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Hagan Clinches Second Career NHRA Funny Crown, Races Mopar Express Lane Dodge to NHRA Finals Win

- Team Mopar driver Matt Hagan adds second NHRA Funny Car title to go along with his 2011 championship
- Hagan's crown is the fifth NHRA Pro Class championship in the last four years for the Mopar and Dodge brands
- The Don Schumacher Racing driver earns his second consecutive NHRA Finals victory and a 14th career win
- Tommy Johnson Jr. ends the NHRA Countdown to the Championship playoffs No. 3, putting two Mopar Dodge Funny Cars in the top three spots
- 2013 NHRA Pro Stock champ Jeg Coughlin Jr. ends his season with a semifinals appearance at Pomona and fifth place finish in the Countdown
- Allen Johnson exits early in his Magneti Marelli/Mopar Dodge Dart, finishes sixth in the final Pro Stock standings

November 16, 2014, Pomona, California - The 2014 NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series season finished just as it started for Matt Hagan, with the Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car driver meeting rival John Force in a final-round battle at Auto Club Raceway at Pomona — except this time the twist was a storybook ending for the Team Mopar star. Hagan exacted revenge for his NHRA Winternationals loss to Force back in February by claiming victory at the 50th annual Auto Club NHRA Finals and putting the cherry on top of a day in which he clinched the coveted 2014 NHRA Funny Car crown, the second of his career.

Hagan's championship is the fifth in the last four years for the Mopar and Dodge brands, following his 2011 Funny Car title, teammate Jack Beckman's 2012 crown, and back-to-back NHRA Pro Stock championships by Allen Johnson (2012) and Jeg Coughlin Jr. (2013). The Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) driver's Pomona triumph marks his second consecutive at the season-ending NHRA Finals and the 14th overall Funny Car victory of his career in 30 final-round appearances. Hagan ends 2014 with four victories on the season; Mopar-powered Dodge Charger R/T drivers combined to collect a total of seven wins.

With the new 2015 Mopar Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car set to make its debut at the NHRA Winternationals in February, the DSR team's current model Charger goes out on top with three NHRA Funny Car World Championships and a total of 69 NHRA Funny Car national event victories.

"Congratulations to Matt Hagan and Don Schumacher Racing from everyone at Mopar on the well-deserved NHRA Championship win," said Pietro Gorlier, President and CEO of Mopar, Chrysler Group LLC's service, parts and customer-care brand. "To win the Funny Car crown and the season finale is a wonderful way to finish off our year-long celebration of the 50-year legacy of the 426 HEMI engine. We are very proud of the team's accomplishments and appreciate their hard work to give Mopar a fifth NHRA championship in the last four seasons."

Hagan, the No. 6 qualifier, watched from the cockpit as Force, in the pair ahead, won his own first-round match to pull closer in the title chase. Hagan answered the bell and advanced to the quarterfinals, posting the quickest pass of the round, 4.015/320.05, to eliminate Chad Head (5.083/167.63). Waiting in the second round was Hagan's DSR Dodge teammate, Ron Capps. After once again watching Force apply pressure by winning his match, Hagan held serve, knocking out Capps with a 4.081/314.83 to a 6.801/100.94.

In the semifinals, faced with yet another all-Mopar Dodge DSR battle against Tommy Johnson Jr., Hagan clocked a winning 4.065/315.86. With the 2014 title already clinched prior to his final-round battle against Force, Hagan added icing to the cake, racing the 16-time champ to the finish line first with a 4.076/310.77 to Force's losing 4.086/276.58. Hagan left first with a .049 reaction time, led until the 660-ft. mark, where Force edged ahead, then surged back near the stripe to claim the event win. The ending was fitting — for the fourth time in the last five years, Hagan and Force duked it out for the NHRA Funny Car championship.

"It's not about how you start but how you finish," said Hagan, who began the six-race NHRA Countdown to the Championship back in the seventh spot but claimed three playoff wins on four final round appearances to end the season on top. "I just can't believe that it all came together in such a fairytale way. It's just an awesome deal to win the championship and then also win the race. This Countdown format is crazy. You have to be strong in the Countdown and have some good races there, and the rest takes care of itself.

"It means a lot to be a two-time champion. Honestly, it's about our team and all the guys that have worked so hard. It may have come down to just one day, but really it's the last six races that led us to this point. Making the right decisions, digging deep and doing a gut-check out there — at the end of the day it comes down to my crew chief and my crew guys that have busted their butts day-in and day-out to make it happen, and I can't be prouder of them. It was one common goal and ten guys working together, and at the end of the day we got to hold both trophies up. I told myself this morning that this is what we worked hard for all year long. I don't need to sweat it. I don't need to be nervous. Just trust in your stuff and race your race car and enjoy the moment.

"The championship was really what we were after. The race win was the icing on the cake. But it solidified that we had a great race car. To be the best you have to beat the best and everyone says he (Force) is the best and we beat him. It was nice to finish it out strong. We beat him here this time last year (at the 2013 NHRA Finals) and we did it again, so hats off to him. They had a great car, but we had the better one today."

Tommy Johnson Jr. (one 2014 win) finished third in the NHRA Countdown to the Championship playoffs, putting two Mopar HEMI-powered machines in the top three of the final standings. Capps (two victories) was listed eighth, while DSR Mopar-powered Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car driver Jack Beckman wrapped up the season 11th in the standings, falling to Del Worsham in round one at Pomona. Dodge drivers Gary Densham and Jeff Arend also saw their day end in the opening session.

Qualifying No. 4, Jeg Coughlin Jr. used a 6.522/212.36 to defeat Dodge Avenger driver V. Gaines, who laid down his best mark of the weekend (6.524/212.69) in a losing effort. The JECS.com/Mopar Dodge Dart driver was quicker off the starting line (.008 to .051) and on the drag strip (6.527/212.73 to 6.548/211.53) in the quarterfinals against Matt Hartford, setting up a semifinals showdown with Pro Stock title contender Jason Line. Coughlin, the 2013 NHRA Pro Stock champ, was just a tad too quick on his reaction time, bowing out on a -.023 red light foul against Line. Coughlin wrapped up his 2014 campaign fifth in the standings, with two wins and four runner-up finishes.

Line went on to a final elimination battle against Erica Enders-Stevens for both the national title and Pro Stock Championship. Enders-Stevens earned her first career Championship and the first for a woman in the Pro Stock category when Line turned on the foul light off the start.

2012 NHRA Pro Stock champion and No. 6 qualifier Allen Johnson experienced a challenging end to his 2014 season. After leaving first with a solid .025 reaction time in round one against Rodger Brogdon, Johnson's Magneti Marelli Quality Auto Parts Offered by Mopar Dodge Dart veered suddenly towards the center line. The Team Mopar veteran recovered to get his Dodge somewhat back in the groove, but slowed to a 8.475/114.04 to his opponent's winning 6.528/212.19. Johnson ends the season in sixth place, marking his ninth consecutive finish in the top ten of the Pro Stock standings.

"That's just the way our year has gone, unfortunately," said Johnson, who raced to four wins in 2014 on six final round appearances, and posted a 36-20 round-win record. "We just couldn't seem to catch a break. We'll have to regroup over the off season and do better next year. I'm disappointed with the way the Countdown played out. We have had a decent year with some good highlights, but we have to get rid of the mistakes."

The 2015 NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series will commence with the NHRA Winternationals, scheduled to take place, February 5-8, 2015, at Auto Club Raceway at Pomona.

2014 NHRA Countdown to the Championship Standings

(Following the final of 24 events, the season-ending Auto Club NHRA Finals)

PRO STOCK (season wins in parentheses)

1. Erica Enders-Stevens – 2639 (5)
2. Jason Line – 2600 (4)
3. Dave Connolly – 2481 (3)
4. Shane Gray – 2463 (1)
5. **Jeg Coughlin Jr. – Dodge Dart – 2445 (2)**
6. **Allen Johnson – Dodge Dart – 2403 (4)**
7. Jonathan Gray – 2385 (1)
8. Vincent Nobile – 2364 (1)
9. **V. Gaines – Dodge Dart – 2269**
10. Chris McGaha – 2168

FUNNY CAR (season wins in parentheses)

1. **Matt Hagan – Dodge Charger R/T– 2628 (4)**
2. John Force – 2585 (3)
3. **Tommy Johnson Jr. – Dodge Charger R/T – 2442 (1)**
4. Courtney Force – 2421 (4)
5. Robert Hight – 2414 (5)
6. Del Worsham – 2393 (1)
7. Alexis DeJoria – 2382 (3)
8. **Ron Capps – Dodge Charger R/T – 2375 (2)**
9. Tim Wilkerson – 2310
10. Cruz Pedregon – 2244 (1)

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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