

## Capps Wins Dodge NHRA Nationals in Mopar-powered Dodge Charger Funny Car

- Mopar Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car driver Ron Capps wins 33rd annual Dodge NHRA Nationals at Maple Grove Raceway near Reading, Pennsylvania
- Win is seventh of season for Capps and 13th for Mopar HEMI® power from Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) in Funny Car this year
- Victory is 56th of Capps' career in Funny Car category
- Mopar HEMI-powered Dodge Funny Cars from DSR have reached 17 final rounds in 20 events to date in 2017
- Three Mopar Dodge Funny Cars from DSR reach semifinals, all go to at least second round
- Leah Pritchett and Tony Schumacher finish in second round in Mopar Top Fuel dragsters
- Capps regains Funny Car points lead at conclusion of second event in NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series Countdown to the Championship playoffs, Schumacher sits fifth to lead Mopar in Top Fuel
- Three Mopar-powered cars reach quarterfinals of Super Stock Eliminator
- Scott Goshert wins Dodge Top Finisher in Stock Eliminator, Richard Kay takes Super Stock Eliminator award

September 24, 2017, Mohnton, Pa. - Mopar HEMI® power claimed its 13th NHRA Funny Car win of 2017 on Sunday at Maple Grove Raceway, as Ron Capps drove his Dodge Charger R/T from Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) to the winner's circle at the Dodge NHRA Nationals. Capps bested Courtney Force in the final round at the Reading-area track to pick up his seventh victory of the season and the 18th for HEMI power from DSR in both Nitro categories overall.

The win in the Dodge-branded event also put Capps, the defending NHRA Funny Car champion, back in the points lead after the second of six events in the NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series Countdown to the Championship playoffs.

Capps bested Courtney Force from the right lane in the final round with a pass of 3.968 seconds at 326.48 mph to Force's 3.993 at 311.70. Capps left the starting line with a .043-second reaction time, while Force had a reaction time of .067. The cars were side-by-side for the length of the drag strip when Force's parachutes deployed just before the finish line.

Capps defeated three Mopar Dodge drivers on his march to the final, starting with Jim Campbell in a wild first round. Campbell had a cylinder out while Capps' car went up in smoke at the finish, but still turned on the win light. Capps next took on DSR teammate Tommy Johnson Jr. and won on a clean pass as Johnson lost traction near half-track. Capps then defeated another DSR teammate in the form of Matt Hagan. The cars were close until Hagan's chutes came out down track, allowing Capps to pull away and reach the final round for the 10th time this season, where he collected the 56th win of his Funny Car career and his first at Maple Grove. It was also the 17th time at least one Mopar Dodge Funny Car has reached the final round through 20 events this year.

After a difficult opening to the Countdown to the Championship at zMAX Dragway near Charlotte last week, where no Mopar-powered car got past the second round in either Funny Car or Top Fuel, in Reading three Mopar HEMI-powered Funny Cars from DSR reached the semifinals.

Matt Hagan, whose team has struggled recently, won his first-round matchup over Jeff Diehl as Hagan powered his

Mopar 80th/Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T to the finish line when Diehl smoked his tires at the 330-foot mark. Hagan next defeated Tim Wilkerson to set up a matchup with DSR teammate Capps, where his day came to an end.

Jack Beckman and the Infinite Hero Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car team narrowly defeated Cruz Pedregon in round one, which also served as Beckman's 600th elimination round. He next took down Jonnie Lindberg on a clean pass when Lindberg immediately smoked the tires. Beckman then raced Courtney Force in the semis, but was late leaving the starting line and could never catch up.

Defending event winner Johnson beat Alexis DeJoria in round one when both cars smoked the tires, but Johnson made it to the finish line first in the Make-A-Wish Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car from DSR. His day was then ended by teammate Capps in round two.

In Top Fuel, Leah Pritchett raced her specially wrapped Mopar 80th Anniversary dragster past Terry McMillen on a clean, side-by-side pass in round one, setting up a showdown with Steve Torrence. Pritchett left the starting line first but suffered a massive explosion down track, giving the win to her opponent.

Tony Schumacher and the Mopar-powered U.S. Army Top Fuel team from DSR defeated Scott Palmer in the first round when Palmer had clutch issues and was unable to make a pass. Schumacher was ultimately defeated in round two by event winner Brittany Force.

The 33rd annual Dodge NHRA Nationals took place under sunny skies and very warm conditions, forcing teams and drivers alike to learn on the fly as the event has had cool, overcast and rainy weather for several years. Massive crowds were on hand each day, setting a four-day attendance record.

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

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

"It's very exciting for Mopar to claim victory at a race sponsored by the Dodge brand. Congratulations to Ron Capps and his entire Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car team on this important win at the Dodge NHRA Nationals. We're looking forward to seeing even more HEMI power in the winner's circle throughout the fall months as we chase another title in the Countdown to the Championship playoffs."

#### **Ron Capps, NAPA Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car**

**(No. 3 Qualifier – 3.877 seconds at 327.43 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.080-second reaction time, 4.166 seconds at 233.96 mph) defeated No. 14 Jim Campbell (.092/4.213/285.95)

Rd. 2: (.070/3.987/326.32) defeated No. 11 Tommy Johnson Jr. (.082/5.135/146.21)

Semis: (.050/3.944/324.67) defeated No. 2 Matt Hagan (.063/3.990/311.20)

Final: (.043/3.968/326.48) defeated No. 6 Courtney Force (.067/3.993/311.70)

"What a deal today. We fell behind a little bit, we got lucky a little bit in the first round, but we feel like we make our luck. The harder we work, the luckier we get for sure."

"Every time I've driven through the gate here, I say, 'I love you, I love you, I love you Maple Grove. Give me some love back' and I've always left here a little short. Getting the points lead back was secondary to winning here. It was an ecstatic feeling in the shutdown area."

#### **Matt Hagan, Mopar 80th/Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car**

**(No. 2 Qualifier – 3.874 seconds at 335.82 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.071-second reaction time, 3.912 seconds at 334.65 mph) defeated No. 15 Jeff Diehl (.145/5.875/122.90)

Rd. 2: (.076/3.955/324.36) defeated No. 10 Tim Wilkerson (.078/3.995/322.65)

Semis: (.063/3.990/311.20) lost to No. 3 Ron Capps (.050/3.944/324.67)

"We went some rounds today, we got out of the first round. That was big. But we've just had awful, awful luck. If we hadn't had bad luck we wouldn't have any. I don't know how you change your luck, but we've just been having

some mistakes here and there and little things are just eating us alive. We had a cable in the parachute break off and put the chutes out. The car's running good; we've had a great race car. We just can't make it work on race day. So we'll get back after it again next weekend and see what we can do. We'll see if we can make up some ground."

**Leah Pritchett, Mopar 80th Anniversary Top Fuel Dragster**

**(No. 6 Qualifier – 3.741 seconds at 328.14 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.074-second reaction time, 3.760 seconds at 328.70 mph) defeated No. 11 Terry McMillen (.075/3.786/322.58)

Rd. 2: (.057/3.825/274.22) lost to No. 3 Steve Torrence (.091/3.767/325.92)

"We got the short end of the stick on the luck meter. The Mopar team and guys are doing a phenomenal job. I think one of the biggest successes of this weekend is finding what's wrong with our race car gremlin-wise and we showed it today. We feel comfortable that we finally have our hot rod back. .

"We're right there on par with all of our competition in the hot weather and still believe we've got one of the best race cars in the cool weather, which shines a very bright light. We're looking forward to St. Louis. This weekend for Mopar, we had all the power and put it to the track."

**Jack Beckman, Infinite Hero Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car**

**(No. 5 Qualifier – 3.914 seconds at 330.55 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.085-second reaction time, 3.938 seconds at 330.63 mph) defeated No. 12 Cruz Pedregon (.092/4.027/318.39)

Rd. 2: (.066/3.952/326.40) defeated No. 4 Jonnie Lindberg (.083/11.160/95.71)

Semis: (.148/3.948/327.74) lost to No. 8 Courtney Force (.073/3.968/329.50)

"I'm not going to candy-coat it. It's 100 percent driver error. It was my worst light of the year. It was a very inopportune time to have my worst light of the year. We had a great car. I've always said we may not be the quickest car in hero conditions (cool weather), but throw a little bit of heat on the track and this Infinite Hero car's right at the top of the heap. We showed it today. I let the team down. That's a bitter feeling. That's tough, knowing everybody did their best and if I'd have done any other light this year would have won that race. So I'm going to shake it off, I'm going to think positive, we are going to take this thing to St. Louis with a winning mindset and see if we can get the trophy there."

**Tommy Johnson Jr., Make-A-Wish Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car**

**(No. 11 Qualifier – 3.957 seconds at 326.00 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.051-second reaction time, 4.226 seconds at 226.62 mph) defeated No. 6 Alexis DeJoria (.084/4.684/266.27)

Rd. 2: (.082/5.135/146.21) lost to No. 3 Ron Capps (.070/3.987/326.32)

"We've got some issues with the clutch and we've just struggled to get a handle on the clutch and the racetrack. It's was a difficult weekend and the guys kept working hard to try and fix it. If we're going to have a shot at the championship, we have to fix it. I'm sure (crew chief) John (Collins) and (assistant) Rip (Reynolds) and all the guys will really regroup this week and see if we can't pinpoint the problem. We've just got to win out. The championship is still doable but it's going to take at least four finals and we need to win them to get back on track."

**Tony Schumacher, U.S. Army Top Fuel Dragster**

**(No. 5 Qualifier – 3.736 seconds at 330.23 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.089-second reaction time, 3.754 seconds at 327.98 mph) defeated No. 12 Scott Palmer (no time - mechanical)

Rd. 2: (.066/3.873/311.49) lost to No. 4 Brittany Force (.077/3.743/330.47)

"We have a really good U.S. Army car and unfortunately we've just had something happen at the wrong time and it's put us in positions Sunday where we are facing cars in the second round that we should be racing in the semifinal or final. If we can qualify inside the top three, chances at winning increase. I know right now the focus is going to be other drivers as far as the Countdown goes, but if you look back over history the past couple of decades more often

than not, the U.S. Army team has been right there until the end of the title hunt."

### **Mopar/Dodge NHRA Sportsman Spotlight**

Mopar-powered drivers made a strong showing in the Stock Eliminator and Super Stock Eliminator categories during the Sportsman portion of the Dodge NHRA Nationals, with Scott Goshert and Richard Kay turning in the top performances for the Mopar brand.

In Stock Eliminator, Goshert drove his E/SA 1971 Plymouth Duster to the third round. The native of Laureldale, Pennsylvania made a pass of 10.896 seconds at 120.80 mph on a 10.72 dial-in. He had a .028-second reaction time.

The best Mopar performance in Super Stock Eliminator belonged to Richard Kay, who reached the quarterfinals in his SS/BM 1969 Plymouth Valiant. Kay turned in his best pass of the weekend in the round, running 8.780 to match his dial-in. The driver from East Meadow, New York, reached a speed of 150.88 and left the starting line with a .027 reaction time. He was bested by less than a foot at the finish. Three Mopar-powered vehicles appeared in the quarterfinals of the category.

Goshert and Kay each received the Dodge Top Finisher award, a program which provides \$500 to the Stock Eliminator and Super Stock Eliminator competitors who advance the farthest in a Dodge or Plymouth vehicle at all 24 national events. It is part of the Mopar and Dodge brands' deep commitment to Sportsman racers.

Super Stock class eliminations also took place in Reading, where five cars featuring Mopar power collected wins.

Gary Wolkwitz from Whitehouse Station, New Jersey, won SS/AH in his '68 Dodge Dart, Kingsville, Maryland's Thomas Baker Jr. took SS/GA in a '70 Plymouth Barracuda, Tom Sheehan of Belle Vernon, Pennsylvania, won GT/NA in a 2000 Chrysler Sebring, Jonathan Allegrucci of Scott Township, Pennsylvania, drove his '15 Challenger to the FSS/D win, and David Collette from Perryville, Maryland, claimed the FSS/F Wally in his '11 Challenger.

### **Up Next: NHRA Midwest Nationals**

The Countdown the Championship playoffs continue next week with a trip to the St. Louis area for the sixth annual NHRA Midwest Nationals at Gateway Motorsports Park. Last season Jack Beckman bested teammate Tommy Johnson Jr. to win an all-Mopar Funny Car final round. Mopar teammate Matt Hagan also claims both ends of the Funny Car track record, turning in a pass of 3.883 seconds at 330.47 mph in 2015.

Mopar-powered Ron Capps has won at Gateway three times in Funny Car, with Beckman having claimed two victories at the track. Last year's Top Fuel runner-up, Mopar driver Tony Schumacher, has also won at the facility twice.

The NHRA Midwest Nationals will take place from September 29 – October 1, and will also feature the fifth and final Factory Stock Showdown of 2017. The entire event will receive coverage on FOX Sports 1, with LIVE coverage of the elimination rounds scheduled for the network at 2 p.m. ET on Sunday, October 1.

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 20 of 24**

(Season Wins in Parentheses)

#### **NHRA Funny Car**

- 1. Ron Capps, Dodge Charger R/T (7) – 2,273**
- Robert Hight (3) – 2,265
- Courtney Force – 2,234
- 4. Matt Hagan, Dodge Charger R/T (3) – 2,183**
- 5. Jack Beckman, Dodge Charger R/T (2) – 2,173**
- 6. Tommy Johnson Jr., Dodge Charger R/T (1) – 2,159**
- J.R. Todd (2) – 2,135
- John Force (1) – 2,116
- Tim Wilkerson – 2,098
- Cruz Pedregon – 2,065

## **NHRA Top Fuel**

1. Steve Torrence (7) – 2,259
2. Doug Kalitta – (1) 2,237
3. Brittany Force (2) – 2,236
4. Antron Brown (4) – 2,208

## **5. Tony Schumacher, Mopar HEMI (1) – 2,174**

6. Clay Millican (1) – 2,171

## **7. Leah Pritchett, Mopar HEMI (4) – 2,162**

8. Terry McMillen – 2,083
9. Scott Palmer – 2,074
10. Shawn Langdon – 2,068

## **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 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](http://www.mopar.com) and the newly redesigned 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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