 3.729 seconds at 329.18 mph)

Round 1: (0.066-second reaction time, 3.716-second elapsed time run at 327.03 mph) loss to No. 6 Tony Schumacher (0.061/3.701/332.02)

"Gaining momentum in the Countdown has got to be one the most challenging times of our season so far. Last week, we pushed our machine harder than we ever had from a mechanical tune-up aspect and believed coming into St. Louis that we would find the edge. During our three rounds of qualifying, our Sparkling Ice +Caffeine machine was starting to become more reactive to our pushes and gaining improved incremental times. We ultimately have not found a combination that works to qualify us lower in the field, which required .60s. We felt confident going into race day that we had a reliable racecar that we could push a lot harder with and so we did. Our big moves did make our car deliver big ET (elapsed time) improvements, as we improved our time to 3.71, but it wasn't enough to beat out the Sarge's (Tony Schumacher) 3.70. Our team's package would have beat all but one other car in the first round. We ultimately were on the non-winning side of a very tight drag race. We are living in real-time the strength of the fabric of this team's commitment to delivering a highly competitive car and have each other's back while doing it. I am so very proud of the quality of work my men put into this team, and we are closer than we have been since Seattle to showing out. You can see that by the caliber of runs our competition puts up against us, knowing we are right there."

Matt Hagan, Baja Vida Snack Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car

(No. 4 Qualifier – 3.867 seconds at 335.48 mph)

Round 1: (0.084-second reaction time, 4.121 seconds at 275.62 mph) defeats No. 13 Jim Campbell (0.127/5.336/137.15)

Round 2: (0.069/3.943/325.14) defeats No. 5 Bob Tasca III (0.047/3.968/327.51)

Round 3: (0.058/3.945/330.31) loss to No. 1 Robert Hight (0.079/3.913/327.59)

"We have a really great race car that is going down the race track. We were on the good side of a tight drag race with (Bob) Tasca III this morning. We seemed to come up a little short when running the points leader, Robert (Hight). We have to have those rounds to win. If we weren't trying hard, there would be reason to be mad, but we're all trying as hard as we can. I really believe in my team. At this point, we have to kind of wait for Robert to mess up, so that we can capitalize on that. We have to tip our hat to him because he's been running great all year. We are the same caliber of a team and capable of winning. Sometimes, it just has to be your day."

Cruz Pedregon, Pedregon Racing Snap-on® Tools Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat

(No. 6 Qualifier – 3.897 seconds at 331.36 mph)

Round 1: (0.099-second reaction time, 4.324 second elapsed time run at 249.49 mph) defeats No. 11 Dale Creasy Jr. (.087/5.805/122.38)

Round 2: (0.095/3.938/322.81) loss to No. 3 Ron Capps (0.066/3.927/328.30)

“All things considered, it was a good weekend for us. Yeah, we lost to Capps in the second round, but it was a good race. It could have gone either way, 3.92 to 3.93. We did drop a couple of cylinders near the finish line, which cost us, but it was a good close race. We obviously want to win these races and go to the semis and go more rounds. But, we did make a great qualifying effort at 3.89, right off the trailer at 331 mph, our top speed of the year, which is a great indication. We did bring in a consultant to our team, Lee Beard, who worked with the guys and I think we got a little bit of more speed out of the car. My guys are great and I believe in (crew chiefs) JC (JohnCollins) and Rip (Reynolds) and Ryan (Elliot), but I think bringing in Lee Beard, who's a Hall-of-Famer crew chief in his own right and that's been around a lot of years, is good for us. Overall I feel good about the Snap-on team and where we're headed. Obviously there's three events left to go and we just want to do better. Dallas is coming up and we'll be ready for that. I've won several times there in Dallas through the years, so I'd like to put another Wally on the mantle for that race.”

NHRA CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS STANDINGS:

Following the NHRA Midwest Nationals at World Wide Technology Raceway

FUNNY CAR (season wins in parentheses)

1. Robert Hight 2404 (8)
2. Ron Capps: 2358 (4)
- 3. Matt Hagan (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat): 2301 (3)**
4. John Force: 2290 (1)
5. Bob Tasca III: 2234(3)
6. Alexis DeJoria: 2187 (1)
7. J.R. Todd: 2185
8. Tim Wilkerson: 2175
- 9. Cruz Pedregon (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat): 2159**
10. Jim Campbell: 2085
11. Blake Alexander: 2064

TOP FUEL (season wins in parentheses)

1. Justin Ashley: 2305 (2)
2. Steve Torrence: 2291 (2)
3. Brittany Force: 2275 (4)
4. Mike Salinas: 2270(4)
5. Antron Brown 2262 (3)
6. Josh Hart: 2241 (1)
7. Doug Kalitta: 2217
8. Clay Millican: 2179
9. Shawn Langdon: 2162
10. Austin Prock: 2161 (1)
- 11. Leah Pruett (Dodge//SRT): 2126 (1)**
12. Tony Schumacher: 2118 (1)

@DodgeMoparMotorsports on Instagram

The [@DodgeMoparMotorsports](#) Instagram channel continues to share content capturing Dodge//SRT Mopar drivers on the track. Fans can see action from the NHRA Camping World Drag Racing Series and NHRA Sportsman grassroots racers, competing in classes such as Factory Stock Showdown, Stock and Super Stock, as well as additional motorsports series.

Dodge//SRT

For more than 100 years, the Dodge brand has carried on the spirit of brothers John and Horace Dodge. Their influence continues today as Dodge shifts into high gear with a lineup that delivers unrivaled performance in each of the segments in which the brand competes while moving forward to a future that includes electrified muscle in the form of the next-generation, all-new Dodge Charger.

The next-generation Dodge Charger electrifies a legend, with the Charger retaining its title as the world's quickest and most powerful muscle car led by the all-new, all-electric 2024 Dodge Charger Daytona Scat Pack. The all-new Dodge Charger will also offer performance choices via multi-energy powertrain options, including the 550-horsepower Dodge Charger SIXPACK H.O., powered by the 3.0L Twin Turbo Hurricane High Output engine.

Dodge also keeps its foot on the gas as a pure performance brand with the 710-horsepower Dodge Durango SRT Hellcat, the most powerful SUV ever, and best-in-class standard performance in the compact utility vehicle segment with the Dodge Hornet.

In 2022, the Dodge brand ranked No. 1 in the [J.D. Power APEAL Study](#) (mass market), making it the only domestic brand ever to do so three years in a row. In 2020, Dodge was named the "[#1 Brand in Initial Quality](#)," making it the first domestic brand ever to rank No. 1 in the J.D. Power Initial Quality Study (IQS).

Fans can follow all the NHRA action this season at [DodgeGarage](#), the one-stop portal for Dodge//SRT and Mopar drag-racing news, including daily updates and access to an online racing HQ, news, events, galleries, available downloads and merchandise. Dodge is part of the portfolio of brands offered by leading global automaker and mobility provider [Stellantis](#) (NYSE: STLA).

Mopar

Mopar is the global name for Stellantis genuine parts and authentic accessories.

A simple combination of the words MOtor and PARts, Mopar offers exceptional service, parts and customer-care. Born in 1937 as the name of a line of antifreeze products, Mopar has evolved over more than 85 years to represent both complete vehicle care and authentic performance for owners and enthusiasts worldwide.

Mopar made its mark in the 1960s during the muscle-car era with performance parts to enhance speed and handling for both on-road and racing use. Later, Mopar expanded to include technical service and customer support, and today integrates service, parts and customer-care operations in order to enhance customer and dealer support worldwide.

Complete information on Mopar is available at www.mopar.com and the newly redesigned Mopar blog at www.blog.mopar.com.

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