

Dodge Dart Pro Stock Driver Johnson Takes HEMI® Power to Seventh Mopar Mile-High Nationals Win

- Mopar-powered Allen Johnson earns his seventh Bandimere Speedway victory at 37th annual Mopar Mile-High NHRA Nationals
- Johnson's win comes in 10th consecutive Denver final round, 11th overall
- Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) Top Fuel driver Tony Schumacher wins first title of season in Mopar-powered U.S. Army dragster
- Matt Hagan and Tommy Johnson Jr. display strong runs in Dodge Charger R/T Funny Cars
- Honorary Starter Jeff Teuton recipient of Mopar President's Award
- Grand Marshal J.R. Martinez attends first NHRA event

July 24, 2016, Morrison, Colorado - The 37th annual Mopar Mile-High NHRA Nationals saw a familiar face in the winner's circle when Allen Johnson, driver of the HEMI®-powered J&J Racing Marathon Petroleum Dodge Dart, earned the seventh Bandimere Speedway win of his career in his 10th consecutive final round on "The Mountain." Johnson, whose last victory came at the season-closer in Pomona last year, pocketed the 27th Pro Stock Wally trophy of his career in front of packed stands and with thunderous applause from the ever-supportive spectators at the celebrated facility nestled in the Rocky Mountains.

"We are thrilled to have Allen Johnson take a Mopar Dodge Dart to the winner's circle for a hard-fought first national title this season and to see him do this at the Mopar Mile-High Nationals for the seventh time," said Pietro Gorlier, Head of Parts and Service (Mopar), FCA – Global. "The never-give-up attitude and hard work this team has put in to tune the HEMI and get the win truly represents what Mopar performance is all about."

Johnson qualified in the No. 10 position and came into Sunday a little less confident than normal at a race where he has been a dominant force for many years. Confidence quickly began to surge, however, as the Johnson City, Tennessee-resident powered to a 7.000-second pass at 196.59 mph to end Drew Skillman's quest for the title. Skillman was 7.047/197.74 at the top end.

Consistency was key for Johnson in the second round, and a .021-second reaction time sure didn't hurt as he took on Erica Enders in the Mopar Performance Dodge Dart. Johnson left first, with Enders just .003-second behind, and he kept ahead for a close win, 7.000/196.53 to 7.006/195.62.

Next on the list was Greg Anderson, and Johnson wasn't taking any chances. He left first by a generous margin of .050-second to get a solid lead and seal up the round win on a holeshot, 6.986/196.42 to 6.968/197.19. With the semifinals win light came a ticket to the final round – his second of the season after a runner-up to Anderson in Epping last month. In the other lane for the Denver final round was No. 9 seed Vincent Nobile, his former teammate. The final marked the first time since the U.S. Nationals in 2008 in which two Pro Stock cars from the bottom half of the field made their way to the closing round.

Nobile was quick out of the gate with a .008-second reaction time, but Johnson made up time quickly and dealt his opponent a blow with a heavily horsepower 6.982/197.39 to knock out a 7.037/196.82.

"In qualifying, we had a lot of bad luck," said Johnson, who ran into a number of unusual issues, ranging from very small to quite large and including a billow of smoke from his car as it went down the track in the final round of qualifying. "I wouldn't have given ourselves a one-percent chance to win this thing today. You know what, this team dug down deep, and we got a little better every run. We just hung right in there, and maybe we had a break or two.

The magic up here is just on our side for some reason. We've done it for Mopar all these years, and now we get to do it for Marathon, and Mopar is still with us also, so we've got dual partnership there. It feels twice as good."

Johnson's victory is the first of the season for a Pro Stock driver outside of the dominating KB Racing duo of Jason Line and Greg Anderson. Johnson had a chance of meeting Line in the final, but the points leader took himself out of the equation in the semifinals with a red-light start against Nobile.

"It feels good," said Johnson, of breaking the KB Racing win streak. "I'm sure I'm speaking for everybody else in the pits; to break that juggernaut is big. Jason shot himself in the foot right there in the semis, or he may have been something to deal with there in the finals. Like I said, we might have got a break or two along the way. That's that Mountain magic. Our streak [at the Mopar Mile-High Nationals], breaking the KB streak – it's good for the class, good for the fans, good for TV, and good for NHRA."

Magneti Marelli Offered By Mopar Dodge Dart driver Jeg Coughlin Jr. exited early in Denver as Nobile beat him to the finish line in the first round, 7.000/197.13 to 7.026/195.62.

Johnson has held steady in the No. 4 position in the Pro Stock points since the Topeka race earlier this year, and he inched closer to No. 3 man Bo Butner with the win. He is now 70 marks out of third with four races to go before the Countdown to the Championship – NHRA's six-race playoffs – field is set.

Mopar Power Propels Schumacher to Top Fuel Win

DSR pilot Tony Schumacher drove his HEMI®-powered U.S. Army Top Fuel dragster to his first victory of the season at the Mopar Mile-High Nationals. On his way to the final, Schumacher first eliminated Doug Kalitta, 3.788/321.19 to 3.832/320.74 before knocking out No. 1 qualifier Steve Torrence in a tire-smoking pedal fest. Schumacher left the starting line first, went up in smoke next to his equally troubled challenger, and recovered first to pick up a 4.083/275.73 win over a 4.381/194.49. The victory sent him ahead to a semifinals meeting with Clay Millican, where he put Mopar horsepower to good use with a 3.839/319.90 to defeat a 3.841/317.49. In the final, Schumacher defeated DSR teammate Antron Brown, 3.802/324.78 to 5.199/144.75.

"This feels amazing," said Schumacher, whose last win was in Chicago in 2015. "I do 200 speeches for kids and tell them that preparation is important, and so is adversity, and digging and digging. We had to get this. Our car, you don't go a year without winning. I enjoy great moments in racing, but coming from a pretty big deficit will always be something I cherish the most. We're doing our job, winning rounds. Now we just have to go out and keep winning these races."

Leah Pritchett, in her first race in the Mopar/Pennzoil® Top Fuel dragster out of the Don Schumacher Racing Stable, qualified in the No. 10 position and put up a good fight in the first round but fell to Shawn Langdon, 4.288/194.97 to 4.877/181.45.

Mopar Dodge Charger Funny Cars

The Mopar Mile-High Nationals is an event that the ultra-competitive drivers look forward to because it is such a unique and challenging event. The high-altitude conditions require a different tune-up that is used just once a year on the 24 event Mello Yello Drag Racing Series tour, and sometimes the crew chiefs hit it – but other times, they simply don't. The four Don Schumacher Racing Dodge Charger R/T Funny Cars were set up on opposite sides of the ladder heading into eliminations, the ultimate goal to maximize potential for an all-Mopar final round at their sponsor's main event, but this time around they were each halted before the semifinals.

Matt Hagan and the Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T was the top performer of the four DSR Funny Cars in the first round, and his 4.039-second pass at 318.62 mph was laid down next to an empty lane as Tim Wilkerson was unable to make the call after injuring his car in the final round of qualifying on Saturday. Tommy Johnson Jr. and the Make-A-Wish Dodge also advanced from the first round on a 4.041/306.40, and Infinite Hero Charger pilot Jack Beckman – the defending event champion – was ousted in the first round by DSR and Mopar teammate Ron Capps, who clocked a 4.047/316.45 to his 4.078/301.47.

Johnson had the quickest DSR Charger in the second round, clocking a 4.032/315.71 in a losing effort, while Hagan

had big speed – 317.64 – but was unable to close the deal. Capps was sent home on a 4.399/213.27 to his opponent's 4.052.

Honorary Starter Jeff Teuton Receives President's Award

Mopar Mile-High NHRA Nationals Honorary Starter Jeff Teuton was brought on stage and surprised with another honor – The President's Award, a lifetime achievement award for motorsports contributions by loyal Mopar motorsports pioneers and legends. Teuton, a loyal Mopar racer, car owner, and sponsor with over 55 years of drag racing success, was the first racer to win Stock Eliminator at Indy as a driver, then later a Stock Eliminator championship as an owner with a modern era package car – a Mopar Drag Pak Challenger. Previous winners of the prestigious Mopar President's Award include the father and son Pro Stock team of Roy Johnson and Allen Johnson in 2013, the "Father of the HEMI," Tom Hoover in 2014, and drag racing legend "Big Daddy" Don Garlits in 2015.

Grand Marshal J.R. Martinez Loves Drag Racing

Jose Rene "J.R." Martinez, a U.S. Army veteran, American actor, author and motivational speaker, served as Grand Marshal of the Mopar Mile-High NHRA Nationals. The popular motivational speaker had never been to a drag race before this weekend's 37th annual Mopar event at Bandimere Speedway.

"I had an amazing opportunity to be taken around by Don Schumacher, and he showed me the ins and outs. I met Jack Beckman, Antron Brown, and a few of the other drivers and their crews, and they explained everything that goes into preparing the car for those four seconds of racing," said Martinez, a board member of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), to which the Infinite Hero Foundation has provided funding for their community of veterans online platform and RRRP (Rapid Referral Response Program). The program offers direct assistance and connections to programs serving mental health needs.

"Everyone has a role in making that car do what it needs to do for a few seconds on the track, and they are all equally as important as the next. I have the utmost respect for these guys and a completely different understanding of how this works than I did before coming to this race. The smells, the noise, the force, and the vibrations, walking on the track and your shoes stick, your eyes water from the nitro. It really is awesome to watch, and the fans want it all – they soak it all up, and it's really amazing to see how much these drivers truly love their fans. As much as these drivers have a passion for these racecars, they also have a passion for interacting with their fans. This really is an awesome experience."

Next Up

NHRA's 2016 Mello Yello Drag Racing Series continues with race 15 of 24 on the circuit and the 29th annual NHRA Sonoma Nationals in Sonoma, Calif., July 29-31, 2016. Tickets: www.racesonoma.com/tickets.

2016 NHRA Championship Point Standings

(Following the Mopar Mile-High NHRA Nationals event)
(season wins in parentheses)

Pro Stock

1. Jason Line (7) – 1,548
2. Greg Anderson (6) – 1,466
3. Bo Butner – 955
- 4. Allen Johnson (1), Mopar Dodge Dart – 885**
5. Vincent Nobile – 758
6. Drw Skillman – 753
7. Chris McGaha – 661
8. Shane Gray – 658
- 9. Jeg Coughlin Jr., Dodge Dart – 613**
10. Alex Laughlin – 595
- 11. Erica Enders, Mopar Performance Dodge Dart – 586**

Funny Car

- 1. Ron Capps, Dodge Charger R/T (4) – 1120**

2. Courtney Force (1) – 998
- 3. Jack Beckman, Dodge Charger R/T (1) – 976**
- 4. Matt Hagan, Dodge Charger R/T (2) – 881**
- 5t. Robert Hight (1) – 877
- 5t. Del Worsham – 877
- 7. Tommy Johnson Jr., Dodge Charger R/T (1) – 855**
8. John Force (1) – 821
9. Tim Wilkerson (2) – 793
10. Alexis DeJoria (1) – 733

Top Fuel

1. Antron Brown (3) – 1,145
2. Doug Kalitta (3) – 1,088
3. Steve Torrence (2) – 982
4. Brittany Force (2) – 953
- 5. Tony Schumacher (1) – 916**
6. Shawn Langdon (2) – 800
7. JR Todd – 799
8. Clay Millican – 681
9. Richie Crampton – 660
- 10. Leah Pritchett (1) – 553**

About Mopar Motorsports

The Mopar brand'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 2016, Mopar will look to once again vie for a NHRA World Championship title in both Pro Stock and Funny Car categories. While Mopar remains involved in a various professional motorsports series, it continues to honor its roots by being a proud supporter of Sportsman racing within the NHRA with its sponsorship of the HEMI Challenge and Mopar's Tom Hoover Sportsman Challenge.

Mopar

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

A simple combination of the words MOrtor 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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