

Capps Wins Fourth Straight in All-Mopar Dodge Charger R/T NHRA Funny Car Final at Topeka

- Ron Capps wins 29th annual NHRA Heartland Nationals at Heartland Park Topeka for 53rd career Funny Car victory and fourth in a row
- Capps and Matt Hagan compete in all-Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car final round
- Three Funny Cars featuring Mopar HEMI® power appear in semifinals
- Leah Pritchett puts Papa John's Pizza/Mopar Pennzoil Top Fuel Dragster in semis
- Mopar maintains top two positions in Funny Car points and No. 1 points position in Top Fuel
- T.J. Diekema and Jacob Pitt win Dodge Top Finisher award in Stock Eliminator and Super Stock

May 21, 2017, Topeka, Kan. - The NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series reached the one-third mark of the 2017 schedule with this weekend's Heartland Nationals, and neither Ron Capps nor his Mopar teammates in the Nitro categories are showing signs of slowing any time soon. Capps took home the Wally trophy in Funny Car for the 53rd time in his career and fourth race in a row, driving his Dodge Charger R/T to the victory over his Mopar and Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) teammate Matt Hagan. Hagan meanwhile became the quickest and fastest driver in Funny Car history during event qualifying. Capps' win is the seventh for Mopar HEMI® power in the Funny Car category this season.

Capps defeated Hagan's Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T from the left lane with a pass of 3.924 seconds at 321.42 mph after a .054-second reaction time. Hagan turned in a pass of 3.985 at 318.92 with a .057 reaction time off the starting line. Capps and team had lane choice for the final, and made a last-second decision to move to the left lane just before the cars were fired. The race was a re-match of this year's Funny Car final round at the Arizona Nationals, which represents the only final round in which Capps has appeared but not won in 2017.

Capps' win, his fourth at the Topeka track, also extends a streak of at least one Mopar HEMI car winning a Nitro category to nine consecutive events, dating all the way back to the season-ending event at Pomona to end 2016.

The 2016 Funny Car champion, Capps moved his HEMI machine past Cruz Pedregon in the first round despite needing to shut off at half-track as Pedregon struggled at the starting line. Capps went on to knock out Courtney Force in a clean, side-by-side race in the second round, setting up a showdown with Robert Hight, who had been quick and fast throughout the weekend. Hight lost traction early in the run as Capps made another clean pass, putting him the Funny Car final for the fourth consecutive event. Capps' march to the victory was made even more impressive by the fact his team changed a fuel pump on Sunday morning before eliminations.

Matt Hagan, the quickest and fastest driver in Funny Car history after Topeka qualifying with a lap of 3.802 seconds at 338.85 mph, began his march to the final with a defeat of Jack Wyatt in the first round. Wyatt had a cylinder out and drifted towards the center line during his run. Hagan next drove his Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T past J.R. Toad as Todd was forced to pedal when the light turned green. Hagan next defeated his DSR Mopar teammate Jack Beckman in the Infinite Hero Dodge Charger R/T. The race was a rematch of last year's Topeka final, won by Hagan, and also broke a head-to-head tie between the two drivers with Hagan now leading 19-18. Hagan's victory set up the final round match-up with Capps.

Beckman began his day with a holeshot win over Chad Head, despite smoking his tires down track and just defeating Head's car at the line, which had a cylinder out. Beckman next turned on the win light against Del Worsham to set up an all-Mopar matchup against Hagan, where Beckman's day ended as he again smoked the tires just past half-track.

Tommy Johnson Jr.'s Make-A-Wish Dodge Charger R/T represented the fourth Mopar-powered Funny Car from

DSR. Johnson suffered an explosion near the 660-foot mark in the first round, however, and was bested by Worsham.

In the Top Fuel category, Leah Pritchett drove her Papa John's Pizza/Mopar Pennzoil dragster to a win over Rob Passey in the first round as Passey had trouble off the starting line. Pritchett next matched up against Doug Kalitta and turned in a come-from-behind win to just best her opponent at the finish. She was then narrowly defeated by eventual event winner Antron Brown in the semis. Pritchett's win-loss record is still stellar this season, currently standing at 21-5.

Also in Top Fuel, No. 1 qualifier Tony Schumacher and the Mopar HEMI-powered U.S. Army dragster snuck past Pat Dakin in the first round to avoid the upset as both cars smoked the tires at the hit. Schumacher was forced to step on the gas half a dozen times to get the car down the track. He was then defeated by Clay Millican in the second round as Schumacher again had mechanical issues while Millican slalomed his way to the win.

Both Pritchett's and Schumacher's defeats meant that at least one Mopar Top Fuel dragster didn't reach the final round for the first time in 2017, but Pritchett maintained her position atop the point standings.

The sprawling Heartland Park Topeka facility is praised by drivers and crews alike for its ideal track surface, while weather conditions in Topeka often provide opportunities for record-breaking passes, as were seen throughout the 29th annual NHRA Heartland Nationals. Rain showers on Friday allowed for only one delayed Nitro qualifying session in cool evening conditions, while cloud cover and temperatures in the high 50's on Saturday allowed for some blistering runs. The sun finally appeared on Sunday, but the weather still was extremely favorable.

Mopar/Dodge Notes & Quotes

Pietro Gorlier, Head of Parts and Service (Mopar) FCA – Global

"The Mopar and Dodge brands are riding an amazing win streak this year, and we appreciate the dedication and commitment of the drivers and teams that have made it possible. All of us at Mopar send congratulations to Ron Capps on the NHRA Heartland Nationals win in his Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car. It's been a very fun couple of months, with hopefully more success in store during the summer stretch of races for our HEMI-powered NHRA teams."

Ron Capps, NAPA Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car **(No. 7 Qualifier – 3.861 seconds at 321.88 mph)**

Rd 1: (.068-second reaction time, 4.606 seconds at 179.02 mph) defeated No. 10 Cruz Pedregon (.047/9.778/81.34)

Rd 2: (.075/3.866/325.45) defeated No. 2 Courtney Force (.073/3.902/33.00)

Semis: (.060/3.908/323.97) defeated No. 3 Robert Hight (.055/6.168/118.16)

Final: (.054/3.924/321.42) defeated No. 1 Matt Hagan (.057/3.985/318.92)

"I've got a crew chief that can adapt to anything. I'm just the luckiest dude in the world, man. I had nothing to do with it; I just stepped on the gas at the right time and held the car together.

"There are some days you don't think you're going to be sitting here holding this Wally. There's a little part of me that woke up this morning going, 'Man, we didn't qualify well and we're putting a new fuel pump on it.' A little part of you is like, 'This could go a lot of different ways.' Then you remind yourself that we won a championship for a reason, that we've won four in a row for a reason. Everybody's just jelled together. You dream about racing and driving a Funny Car, but you can't even dream big enough to dream about doing what I've gotten to do in terms of four Wallys in a row. Trust me, we showed up here Friday and in no way did we have any thoughts in our head that we had just won three in a row. I really didn't, you forget all that. I'm sure our competitors did, too. You've just got to show up and prove yourself."

Matt Hagan, Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car **(No. 1 Qualifier – 3.802 seconds at 338.85 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.072-second reaction time, 3.852 seconds at 333.99 mph), defeated No. 16 Jack Wyatt (.106/5.699/124.65)

Rd. 2: (.075/4.016/273.94) defeated No. 9 J.R. Todd (.065/5.288/148.27)

Semis: (.057/3.918/330.55) defeated No. 4 Jack Beckman (.064/4.434/195.65)

Final: (.057/3.985/318.92) lost to No. 7 Ron Capps (.054/3.924/321.42)

"We came out and we set both ends of the national record and we were able to keep it this morning so that's a little feather (in our cap).

"Hats off to those guys, Ron Capps and Tobler, they're killing it man. Four in a row – how do you not respect that? They laid the hammer down and they're getting it done."

Leah Pritchett, Papa John's Pizza/Mopar Pennzoil Top Fuel Dragster
(No. 2 Qualifier – 3.667 seconds at 329.83 mph)

Rd. 1: (.132-second reaction time, 3.707 seconds at 326.87 mph) defeated No. 15 Rob Passey (.086/14.850/35.15)

Rd. 2: (.063/3.708/325.92) defeated No. 7 Doug Kalitta (.049/3.731/330.96)

Semis: (.111/3.718/329.34) lost to No. 3 Antron Brown (.060/3.715/330.15)

"We're continuing to show how healthy this car is, the team is together on all aspects. So physically and mentally we're still hungry, but this has been a weekend that we were looking for. I'm slightly disappointed in myself, I'm figuring out a few things tree-wise, but overall it's a great bridge between that last swing and the one we're coming up on.

"I've figured out that I've lately been sometimes operating in fear of losing what we have instead of the aggressiveness of chasing. So I walk away from this weekend identifying what I personally need to work on and it's a mindset. And it's something that we will see come Epping."

Jack Beckman, Infinite Hero Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car
(No. 4 Qualifier – 3.844 seconds at 331.77 mph)

Rd 1: (.067-second reaction time, 4.218 seconds at 217.70 mph – holeshot win) defeated No. 13 Chad Head (.138/4.172/247.97)

Rd 2: (.073/3.883/328.54) defeated No. 12 Del Worsham (.084/4.012/324.36)

Semis: (.064/4.434/195.65) lost to No. 1 Matt Hagan (.057/3.918/330.55)

"I think the guys did a phenomenal job of running strong when the conditions were great, and then when the racetrack warmed up on Sunday, we still were able to lay down some impressive numbers. It was frustrating to smoke the tires in the semis. We knew we had to push hard, we were racing the world's quickest and fastest car, a teammate of ours. But I think if you look at the strides that we've made since Vegas, this is a team that's becoming one of the top two or three and if we keep chipping away at the points, we'll be there pretty soon. Our short-term goal is we need to win a race and get in the Traxxas Shootout."

Tommy Johnson Jr., Make-A-Wish Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car
(No. 5 Qualifier – 3.847 seconds at 3331.61 mph)

Rd.1: (.083.-second reaction time, 4.456 seconds at 190.83 mph) lost to No. 12 Del Worsham (.100/3.968/326.87)

"It's frustrating. I ran so good in qualifying and had a great race car. I thought we had a great race car for today. It just came loose down (track), started spinning the tires and blew the blower off of it. But we'll regroup and go try it again."

Tony Schumacher, U.S. Army Top Fuel Dragster
(No. 1 Qualifier – 3.660 seconds at 327.90 mph)

Rd. 1: (.071-second reaction time, 5.895 seconds at 193.85 mph) defeated No. 16 Pat Dakin (.071/10.92/71.62)

Rd. 2: (.068/8.413/64.85) lost to No. 8 Clay Millican (.059/5.428/143.41)

"Something broke. Something just broke. But, hey, we've got a bad-to-the-bone U.S. Army car, so let's get on with it. It's a rarity for us to have something like that happen. Overall we can feel really good that Saturday was a great

day that made us feel really, really good in very cool, overcast conditions – something that hasn't necessarily been our forte the last several years. So that definitely makes us feel good about later on in the season, when the wins will mean the most. Overall, I'm proud of what this U.S. Army team accomplished this weekend."

Mopar/Dodge NHRA Sportsman Spotlight

As has been the case throughout the 2017 season, Mopar-powered vehicles drove into Sunday's elimination rounds at Heartland Park Topeka from out of dozens entered in the Sportsman ranks. T.J. Diekema of Mason City, Iowa, turned in the best performance in Stock Eliminator, putting his '62 Plymouth Fury powered by a 383 cubic-inch engine in the third round. There he broke out on a pass of 10.683 seconds at 119.20 mph on a 10.70 dial-in. He had a .038-second reaction time.

Jacob Pitt's FGT/H 2003 Dodge Stratus meanwhile represented the sole Mopar-powered machine in Super Stock. The driver from Mansfield, Texas, qualified third, but was eliminated in the first round of competition on Saturday. He turned in a pass of 9.755 seconds at 141.79 mph after a .066-second reaction time. His dial-in was 9.44.

For their efforts, Diekema and Pitt each earned a \$500 bonus as the Dodge Top Finisher. The program is in place at all 24 NHRA national events and is provided to the top finishing Stock and Super Stock competitor driving a Dodge or Plymouth vehicle.

Next Event

In two weeks the NHRA national event calendar heads to the Northeast for the fifth annual NHRA New England Nationals at New England Dragway in Epping, New Hampshire. The track in the southeastern region of the Granite State opened in 1966 and remains the only quarter-mile drag strip in New England. It lies about an hour north of metro Boston.

Last year Mopar driver Ron Capps took home the Funny Car win, one of five on the year that helped him to his first world championship. Capps also won the 2014 edition of the event, while Tony Schumacher has two wins at the New Hampshire track in Top Fuel.

The NHRA New England Nationals will take place from June 2 – 4 and will be broadcast throughout the weekend on FOX Sports 1, with Sunday's elimination rounds airing at 4:30 p.m. ET on Sunday, June 4. The event is the first of four consecutive races throughout the month of June.

For more information on Mopar and Dodge in NHRA, check out the Mopar brand's official blog, <http://blog.mopar.com>.

2017 NHRA Championship — Point Standings After Round 8 of 24

(Season Wins in Parentheses)

NHRA Funny Car

- 1. Ron Capps, Dodge Charger R/T (4) – 748**
- 2. Matt Hagan, Dodge Charger R/T (2) – 629**
3. John Force (1) – 524
4. Robert Hight – 518
- 5. Jack Beckman, Dodge Charger R/T – 502**
6. Courtney Force – 464
- 7. Tommy Johnson Jr., Dodge Charger R/T (1) – 461**
8. J.R. Todd – 378
9. Tim Wilkerson – 360
10. Jonnie Lindberg – 318

NHRA Top Fuel

- 1. Leah Pritchett, Mopar HEMI (3) – 721**
2. Steve Torrence (2) – 691
3. Antron Brown (2) – 680
- 4. Tony Schumacher, Mopar HEMI (1) – 673**

5. Doug Kalitta – 539
6. Clay Millican – 433
7. Brittany Force – 405
8. Terry McMillen – 333
9. Troy Coughlin Jr. – 327
10. Scott Palmer – 276

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, thanks to Don Schumacher Racing driver Ron Capps, Mopar captured its fourth NHRA Funny Car World Championship in the last six years. As Mopar celebrates 80 years as a brand in 2017, it will focus its NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series efforts on NHRA Funny Car and, with rising star Leah Pritchett, NHRA Top Fuel Dragster. Mopar will also bolster its commitment to NHRA Sportsman racing with new contingency rewards, factory support and at-track technical advice and guidance.

Mopar-First Features

During the brand's 80 years, Mopar has introduced numerous industry-first features including:

- Vehicle-information apps: first to introduce smartphone vehicle-information applications, a new channel of communication with consumers
- wiADVISOR: first to incorporate a tablet-based service lane tool
- Electronic Vehicle Tracking System (EVTS): first to market with a new interactive vehicle tracking device that sends owner a text when vehicle is driven too fast or too far based on pre-set parameters
- Wi-Fi: first to offer customers the ability to make their vehicle a wireless hot spot
- Electronic owner manuals: first to introduce traditional owner manuals on a smartphone app

Mopar

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

A simple combination of the words MOTO 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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