

Hagan Runs Mopar Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car to First Ever Final-round Appearance at Indy

Pritchett Takes First Win, Sets Class Records in Factory Stock Showdown

- Matt Hagan becomes first driver to take new Mopar Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car body to final-round appearance at NHRA U.S. Nationals
- Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) driver Hagan advances to sixth final round of 2018 at Lucas Oil Raceway at Indianapolis, 53rd of his career
- Top Fuel driver Leah Pritchett pulls double duty, earns first career Factory Stock Showdown win in Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Pak
- Pritchett sets elapsed time and speed records in Factory Stock Showdown en route to earning pole
- Pritchett defeats DSR teammate Mark Pawuk in second straight all-Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Pak final in the class
- Dennis Steward seizes Super Stock win in Mopar-powered Plymouth Savoy
- Steward, Larry Hill earn Dodge Top Finisher honors in Super Stock and Stock
- Dodge Garage (<http://www.dodgegarage.com/>), a digital content hub for muscle car and race enthusiasts, features highlights from NHRA season

September 3, 2018, Auburn Hills, Mich. - Matt Hagan raced the new Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat NHRA Funny Car to its first ever final-round appearance at the 64th annual NHRA U.S. Nationals, while Leah Pritchett claimed her first Factory Stock Showdown victory and the third consecutive win for a Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Pak driver in the class.

Hagan led the way for the Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) four-team Funny Car squad in the new Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car body, which he recently debuted in late July at the Dodge Mile-High NHRA Nationals. Hagan earned the No. 3 starting spot and the 2016 event winner at Indy began race day by defeating Jonnie Lindberg in a challenging run that saw Hagan deftly manage traction and engine issues to lock down the round win. Matched up against points leader Courtney Force in the quarterfinals, both drivers hazed the tires near halftrack with Hagan once again using his driving skills to pedal his car to the finish line for his 330th round win.

In the semifinals, three-time 2018 race winner Hagan recorded his best run of the day, a 4.129-second elapsed time at 298.60 mph, to knock off Shawn Langdon and advance to his sixth final round of the year and 53rd of his career. Lacking lane choice in the final against J.R. Todd, Hagan was first off the starting line but Todd soon pulled ahead, and Hagan's solid 4.141/300.60 run wasn't enough to close the gap. Hagan will start second when the six-race NHRA Countdown to the Championship playoffs begin at the next race, the Dodge NHRA Nationals in Pennsylvania.

Complete domination best describes the performance by Pritchett and her fellow Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Pak drivers in the NHRA Factory Stock Showdown class, with Pritchett going wire-to-wire and notching the quickest pass in every single round for the entire weekend, from qualifying through to the final. Pritchett, once again pulling double duty in Top Fuel and Factory Stock Showdown, set records for elapsed time and speed with an 8.002/172.56 run to claim her second career pole in the class.

After sweeping the top four spots in qualifying at the Factory Stock Showdown event in Norwalk, Ohio, in late June, Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Pak drivers took three of the top four spots at Indy. In addition to Pritchett, her DSR teammate Mark Pawuk qualified No. 2 for the second straight event, and 2012 Pro Stock champion Allen Johnson captured the No. 4 starting position.

Pritchett kept the hammer down in eliminations, posting the quickest passes of all competitors in each of the first three rounds — an opening 8.111/170.04 to defeat Aaron Stanfield, a run of 8.077/170.73 to take out Kevin Skinner and an 8.119/169.74 mark in the semifinals to chase down Stephen Bell. In the all-Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Pak final, Pritchett powered past Pawuk on an 8.108/170.26 pass to claim her first Factory Stock win in her first final-round appearance in the class. The all-DSR final also came as the DSR organization celebrated its milestone 20th anniversary at the 2018 Indianapolis event.

Pawuk believed his chance at a U.S. Nationals win was over after apparently losing to Joe Welch in the opening round, but his opponent was later disqualified by the NHRA, moving Pawuk on to round two. The driver nicknamed “The Cowboy” got by Leonard Libersher and then trailered Arthur Kohn in the semifinals with an 8.235/167.28 run to set up his final-round battle with Pritchett and his second straight runner-up finish.

Armed with the confidence boost of a runner-up finish at the most recent event and an impressive performance throughout all three days of qualifying, Tommy Johnson Jr. looked primed to go rounds in his Riley Dodge Charger R/T. Johnson faced teammate Ron Capps in the opening round, moved first and led the entirety of the 1,000-foot stretch, despite dropping cylinders down track. Johnson prevailed in the quarterfinals over Tim Wilkerson, earning another round win in the Riley car, a once-a-year tribute to the local children’s hospital at DSR’s hometown event. Against Todd, Johnson held on to the initial lead until just before halftrack when Todd pulled ahead and took the win, ending Johnson’s day at the semis. The veteran will head into the playoffs in seventh.

Infinite Hero Foundation driver Jack Beckman, winner at the recent NHRA Brainerd race, qualified No. 11 in his switch to the new Mopar Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car body, which his DSR teammate Hagan first debuted back in July. The 2012 NHRA Funny Car champion and 2015 U.S. Nationals event winner drew Courtney Force in round one. Beckman was quicker off the line with a .062 reaction time to his opponent’s .077 mark and had his Hellcat ahead early in the run, but his hopes would go up in tire smoke as Force sped away to claim the round win. “Fast” Jack will begin the Countdown playoffs from the sixth position.

Mopar Dodge Top Fuel driver and Avon, Indiana, resident Pritchett was able to get one of the two wins she was dreaming of at her home track. Pritchett posted her Top Fuel dragster No. 6 in qualifying and in the top half of the field. The two-time Top Fuel event winner this year was matched up against Doug Kalitta in the opening round, but Pritchett’s dragster smoked the tires at about the 330-ft. mark on the track and dashed any hopes to double up at Indy. She’ll seek her first Top Fuel championship starting from the fourth spot in the playoffs.

There are only two tracks on the current 24-race NHRA tour where Mopar-powered DSR Dodge Charger Funny Car driver Capps has yet to claim victory – the recently reinstated Virginia Motorsports Park and Lucas Oil Raceway in Indianapolis. Runner-up at the 2017 U.S. Nationals, Capps qualified No. 13 in the bottom half of the field and faced DSR teammate Johnson in the opening round. Capps lost traction early in the run and fell to his stablemate, keeping a win at Indy as one of the few items left on his racing bucket list. The 2016 Funny Car champ will begin his 2018 Funny Car title campaign from the No. 4 spot.

U.S. Army Top Fuel driver Tony Schumacher — owner of an amazing 83.3 percent win average at the U.S. Nationals — began his bid to add to his record 10 wins at Indy from the No. 7 spot. Schumacher’s Mopar-powered dragster was in the hunt until he experienced tire smoke, allowing opponent Billy Torrence to claim the win. Schumacher will enter the six-race playoff for the 2018 Top Fuel title seeded third.

Mopar Dodge/SRT NHRA Sportsman Spotlight

Dennis Steward of Port Orange, Florida, raced his 1964 FGT/L Plymouth Savoy to his first NHRA U.S Nationals victory in the Super Stock class. Steward drove through seven rounds of intense competition in his Plymouth that had a Mopar 360 Drag Pak engine combination under the hood. Steward also earned the Dodge Top Finisher award in Super Stock with the win.

In Stock Eliminator, Larry Hill of Hickory, Kentucky, drove his 1970 B/SA Plymouth ‘Cuda to the semifinals and the Dodge Top Finisher award in the class. Powered by a Mopar 440 Six Pack, Hill had a heads-up race in the semis that he narrowly lost by a mere 0.0162 seconds (approximately 3 feet) to his opponent.

The Dodge Top Finisher award, now in its second year, awards \$500 to Stock Eliminator and Super Stock drivers who advance the furthest behind the wheel of a Mopar-powered Dodge, Chrysler, or Plymouth race car at all 24 NHRA national events.

Mopar Dodge//SRT NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series: Notes & Quotes

Matt Hagan, Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car

(No. 3 Qualifier – 3.943 ET)

Rd.1: (.091-second reaction time, 4.401 seconds at 217.56 mph) beat No. 14 Jonnie Lindberg (.086/9.208/80.50)

Rd.2: (.060/4.397/219.58) beat No. 6 Courtney Force (.058/4.557/219.15)

Rd.3: (.064/4.129/298.60) beat No. 7 Shawn Langdon (.055/4.148/307.16)

Rd.4: (.052/4.141/300.60) lost to No. 1 J.R. Todd (.059/4.062/311.70)

"We're going into the Countdown with some good points and a good lead on some of the heavy hitters. All we can focus on now is these next six races coming up. We all want to do the best job we can and want nothing more than to put this new Hellcat body in the winner's circle, and I feel like we're going to do it two or three times in the Countdown, it's just a matter of time. The Countdown is always tough. You've got to figure out how to just enjoy the ride. We're going to make opportunities for ourselves, capitalize on them, and hopefully turn that into win lights on race day."

Leah Pritchett, Factory Stock Showdown Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Pak

(No. 1 Qualifier – 8.002 ET)

Rd.1: (.071-second reaction time, 8.111 seconds at 170.04 mph) beat No. 9 Aaron Stanfield (.058/8.171/167.38)

Rd.2: (.026/8.077/170.73) beat No. 5 Kevin Skinner (.111/9.409/107.61)

Rd.3: (.077/8.119/169.74) beat No. 7 Stephen Bell (.053/8.593/166.23)

Rd.4: (.050/8.108/170.26) beat No. 2 Mark Pawuk (.027/8.191/167.51)

"That's what we call a picture-perfect weekend over here on the left side of the racetrack. Absolutely overwhelmed and impressed. The developmental work by Mopar and Dodge to not only be fast, but to make more power than anybody else, to stick it to the ground and do it time and time again, reliably, is so impressive. For one, I love having fun when I race and this is the epitome of having fun and racing. Tuning to the track and constantly always working on being faster, and to be low of every single session of the U.S. Nationals, that's eight rounds. When I say that, I mean legally and officially, not to be contested. It is a testament to this team – Kevin Helms, Terry Snyder and all of DSR and the people back in Detroit. The expectations are high. Don Schumacher wants us to be No. 1 qualifier, low of every round and win the race and there's no better time to do that than the U.S. Nationals. We know how to do it now, we're not going to let that get too far ahead of us. The season is coming to a close and we are going to make a run at this as hard and fast as possible just like these Drag Paks do."

Leah Pritchett, Mopar Dodge Top Fuel Dragster

(No. 6 Qualifier – 3.797 ET)

Rd.1: (.084-second reaction time, 5.580 seconds at 125.12 mph) lost to No. 11 Doug Kalitta (.067/3.888/273.44)

"We started the weekend rising to the occasion by putting that lap on the board Friday night, but the rest of the qualifying sessions were a challenge. We had confidence coming into today after putting in a new clutch package for last night's final qualifying run. Unfortunately, against Doug (Kalitta), it just wasn't quite enough. It's something that we thought we had a grasp on, but obviously we aren't quite there yet. It's frustrating for the crew chiefs right now. We were all hoping that we were making a change for the better, but it's something we are going to have to figure out quickly with the Countdown starting. Yeah, Indy has kicked our butt again, but that's okay because the Countdown is definitely where this team is going to shine."

Tommy Johnson Jr., Riley Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car

(No. 4 Qualifier – 3.948 ET)

Rd.1: (.048-second reaction time, 4.105 seconds at 255.58 mph) beat No. 13 Ron Capps (.067/4.894/170.77)
Rd.2: (.065/4.085/295.34) beat No. 5 Tim Wilkerson (.075/4.115/305.08)
Rd.3: (.060/4.130/278.98) lost to No. 1 Mike Salinas (.048/4.045/312.21)

“We had a really good car; a really good showing at Indy. We came up a round and a half short, but we’re really pleased with the way our car is running. We’re continuing the performance we’ve had the last few races and it’s a really great way to go into the Countdown. We’ll be a car to contend with. Would’ve loved to win Indy for Riley and all of the kids, but now we’re going to focus on winning the championship.”

Jack Beckman, Infinite Hero Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car

(No. 11 Qualifier – 4.018 ET)

Rd.1: (.062-second reaction time, 5.089 seconds at 156.50 mph) lost to No. 6 Courtney Force (.077/4.095/308.35)

“It’s never easy losing, but it’s much tougher losing first round because you leave here beating nobody. We didn’t qualify in the top half so we didn’t have lane choice today, but you can’t make excuses. You need to be able to win no matter which lane you’re in and we didn’t get it done. The hope is we learned something that’s going to help us in the Countdown. We lost in the biggest race of the year and now we’ll reset the points and go into the Countdown and run for a world championship. So from this point on it’s not about the trophy, it’s about round wins and points. We’re going to have to step on it during qualifying and go after all the bonus points that are possible and be nearly flawless on race day. “

Ron Capps, NAPA Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car

(No. 13 Qualifier – 4.095 ET)

Rd.1: (.067-second reaction time, 4.894 seconds at 170.77 mph) lost to No. 4 Tommy Johnson Jr. (.048/4.105/255.58)

“Once again, we’ll have to look at winning the U.S. Nationals next year, but big picture is, we’re going to get ready for the Countdown. The points will reset. I always brag about this NAPA team and how we’re always in the talks for a championship, and we’re going to go to Maple Grove in two weeks and have our game face on.”

Tony Schumacher, U.S. Army Top Fuel Dragster

(No. 7 Qualifier – 3.801 ET)

Rd.1: (.089-second reaction time, 4.203 seconds at 256.55 mph) lost to No. 10 Billy Torrance (.067/3.831/320.05)

“What a way to end a frustrating weekend. This is Indy and you want to come out and be your best every day here. Especially today when everything was on the line. We have a fast race car, but just never got a handle of it this weekend. That’s tough, because we had good results last week here testing. This place has been so special to me and the U.S. Army for the last 18 years. We certainly had a different outcome in mind for this weekend, but it doesn’t always work out the way you want it to. We’re sitting third heading into the Countdown and we earned that spot. It’s almost a clean slate from here on. It’s about the team that can finish now. Six races to decide it all. That’s starts in Reading in two weeks and we’ll be ready.”

Up Next: Dodge NHRA Nationals

Next on the calendar for the Mopar and Dodge//SRT squad is the Dodge NHRA Nationals, scheduled for September 13-16 at Maple Grove Raceway in Mohnton, Pa. Last year Ron Capps took the win in Funny Car at the event. This is the third year for the Dodge sponsorship at Maple Grove and will be the kickoff event of the NHRA Countdown to Championship six-race playoff. On Thursday, September 13, the popular Mopar Mega Block Party will jump start race weekend.

Dodge Garage: Digital Hub for Drag Racing News

Fans can catch NHRA coverage at [Dodge Garage](#), the one-stop destination for Mopar and Dodge//SRT drag racing

news.

The site includes daily updates and access to an online racing HQ, news, events, galleries, available downloads and merchandise. Dodge Garage features include exclusive content, such as the “Chasing the Title” video series, which offers fans a unique, behind-the-scenes glimpse at DSR drivers and teams in action on and off the track.

For information on Mopar on and off the track, check out the Mopar brand's official blog, <http://blog.mopar.com>.

2018 NHRA Championship — Point Standings After Round 18 of 24

(Season Wins in Parentheses)

NHRA Funny Car

1. Courtney Force — 1457
2. **Matt Hagan, Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat (3) — 1247**
3. Robert Hight — 1241
4. **Ron Capps, Dodge Charger R/T (2) — 1227**
5. J.R. Todd — 1174
6. **Jack Beckman, Dodge Charger R/T (2) — 1161**
7. **Tommy Johnson Jr., Dodge Charger R/T — 1107**
8. Shawn Langdon — 907
9. John Force — 904
10. Tim Wilkerson — 831

NHRA Top Fuel

1. Steve Torrence — 1422
2. Clay Millican — 1234
3. **Tony Schumacher, Mopar Dodge HEMI (1) — 1195**
4. **Leah Pritchett, Mopar Dodge HEMI (2) — 1170**
5. Doug Kalitta — 1166
6. Antron Brown — 1112
7. Terry McMillen — 959
8. Brittany Force — 839
9. Mike Salinas — 768
10. Scott Palmer — 755

About Dodge//SRT

Dodge//SRT offers a complete lineup of performance vehicles that stand out in their own segments. Dodge is America's mainstream performance brand and SRT is positioned as the ultimate performance halo of the Dodge brand, together creating a complete and balanced performance brand with one vision and one voice.

For more than 100 years, the Dodge brand has carried on the spirit of brothers John and Horace Dodge, who founded the brand in 1914. Their influence continues today. New for 2019, the Dodge Challenger SRT Hellcat Redeye is possessed by the Demon. Its 797-horsepower supercharged HEMI® high-output engine makes it the most powerful, quickest and fastest muscle car reaching 0-60 miles per hour (mph) in 3.4 seconds and the fastest GT production car with a ¼-mile elapsed time (ET) of 10.8 seconds at 131 mph. It also reaches a new top speed of 203 mph. Joining the Challenger SRT Hellcat Redeye is the 2019 Dodge Challenger SRT Hellcat with its more powerful 717-horsepower engine, the Challenger R/T Scat Pack Widebody, which features fender flares from the SRT Hellcat Widebody and adds 3.5 inches of width to Scat Pack's footprint, as well as and the new Challenger R/T Scat Pack 1320. Infused with exclusive drag strip technology from the iconic Dodge Challenger SRT Demon, the Challenger R/T Scat Pack 1320 is a drag-oriented, street-legal muscle car and a blank canvas for the serious grassroots drag racer. The 2019 Dodge Durango SRT, America's fastest, most powerful and most capable three-row SUV with a best-in-class tow rating of 8,700 lbs. fills out the brands' performance lineup. These visceral performance models join a 2019 brand lineup that includes the Durango, Grand Caravan, Journey, Charger and Challenger — a showroom that offers performance at every price point.

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 Mopar blog at www.blog.mopar.com. For more information regarding Stellantis (NYSE: STLA), please visit www.stellantis.com.

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