

## Capps Wins Eighth of Season in Mopar Dodge Funny Car at NHRA Midwest Nationals

- Ron Capps wins NHRA Midwest Nationals at Gateway Motorsports Park in Mopar Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car from Don Schumacher Racing (DSR)
- Mopar HEMI®-powered Funny Cars from have won 14 times in 2017
- Win is second in a row for Capps, eighth of season and 57th career win in Funny Car
- Three Mopar Dodge Funny Cars appear in second round
- Leah Pritchett and Tony Schumacher finish in second round in Mopar-powered Top Fuel dragsters
- Capps extends Funny Car points lead, Schumacher sits sixth to lead Mopar in Top Fuel standings
- Jerry Stein wins Dodge Top Finisher in Stock Eliminator, Brent Jones claims prize in Super Stock Eliminator

October 1, 2017, Madison, Ill. - Mopar Funny Car driver Ron Capps marched to his second win in a row on Sunday in his HEMI®-powered Dodge Charger R/T at a packed Gateway Motorsports Park, giving him his eighth victory of the year and the 14th overall for Mopar in the Funny Car category in 2017. The win in the sixth annual NHRA Midwest Nationals, held in the shadow of St. Louis' Gateway Arch, also extended Capps' points lead as the NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series Countdown to the Championship playoffs reach the halfway mark.

Capps' victory was the 19th overall for Mopar HEMI power in the Nitro categories (Funny Car and Top Fuel) in 2017. It was also the 18th time in 21 events to date this year that at least one Mopar Dodge Funny Car from Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) appeared in the final round.

Capps bested Swedish driver Jonnie Lindberg in the final, turning in a 3.879-second pass at 331.53 mph from the right lane to better Lindberg's 3.904 at 326.87. The two left the starting line at nearly the same time, with Capps posting a .072-second reaction time and Lindberg leaving just .001 later.

Capps, the defending Funny Car champion, began the Sunday elimination rounds by powering past fellow Dodge competitor Jim Campbell when Campbell turned on the red light. Capps then defeated teammate Jack Beckman by .010 to set up a showdown with 16-time champion John Force. Force got a slight advantage off the line, but neared the wall down track, while Capps maintained a clean pass in the center of the groove to reach his 11th final round of the year.

The win was the 57th Funny Car win for Capps, which is second all-time in the category.

The rest of the DSR Mopar Funny Cars suffered early-round exits. Matt Hagan opened his day in the Mopar/Sandvik Coromant Dodge Charger R/T by besting DSR Mopar teammate Tommy Johnson Jr. and the Make-A-Wish team on a clean pass. Hagan next took on Robert Hight, but got sideways near half-track after losing a cylinder and could never recover.

Jack Beckman and the Infinite Hero Dodge Charger R/T team from DSR meanwhile bested Del Worsham in the first round on a solid run while Worsham was forced to give up on the pass. Beckman was then defeated by Capps.

In Top Fuel, Leah Pritchett qualified No. 2 in the Papa John's Pizza/Mopar Pennzoil Top Fuel dragster from DSR and opened her day by defeating Ashley Sanford in round one. However, Pritchett went up in smoke just past the starting line in the second round and her day came to an end at the hands of eventual event winner Steve Torrence.

Pritchett's teammate Tony Schumacher drove his U.S. Army dragster featuring Mopar HEMI power from DSR past a

tire-smoking Troy Buff in the first round, but lost to Antron Brown in round two.

The sixth annual NHRA Midwest Nationals served as the third stop of the six-race NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series Countdown to the Championship. The event was contested under sunny skies and moderate fall temperatures, leading to quick times, fast speeds and several record-breaking runs. A sellout crowd was on hand at Gateway Motorsports Park on Saturday.

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

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

"Congratulations to Ron Capps and his Dodge Charger R/T team on their win at the NHRA Midwest Nationals. We're very proud of everyone who helped put Mopar HEMI power in the winner's circle this weekend, especially at the midway point of the Countdown to the Championship playoffs. The final three races of 2017 are sure to be exciting for all of us."

#### **Ron Capps, NAPA Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car** **(No. 3 Qualifier – 3.849 seconds at 332.51 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.075-second reaction time, 3.908 seconds at 328.70 mph) defeated No. 14 Jim Campbell (no show – red light)  
Rd. 2: (.070/3.885/328.86) defeated No. 6 Jack Beckman (.078/3.895/332.34)  
Semis: (.057/3.905/329.91) defeated No. 3 John Force (.047/3.962/274.33)  
Final: (.072/3.879/331.53) defeated No. 5 Jonnie Lindberg (.073/3.904/326.87)

"Last year we said a semifinal average was going to win the championship and we did that going into Pomona. We beat them with consistency, we didn't have a win. This year we went out second round, I lost on a holeshot in Charlotte, and we fixed that average by winning (at Reading) so that we got our semifinal average. Thank God (crew chief Rahn Tobler) gave me a great race car in Pennsylvania. I think that this year's even tougher.

"He (Tobler) is the best racer; he's so much fun to race with. I love his old-school mentality. He gave me the biggest compliment I've ever had working for him when he turned around to me after one of the rounds today in the pit area and I said, 'great job, man, great run, we didn't have lane choice, just a great job,' and he said, 'no, you're driving like a champion.'

#### **Matt Hagan, Mopar/Sandvik Coromant Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car** **(No. 8 Qualifier – 3.894 seconds at 330.96 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.063-second reaction time, 3.838 seconds at 334.73 mph) defeated No. 9 Tommy Johnson Jr. (.059/3.940/324.90)  
Rd. 2: (.057/4.253/216.17) lost to No. 1 Robert Hight (.034/279.15/330.31)

"Obviously we were just pressing really hard on race day. We went .83 first round and were low of the round. We just kind of (decided to) gas and go. We just made a few adjustments for the heat, but all in all we just were kind of like, 'let's leave it alone.' It's race day, man. You have to press. You're running Robert Hight and those boys and they're pressing. I mean they blew their stuff up trying to run hard. We've got three more races, we've got to make all three of them count."

#### **Leah Pritchett, Papa John's Pizza/Mopar Pennzoil Top Fuel Dragster** **(No. 2 Qualifier – 3.670 seconds at 329.10 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.070-second reaction time, 3.672 seconds at 332.75 mph) defeated No. 15 Ashley Sanford (.070/3.672/332.75)  
Rd. 2: (.073/8.484/67.26) lost to No. 7 Steve Torrence (.040/3.678/330.80)

"A couple steps forward in qualifying with our overall program gave us a good amount of confidence coming into race day. That early E2 exit, you can't sugarcoat in any sense of a way, we're halfway through the Countdown and that was probably the most important round by far. I'm giving everything that I've got; our team's giving everything that we've got at the moment. Give credit where credit's due, Steve (Torrence) had basically one of the most legit,

unbeatable packages of that round and we are going to do exactly what we've done all year: analyze, pick it up, move on to the next race. It isn't over yet, but the hill just got a lot steeper."

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

**(No. 6 Qualifier – 3.873 seconds at 331.77 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.082-second reaction time, 3.850 seconds at 333.49 mph) defeated No. 11 Del Worsham (.119/5.167/153.11)

Rd. 2: (.078/3.895/332.34) lost to No. 3 Ron Capps (.070/3.885/328.86)

"This has nothing to do with our team's attitude or our philosophy moving forward. We certainly think we've got a car that can win the next three races. But that round was our championship round. If we won that round, we stay in the race, keep earning points, and move closer to the top cars. We lost against the No. 1 car and it increased the spread. That was the biggest round of the year for us. We did everything very well; they did it a little better. There's nothing to do but go over and shake their hands."

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

**(No. 9 Qualifier – 3.897 seconds at 325.30 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.059-second reaction time, 3.940 seconds at 324.90 mph) lost to No. 8 Matt Hagan (.063/3.838/334.73)

"Realistically this probably killed our chances for a championship, but we can still finish higher in the standings. We've been fighting issues with our car and it's the wrong time of the year to have that. So the team will just continue to work through it, do the best we can, finish as high as we can, and more than anything try to prepare ourselves for next year. It's unfortunate we're out of it so soon, but not every year is going to be a successful year. So we'll learn from it, make ourselves better and come back stronger."

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

**(No. 3 Qualifier – 3.680 seconds at 327.66 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.076-second reaction time, 3.693 seconds at 324.75 mph) defeated No. 14 Troy Buff (.079/11.054/42.55)

Rd. 2: (.072/4.218/208.26) lost to No. 6 Antron Brown (.056/3.692/331.12)

"Everybody has seasons where they're unstoppable. We're getting there. Understand that the battles are big and the competition is excellent. That's just the way it goes. We'll fight on. We don't give up, we just battle. Say what you will about the points. All we can do is show up and try to win. I don't look at points because they don't mean anything until you reach a certain point. We've got a long way to go, still."

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

Dozens of vehicles competed in the Stock and Super Stock Eliminator categories during the Midwest Nationals, where Jerry Stein and Brent Jones turned in the top performances for Mopar.

In Stock Eliminator, Stein drove his D/SA 1969 Dodge Dart to the quarterfinal round. The driver from Brentwood, California, turned in a 10.749-second pass at 120.48 mph on a 10.68 dial-in. He had a .051-second reaction time.

Jones, who hails from Wheatland, Indiana, qualified No. 1 in Super Stock Eliminator and advanced to the third round in his FSS/K 2010 Dodge Challenger before bowing out. In the round he made a lap of 9.740 at 137.29 on a 9.33 dial-in. His reaction time at the starting line was .053.

Stein and Jones were each named the Dodge Top Finisher of the event and were awarded \$500 apiece for their efforts. The program is in place at all 24 national events this year and provides a payout to the top performing competitor driving either a Dodge or Plymouth vehicle in both the Stock Eliminator and Super Stock Eliminator categories. The total yearly payout of \$24,000 is part of Mopar and Dodge's commitment to Sportsman racers, which also includes an impressive contingency program.

#### **Up Next: NHRA FallNationals**

In two weeks the NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series is back in action with a trip to the Lonestar State for the 32nd

annual NHRA FallNationals at Texas Motorplex outside of Dallas. In 2016 Mopar's Matt Hagan bested teammate Ron Capps to win the Funny Car final. Mopar driver Jack Beckman also set the Funny Car speed record during the weekend with a pass reaching 333.66 mph.

Hagan has won the NHRA FallNationals twice, while Capps has one victory in the event. Mopar driver Tony Schumacher has taken the Top Fuel trophy at Texas Motorplex six times.

The FallNationals will take place from October 12 -15 and be broadcast throughout the weekend on FOX Sports 1. The elimination rounds will air LIVE on FS1 at 2 p.m. ET on Sunday, October 15.

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 21 of 24**

(Season Wins in Parentheses)

### **NHRA Funny Car**

- 1. Ron Capps, Dodge Charger R/T (8) – 2,395**
2. Robert Hight (3) – 2,349
3. Courtney Force – 2,287
- 4. Matt Hagan, Dodge Charger R/T (3) – 2,238**
- 5. Jack Beckman, Dodge Charger R/T (2) – 2,228**
6. John Force (1) – 2,197
- 7. Tommy Johnson Jr., Dodge Charger R/T (1) – 2,191**
8. J.R. Todd (2) – 2,168
9. Tim Wilkerson – 2,130
10. Cruz Pedregon – 2,096

### **NHRA Top Fuel**

1. Steve Torrence (8) – 2,376
2. Doug Kalitta – (1) 2,334
3. Brittany Force (2) – 2,293
4. Antron Brown (4) – 2,282
5. Clay Millican (1) – 2,235
- 6. Tony Schumacher, Mopar HEMI (1) – 2,234**
- 7. Leah Pritchett, Mopar HEMI (4) – 2,224**
8. Terry McMillen – 2,115
9. Scott Palmer – 2,105
10. Shawn Langdon – 2,100

### **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 MOtor 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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