

## Johnson Finishes as Runner-up in Mopar Dodge Funny Car at NHRA Northwest Nationals

- Mopar Funny Car driver Tommy Johnson Jr. appears in final round of 30th annual NHRA Northwest Nationals at Pacific Raceways in Kent, Washington
- HEMI®-powered Funny Car teams from Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) have appeared in 14 of 16 final rounds in 2017
- Johnson and Matt Hagan each go to semifinals in Dodge Charger R/T Funny Cars
- Leah Pritchett puts HEMI-powered Top Fuel dragster in semis
- All four Mopar DSR Funny Cars and both Mopar-powered Top Fuel dragsters advance to at least second round
- Mopar maintains four of top five points positions in Funny Car, third and fourth in Top Fuel
- Vince Storms named Dodge Top Finisher in Stock Eliminator, Kelly Thomas claims award in Super Stock

August 6, 2017, Kent, Wash. - Mopar driver Tommy Johnson Jr. went to the final round for the third time in the last four NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series events this weekend, but he came up just one win light short of taking the Funny Car category victory during the NHRA Northwest Nationals at Pacific Raceways.

Johnson's final-round appearance in his HEMI®-powered Make-A-Wish Dodge Charger R/T from Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) marked the 14th final round for at least one Mopar Funny Car fielded by the team in 16 events to date this year. They have visited the winner's circle 12 times.

Johnson met Robert Hight in the final round on Sunday, and despite getting off the starting line first with a .045-second reaction time to Hight's .085, he was bested by Hight's time of 3.890 seconds at 328.62 mph. Johnson made a lap of 3.978 at 323.27.

The final round was a re-match of the Mopar Mile-High NHRA Nationals two weeks ago at Bandimere Speedway, won by Hight, while Johnson also went to the final of the NHRA Route 66 Nationals two weeks prior.

Although Johnson didn't hold his second Wally of 2017 at the end of the day, he and the Make-A-Wish team still turned in a very solid Sunday at the Seattle-area track.

Johnson first defeated fellow Dodge competitor Jim Campbell in round one when Campbell slowed, setting up a showdown between Johnson and his Mopar DSR teammate Ron Capps. Johnson defeated Capps for the third week in a row with both cars side-by-side as they reached the finish line. The Make-A-Wish team next bested another Mopar teammate in the form of Matt Hagan in the semis to reach the final round against Hight.

Johnson won the Northwest Nationals in 2015 and claimed his first win in the Top Fuel category at Pacific Raceways in 1993.

Hagan meanwhile drove his Mopar 80th/Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T from DSR past Del Worsham in round one and then squared off with Alexis DeJoria. Hagan just bested her on a holeshot before falling to Johnson in the semis.

The remaining two Mopar-backed Funny Cars from DSR each reached the second round.

Jack Beckman and the Infinite Hero Dodge Charger R/T first defeated Del Worsham on a clean pass, but Beckman lost to Courtney Force after another close race in the second round. 2016 Funny Car champion Ron Capps and his Dodge Charger R/T team started their day by knocking out a slowing Tim Wilkerson, but Capps was then narrowly

defeated by teammate Johnson in round two.

In the Top Fuel category, Leah Pritchett began her march by driving her Papa John's Pizza/Mopar Pennzoil dragster from DSR past Shawn Reed. She next raced Mopar teammate Tony Schumacher, and despite both cars going up in smoke, Pritchett was able to get to the finish line first. She ultimately bowed out in the semis to Terry McMillen.

Schumacher powered his U.S. Army car past Troy Coughlin Jr. during round one in the first ever meeting of the two drivers when the rookie Coughlin hazed his tires. Schumacher's day was then ended by Pritchett.

The 30th annual NHRA Northwest Nationals concluded the three-race Western Swing on the NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series season and served as the two-thirds mark on the 2017 series calendar. There are now just two races to go before the NHRA Countdown to the Championship begins.

Qualifying for the Northwest Nationals featured uncharacteristically hot atmospheric and track conditions for NHRA's annual trip to the Seattle area. In addition, fires in nearby British Columbia also affected air quality. However, conditions were much improved by Sunday's elimination rounds.

### **Mopar/Dodge Notes & Quotes**

#### **Tommy Johnson Jr., Make-A-Wish Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car** **(No. 3 Qualifier – 3.930 seconds at 324.05 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.098-second reaction time, 3.953 seconds at 325.92 mph) defeated No. 14 Jim Campbell (.082/4.372/206.48)  
Rd. 2: (.053/3.957/323.19) defeated No. 6 Ron Capps (.099/3.976/311.41)  
Semis: (.058/3.935/319.67) defeated No. 2 Matt Hagan (.058/3.955/326.08)  
Final: (.045/3.978/323.27) lost to No. 1 Robert Hight (.085/3.890/328.62)

"Our goal was to try to get our placement the best we can going into the Countdown and we're doing a good job of that. It's frustrating to lose a final again, but three of the last four races (we've been) runner-up so you can't complain too bad.

"There are two to go before the Countdown and it seems like it's that time of year to start picking up momentum and getting yourself set. I'm happy with the way we're doing and we'll get it done. Final rounds are great; you just like to finish the job when you get there. But six finals in the Countdown would be just fine with me, too."

#### **Matt Hagan, Mopar 80th/Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car** **(No. 2 Qualifier – 3.930 seconds at 328.54 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.094-second reaction time, 3.920 seconds at 330.47 mph) defeated No. 15 Gary Densham (.132/3.965/319.37)  
Rd. 2: (.061/3.958/326.71) defeated No. 7 Alexis DeJoria (.099/3.956/324.12)  
Semis: (.058/3.955/326.08) lost to No. 3 Tommy Johnson Jr. (.058/3.935/319.67)

"You've got Brainerd and Indy and then you've got the Countdown coming up. So having some momentum is huge. I think that the biggest thing is we need to put this Mopar Funny Car in the winner's circle. The car's running good and I think it's one of those things where we're always consistent, we're always right there in the hunt and I think we can be where we need to be at the end of the year."

#### **Leah Pritchett, Papa John's Pizza/Mopar Pennzoil Top Fuel Dragster** **(No. 3 Qualifier – 3.755 seconds at 325.30 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.084-second reaction time, 3.729 seconds at 314.46 mph) defeated No. 14 Shawn Reed (.080/3.964/313.22)  
Rd. 2: (.079/5.062/157.72) defeated No. 6 Tony Schumacher (.074/6.483/130.67)  
Semis: (.094/3.888/306.40) lost to No. 10 Terry McMillen (.077/3.822/315.42)

"Ultimately this team can't wait to get back on a cold racetrack. Those cold tracks are our hot buttons and we struggled here a little bit. I'd have to say that round two definitely had the most drama in it: a nice pedal-fest against

Tony Schumacher. Our teams work very closely together trying to get the DSR cars to be at the very top, and both DSR cars did very similar things on the track.

"Overall we're happy that the (Western) Swing is over, we gave it absolutely our very best shot in every way. Nobody here failed at all. Our engine program just isn't as happy in these hot conditions and we're continuing to work on that."

**Jack Beckman, Infinite Hero Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car**  
**(No. 5 Qualifier – 3.943 seconds at 323.35 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.086-second reaction time, 3.926 seconds at 325.69 mph) defeated No. 12 Del Worsham (.104/4.033/319.52)  
Rd. 2: (.079/4.037/287.66) lost to No. 4 Courtney Force (.095/3.959/317.27)

"Seattle 2017 is going to go down as the race where our championship form showed up. I don't think I did a good enough job driving against Courtney (Force) in the second round. I think I let the car move over too much and that might've been what did us in. We've cured our parts breakage; the car is doing what we tell it to every time. That smoke in the second round is on me; that's not on the crew chiefs. I cannot wait for the rest of the season. We're peaking at the perfect time, we're doing everything right for the soldiers with the Infinite Hero fundraisers and we're going to make Mopar proud at the end of the year."

**Ron Capps, NAPA Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car**  
**(No. 6 Qualifier – 3.956 seconds at 317.34 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.104-second reaction time, 3.901 seconds at 326.00 mph) defeated No. 11 Tim Wilkerson (.096/4.232/226.32)  
Rd. 2: (.099/3.976/311.41) lost to No. 3 Tommy Johnson Jr. (.053/3.957/323.19)

"We know championships are going to have to go through a DSR Funny Car, if not all four. We showed that last year with all our Funny Cars. Don (Schumacher) has put together four of the best Funny Cars on the ground. We know that the things that we want to try to get better we have to do under track conditions that we will see on race day. We can't rely on a Monday or a Saturday somewhere else on an off weekend. We have to do that under NHRA race conditions where we can compare apples to apples. I've always bragged about (crew chief) Rahn Tobler making sure that he's got everything lined up and ready to go. Don't let the last few races fool anybody."

**Tony Schumacher, U.S. Army Top Fuel Dragster**  
**(No. 6 Qualifier – 3.783 seconds at 324.12 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.059-second reaction time, 3.741 seconds at 328.94 mph) defeated No. 11 Troy Coughlin Jr. (.113/4.615/169.83)  
Rd. 2: (.074/6.483/130.67) lost to No. 3 Leah Pritchett (.079/5.062/157.72)

"Ten feet further and you win that kind of a race. You smoke the tires so early that there's no way to calm it down. You need a little more momentum in that situation. This was supposed to be our day and we didn't need to smoke the tires that early. But, you know what makes you smoke the tires? They (Pritchett) ran a .75 in the heat Saturday in qualifying, so we have to think they're going to do it again, you've got to push it a little more. We're getting there but we're not quite there, yet. But we'll be all right. It's a long year."

**Mopar/Dodge NHRA Sportsman Spotlight**

Mopar power drove into round three in the Stock Eliminator category during the NHRA Northwest Nationals, with Vince Storms turning in the best package of the round. The driver from Maple Valley, Washington, made a 10.995-second pass at 117.39 mph on a 10.99 dial-in in his E/SA 1971 Plymouth Duster. Storms left the starting line with a .075-second reaction time. Despite failing to advance, it was his best pass of the weekend in elimination rounds.

In Super Stock, Kelly Thomas turned in the best Mopar effort, driving a GT/LA '69 Dodge Dart to round two. The Auburn, Washington, driver made a breakout pass of 10.645 at 123.78 on a 10.66 dial-in after a .011 reaction time.

Storms and Thomas each were named the Dodge Top Finisher at Pacific Raceways. The program awards \$500 the

competitors who advance the farthest in both Stock and Super Stock at all 24 NHRA national events in 2017. It is part of Mopar and Dodge's strong commitment to Sportsman racers.

#### **Next Event**

After a one-week break, the NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series returns to action on August 17 – 20 for the 36th annual NHRA Nationals at famed Brainerd International Raceway in central Minnesota.

In 2016, Mopar Funny Car driver Matt Hagan set both ends of the track record to qualify No. 1 with a pass of 3.822 seconds at 333.82 mph. He finished as the event runner-up. Hagan's Mopar Funny Car teammate Ron Capps has five wins at Brainerd, while Tommy Johnson Jr. has one win at the facility. Mopar-powered Tony Schumacher has collected three Wallys there in Top Fuel.

The 36th annual NHRA Nationals will be broadcast on FOX Sports 1 throughout the weekend, with LIVE coverage of the elimination rounds on the network at 2 p.m. ET on Sunday, August 20.

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 16 of 24** **(Season Wins in Parentheses)**

##### **NHRA Funny Car**

- 1. Ron Capps, Dodge Charger R/T (6) – 1,330**
- 2. Matt Hagan, Dodge Charger R/T (3) – 1,172**
3. Robert Hight (2) – 1,164
- 4. Jack Beckman, Dodge Charger R/T (2) – 1,104**
- 5. Tommy Johnson Jr., Dodge Charger R/T (1) – 1,081**
6. Courtney Force – 951
7. John Force (1) – 877
8. Tim Wilkerson – 759
9. J.R. Todd (1) – 756
10. Cruz Pedregon – 601

##### **NHRA Top Fuel**

1. Antron Brown (4) – 1,418
2. Steve Torrence (6) – 1,405
- 3. Leah Pritchett, Mopar HEMI (3) – 1,329**
- 4. Tony Schumacher, Mopar HEMI (1) – 1,064**
5. Brittany Force (1) – 992
6. Doug Kalitta – 977
7. Clay Millican (1) – 937
8. Terry McMillen – 690
9. Scott Palmer – 606
10. Troy Coughlin Jr. – 560

##### **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](http://www.mopar.com) and the Mopar blog at [www.blog.mopar.com](http://www.blog.mopar.com). For more information regarding Stellantis (NYSE: STLA), please visit [www.stellantis.com](http://www.stellantis.com).

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