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Hagan Wins All-Mopar Dodge//SRT Final Showdown to Restart 2020 NHRA Season and Keeps Victory Streak Alive

- Matt Hagan drives Mopar Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat to victory over Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) teammate and No. 1 qualifier Tommy Johnson Jr.'s MD Anderson Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat in Funny Car finals at E3 Spark Plugs NHRA Nationals to restart 2020 NHRA season
- Hagan posts third consecutive national event title for a Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat this 2020 NHRA season following wins by Jack Beckman at Pomona, California, and Johnson at Phoenix, Arizona, and the sixth straight for a HEMI®-powered Funny Car since October 2019
- Three DSR Dodge Charger SRT Hellcats with wins this year are atop Funny Car points standings with Beckman leading the charge over Johnson and Hagan
- DSR's Leah Pruett and her Mopar Dodge//SRT Dragster make a quarterfinal appearance to maintain a top-five position in the Top Fuel points standings

July 12, 2020, Brownsburg, Ind. - An all-Mopar Dodge//SRT Funny Car final elimination showdown at the E3 Spark Plugs NHRA Nationals was good proof that even a four-month pause in National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Mello Yello Drag Racing Series competition couldn't stymie the drive to battle for wins as Matt Hagan's victory over Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) teammate Tommy Johnson Jr. gave the team its third consecutive national title of the 2020 season.

From a sixth-seeded position, Hagan drove his Mopar Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat to the winner's circle for the first time this year, giving him his third Wally in six nationals events dating back to October 2019 when he won both the AAA Texas NHRA FallNationals in Dallas and the Dodge NHRA Nationals presented by Pennzoil in Las Vegas. DSR teammate Jack Beckman's wins in the 2019 season finale and 2020 season opening races at Pomona, California, along with Johnson's win at the Arizona Nationals, means that a DSR Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat has earned a national title at each of the last six events.

Hagan was consistent with both his reaction times and runs to quickly dispose of Daniel Wilkerson, Beckman and Tim Wilkerson. That set up an all-Mopar final showdown against No. 1 qualifier Johnson, who was also making his second consecutive final round appearance. Johnson made it to his 54th final round by knocking off teammate Ron Capps, Blake Alexander and J.R. Todd. The two DSR teammates had previously met twice in final elimination round match-ups, with Hagan emerging as the winner in both.

Hagan's powerhouse had the early advantage and enough of a lead over Johnson to earn a decisive win, the 34th of his career, even when his engine let go right at the finish to set off a few of its own fireworks. On the strength of his victory and two top qualifier awards to start the season, Hagan and his Mopar Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat move up into third place in the Funny Car championship points standings.

Meanwhile, following a No. 3 qualifying effort, Beckman was able to keep his lead in the Funny Car points standings by driving his Infinite Hero Foundation Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat away from Mike McIntire in the first round, straight into a quarterfinal showdown with DSR teammate Hagan. While the loss to the eventual winner was disappointing, Beckman is two markers ahead of runner-up Johnson and 40 points from Hagan, with each driver boasting a win this season.

For his part, Capps had a tough restart to the season, qualifying 16th to face teammate Johnson, who was still riding the momentum from his win at the last-contested NHRA event in February and a No.1 qualifying position earned on

Saturday. Capps laid down a solid 3.956 E.T., the second-quickest run of the entire first session except that it was against the only car to run better, as Johnson posted a 3.896 to move on. While they didn't walk away with the round win, Capps and the NAPA team are bolstered by the fact that they have their car back and know they're capable of running big numbers.

In Top Fuel competition, a 10th place qualifying position on the eliminations ladder saw Leah Pruett's opening round pairing pitting her against seventh-seeded DSR teammate Tony Schumacher, the winningest Top Fuel driver in NHRA history, making a cameo appearance for the back-to-back Indianapolis race events. Pruett had the starting line advantage and never looked back to move on to a quarterfinal match-up and lane choice over current points leader Doug Kalitta.

Once again, the Mopar Top Fuel Dragster was quick on the tree and held the lead on Kalitta through to half-track, but a close side-by-side race to the finish with just a 0.0044 -second difference saw Pruett edged by her opponent at the stripe to end her day a little sooner than she had hoped.

Qualified 12th for the first of his two-event "comeback tour" with DSR, Cory McClenathan didn't even get a chance to challenge for a win light when an issue kept his car in neutral and from staging the car for the start, but he'll look another shot to battle for a 35th career Top Fuel win next weekend.

Mopar Dodge//SRT and DSR will return to Lucas Oil Raceway in just a few days for the Lucas Oil NHRA Summernationals, the second of two consecutive Indianapolis-based meets on July 18-19, as part of the updated 2020 NHRA schedule.

NOTES and QUOTES:

Jack Beckman, Infinite Hero Foundation Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car
(No. 3 Qualifier – 4.050 seconds at 298.47 mph)
Round 1: (0.079-second reaction time, 4.099 seconds at 250.60 mph) beat No. 4 Mike McIntire (0.103/4.506/203.55)
Round 2: (0.069/3.969/316.90) loss to No. 6 Matt Hagan (0.080/3.949/321.19)

"That was the first time we made it to the lights under power in six runs this weekend. We have been having an issue with down track tire spin and we obviously remedied that. The crazy thing is we ran second low ET of the meet by backing the car down and that tells us what we need to do for next weekend. It's upsetting to lose, but with a new front half on this car the silver lining is we have a good baseline tune-up for next weekend and I think we're going to be a favorite when we roll back up for Q1."

Matt Hagan, Mopar Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car
(No. 6 Qualifier – 4.090 seconds at 289.07 mph)
Round 1: (0.072-second reaction time, 4.025 seconds at 315.27) beat No.11 Daniel Wilkerson (0.097/4.238/249.44)
Round 2: (0.080/3.949/321.19) beat No. 3 Jack Beckman (0.069/3.969/316.90)
Round 3: (0.078/3.959/322.34) beat No. 10 Tim Wilkerson (0.081/4.349/211.43)
Round 4: (0.044/4.328/215.00) beat No. 1 Tommy Johnson Jr. (0.066/5.854/117.84)

"It was a big change going from super cool conditions and being able to run really hard, and then watching (crew chief) Dickie Venables make the adjustments when it's a 140-degree race track and different things like that. Really proud of Dickie, (assistant crew chief) Mike Knudsen, Alex Conway and all my guys that are wrenching on the car to make these adjustments.

"My guys put a great race car underneath me. We kept lane choice all day long and to be able to make those calls and to go out there and run hard in this heat is really telling. Tommy Johnson, he really had the car to beat this weekend. He rolled out of the box really strong. That whole team over there, they're going to be tough for us all year long. I'm just really proud and excited to be a part of NHRA that's bringing it out here with the fans. We're back out here and we've got this race underneath us to show people that we can do this and do it right. People are taking the necessary precautions and making sure we're staying safe. It's just really nice to be back into drag racing and to be able to hold up the Wally again."

Tommy Johnson Jr., MD Anderson Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car

(No. 1 Qualifier – 3.983 seconds at 317.72 mph)

Round 1: (0.068-second reaction time, 3.896 seconds at 324.90 mph) beat No.16 Ron Capps (0.073 /3.956/294.24)
Round 2: (0.241/3.963/318.32) beat No. 9 Blake Alexander (no time)
Round 3: (0.070/3.959/319.29) beat No.4 J.R. Todd (0.059/9.211/77.50)
Round 4: (0.066/5.854/117.84) loss to No. 6 Matt Hagan (0.044/4.328/215.00)

"I'm kind of disappointed but it's hard to be disappointed when you go to the final round and get a No. 1 qualifier. We have a great car just like we did at Phoenix. Out of nowhere it put a cylinder out and (crew chief) John (Collins) did the right thing by trying to shut me off and just after he did that I watched Matt (Hagan) blow up and I think I could have been him on seven. It's probably the right decision to not risk hurting parts. It's still a great weekend and we have such a solid race car and with a shortened season and no Countdown being near the top of the points is the most important thing."

Ron Capps, NAPA Auto Parts Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car

(No. 16 Qualifier – 4.555 seconds at 184.70 mph)

Round 1: (0.073-second reaction time, 3.956 seconds at 294.24 mph) lost to No.1 Tommy Johnson Jr. (0.068/3.896/324.90)

"We didn't qualify where we wanted to but I always brag about our NAPA team that we can win from any starting position. My friend and former teammate Larry Dixon texted me yesterday and said you have a much better chance winning from the 16th position than the 17th. We just went up there and did what we do. (Rahn) Tobler did a great job reading the race track without lane choice. I don't think that mattered. We had to go up and race John Collins, who we know well, and Tommy Johnson is as good as it gets in the driver's seat. At that point we were second quickest of the round and I shut it off a little early because Tommy was ahead of me. I'm very happy with how the weekend finished after that run, unfortunately we just put ourselves in a bad position with qualifying and we just can't do that. That's not our MO. I'm very excited about next weekend."

Leah Pruett, Mopar Dodge//SRT Top Fuel Dragster

(No. 10 Qualifier – 3.934 seconds at 306.33 mph)

Round 1: (0.051-second reaction time, 3.817 seconds at 262.03 mph) beat No. 7 Tony Schumacher (0.081/4.108/253.14)
Round 2: (0.047/3.813/319.14) lost to No. 2 Doug Kalitta (0.053/3.803/321.58)

"It was an early start but we were more than ready. Racing Tony (Schumacher) isn't ideal. Tony had traction issues and we had the (blower) belt release which is one of the worst feelings as a driver. You're ahead, you're going, you're making power and all of a sudden you're coasting and I hear Tony pedal and you're thinking 'oh my god, just make it.' It felt great to get the win light and we brought everything we had against Doug Kalitta in a heavy-hitter matchup and it was one of the closest races we've had in a long time. What that shows is that this Mopar/Pennzoil team hasn't skipped a beat. We're as strong as we've ever been and we'll keep progressing and come back here next weekend with a solid foundation for both cars with Cory (McClenathan) and me and go after that Wally.

NHRA Championship Points Standings (After three of 18 National events):

FUNNY CAR (season wins in parentheses)

1. **Jack Beckman (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 278 (1)**
2. **Tommy Johnson Jr. (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 276 (1)**
3. **Matt Hagan (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 238 (1)**
4. Tim Wilkerson – 179
5. John Force – 173
6. **Ron Capps (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 159**
7. Alexis DeJoria – 154
8. Bob Tasca III – 149
9. J.R. Todd – 141
10. Robert Hight – 100

TOP FUEL (season wins in parentheses)

1. Doug Kalitta – 310 (1)
2. Steve Torrance – 199 (1)
3. Billy Torrance – 190 (1)
4. **Leah Pruett (Mopar Dodge//SRT) – 189**
5. Antron Brown – 174
6. Brittany Force – 153
7. Shawn Langdon – 144
8. Clay Millican – 142
9. Justin Ashley – 140
10. Austin Prock – 131

DodgeGarage: Digital Hub for Drag Racing News

Fans can follow all the NHRA's action this season at DodgeGarage, the one-stop portal for Dodge//SRT and Mopar drag-racing news. The site includes daily updates and access to an online racing HQ, news, events, galleries, available downloads, and merchandise. For more information, visit www.dodgegarage.com.

@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 Mello Yello 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.

Official Driving School of Dodge//SRT

Dodge is the official sponsor of the Bondurant School of High Performance Driving in Chandler, Arizona, where guests get behind the wheels of the fastest street-legal cars in the world with professional instruction and time on the track. Customers who buy a new SRT model receive one full-day session as part of the Dodge//SRT Package and have the opportunity to learn how to get the optimum performance from their new vehicles in a controlled environment. For more information, visit dodgegarage.com/track-experience.

Mopar

Mopar (a simple contraction of the words MOtor and PARts) is the service, parts and customer-care brand for FCA vehicles around the globe. Born in 1937 as the name of a line of antifreeze products, the Mopar brand has evolved over more than 80 years to represent both complete care and authentic performance for owners and enthusiasts worldwide.

Mopar made its mark in the 1960s during the muscle-car era, with Mopar Performance Parts to enhance speed and handling for both road and racing use, and expanded to include technical service and customer support. Today, the Mopar brand's global reach distributes more than 500,000 parts and accessories in more than 150 markets. With more than 50 parts distribution centers and 25 customer-contact centers globally, Mopar integrates service, parts and customer-care operations in order to enhance customer and dealer support worldwide.

Complete information on the Mopar brand is available at www.mopar.com. Mopar is part of the portfolio of brands offered by global automaker Fiat Chrysler Automobiles. For more information regarding FCA (NYSE: FCAU/ MTA: FCA), please visit www.fcagroup.com.

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 muscle cars and SUVs that deliver unrivaled performance in each of the segments where they compete.

2021 marks the year that Dodge is distilled into a pure performance brand, offering Hellcat-powered, 700+ horsepower SRT versions of every model across the lineup. For the 2021 model year, Dodge delivers the drag-strip

dominating 807-horsepower Dodge Challenger SRT Super Stock, the new 797-horsepower Dodge Charger SRT Redeye, the most powerful and fastest mass-produced sedan in the world, and the new 710-horsepower Dodge Durango SRT Hellcat, the most powerful SUV ever. Combined, these three muscle cars make Dodge the industry's most powerful brand, offering more horsepower than any other American brand across its entire lineup.

In June 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). Dodge is part of the portfolio of brands offered by global automaker Fiat Chrysler Automobiles. For more information regarding FCA (NYSE: FCAU/ MTA: FCA), please visit www.fcagroup.com.

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