

## **Mopar-powered Driver Beckman Wins All-Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car Final at NHRA Gatornationals**

- Mopar-powered Dodge Charger R/T driver Jack Beckman outruns Matt Hagan to win from pole at Gainesville Raceway
- Victory is 27th of Beckman's career and second this season for a Mopar Dodge//SRT driver
- Points leader Hagan wraps up wild weekend with runner-up showing in Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T in his 500th round of racing
- Trio of Mopar-powered Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car drivers advance to semifinals at Gainesville Raceway
- Papa John's/Mopar Dodge Top Fuel Dragster driver Leah Pritchett's day ends in quarterfinals
- Pritchett takes Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Pak to second round in Factory Stock Showdown to cap solid weekend
- Nichols, Kay earn Dodge Top Finisher awards at Gainesville
- More info on Mopar in NHRA available at <http://blog.mopar.com>
- New Dodge Garage (<http://www.dodgegarage.com/>), a digital content hub for muscle car and race enthusiasts launches; will include highlights from NHRA season

March 18, 2018, Gainesville, Florida - Jack Beckman capped off an amazing weekend for Mopar Dodge//SRT drivers by racing from the pole to defeat teammate Matt Hagan and take the victory in an all-Mopar Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car final round at the 49th Annual NHRA Gatornationals.

Beckman's victory was the second for a Mopar Dodge//SRT driver this year, as well as the second from the No. 1 spot. Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) Mopar Dodge Funny Car pilots also claimed three of four spots in the semifinals, and own the top two spots in the Funny Car standings, as well as three of the top four positions.

En route to his 27th career win and his first at historic Gainesville Raceway, Beckman got down the track to make eight solid runs in his Infinite Hero Dodge Charger R/T during qualifying and eliminations, including a 3.911-second elapsed time to claim the No. 1 spot.

He kicked off eliminations by leaving first and leading all the way against fellow Dodge driver and No. 16 qualifier Jim Campbell. In round two, Beckman's 3.973-second run at 318.54 mph helped him quickly overcome a slight starting line advantage by opponent Del Worsham. Beckman was slower in the semifinals but his 4.478-second pass was enough to hold off Shawn Landon, who smoked the tires.

The all-DSR Mopar Dodge battle between Beckman and Hagan was a thriller, with Beckman off the line first but with Hagan closing the gap. In the end, Beckman was able to hold off the hard-charging Hagan, taking the holeshot win with a quicker .051 reaction time paired with a 4.035/323.58 pass to his teammate's slower .062 reaction time and 4.034/322.04 mark. His performance this weekend also moved Beckman into the second spot in the point standings.

Hagan's run to the final round in his Mopar Express Lane Dodge included a first-round win over Tim Wilkerson and then a wild, fiery ride against Robert Hight in the quarterfinals. Hight's engine exploded near the 660-ft mark, with his Funny Car body flying apart. As Hagan raced by in the right lane his engine did the same, sending the car body flying high in the air, but Hagan was able to cross the line at 4.027/291.26 to earn a hard-fought round win.

The Mopar Express Lane Dodge team and crew chief Dickie Venables thrashed and dug deep to get a backup car ready for Hagan to face DSR teammate and Mopar-powered Dodge Charger R/T driver Ron Capps in the semifinals.

The hard work paid off as Hagan, the Funny Car points leader, posted a solid 4.056/310.91 to advance to his 49th career final round and reach a remarkable milestone, his 500th career round of racing.

Capps' road to the semifinals included a first-round victory over Bob Tasca III that earned him lane choice in round two versus Courtney Force. In the quarterfinals, the 2016 Funny Car champion was first off of the starting line and never trailed for the win with a 4.060-second pass. The fourth DSR team member, Tommy Johnson Jr., the most recent Funny Car runner-up, defeated Cruz Pedregon in round one, but in the quarterfinals Johnson's opponent Shawn Langdon was able to pull ahead early and take the win against Johnson's tire smoking effort.

Mopar-powered NHRA Top Fuel dragster DSR teammates Leah Pritchett and Tony Schumacher were dealt similar fates on Sunday at Gainesville Raceway, as both bowed out in round two.

Pritchett clocked a 3.735/321.50 in her Papa John's/Mopar Dodge dragster to knock out Terry Haddock to open eliminations, and also showcased her quick trigger reflexes with a .053 reaction time at the starting tree, quickest of the round. Pritchett's day ended in the quarterfinals with a 3.779/327.51 that was second-quickest of the session but wasn't enough to overcome teammate Antron Brown's even quicker and faster 3.793/324.20 run.

After resetting the Gainesville Raceway speed record earlier in the weekend and running low E.T. of the first qualifying session, defending event champion Tony Schumacher looked primed for a repeat. The U.S. Army dragster driver took down Brittany Force in round one with a 3.717/329.26 pass. In the quarterfinals, Schumacher's starting line advantage quickly evaporated after he smoked the tires, preventing the "Sarge" from chasing down round winner Shawn Reed.

### **Mopar Dodge//SRT NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series: Notes & Quotes**

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

"Two wins at the first three events is a great start to the season for the Mopar and Dodge brands. This victory is a testament not only to HEMI engine power, but also to the talent and skill of Jack Beckman, his team and the entire Don Schumacher Racing organization."

#### **Steve Beahm, Head of Passenger Cars, Dodge//SRT, Chrysler and FIAT, FCA North America**

"Congratulations to Jack Beckman on racing his Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car to the win today at the NHRA Gatornationals. Jack's victory really showcases how the increased teamwork between Dodge and Mopar this NHRA season is already paying dividends."

#### **Jack Beckman, Infinite Hero Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car (No. 1 Qualifier – 3.911 ET)**

Rd. 1: (.061-second reaction time, 3.934 seconds at 327.43 mph) beat No. 16 Jim Campbell (.138/4.183/305.29)

Rd. 2: (.081/3.973/318.54) beat No. 9 Del Worsham (.060/4.032/315.56)

Rd. 3: (.083/4.478/199.35) beat No. 4 Shawn Langdon (.143/9.414/81.39)

Rd. 4: (.051/4.035/323.58) beat No. 6 Matt Hagan (.062/4.034/322.04)

"The Gatornationals came on the schedule in 1970 when NHRA went from four races to seven. That was the super season, the first year they crowned a Funny Car champion. 1970 was a big year for our sport, and it's been at this track ever since then, and I've never gotten close. It was such a bucket list thing (to win here).

"I flew in a day earlier, and on Thursday I went to the Hall of Fame (dinner), and I got to present Johnny Gray with the Pat Garlits award in honor of Terry Chandler, who is still on the side of our car and made all of this possible. There are 21 of us who have jobs today because of Terry Chandler and how big her heart was, and now her husband Doug wants to carry it on. He's loving it because he knows Terry is looking down and saying, 'Alright -- my boys did it.'"

#### **Matt Hagan, Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car (No. 6 Qualifier – 3.941 ET)**

Rd. 1: (.086-second reaction time, 3.976 seconds at 328.38 mph) beat No. 11 Tim Wilkerson (.073/7.821/131.27)  
Rd. 2: (.066/4.027/291.26) beats No. 3 Robert Hight (.073/4.067/265.53)  
Rd. 3: (.088/4.056/310.91) beats No. 7 Ron Capps (.072/9.134/81.86)  
Rd. 4: (.062/4.034/322.04) lost to No. 1 Jack Beckman (.051/4.035/323.58)

"We had a pretty great race day, to be honest. I've never been to the finals in Gainesville. We obviously had a huge blow up in the second round, then to watch these guys pull the other car back out and put it together in the amount of time they had, then turn a win light on against Capps, then to be able to go to a final, it was huge and it speaks for itself.

"These guys put a great race car together. We ran a really close race out there. It was within one [thousandth of a second] but it was one of those deals where I just got left on by Jack Beckman. You have to go home and work on that and not let these guys down who worked all day long to get you there. We'll take these next few weeks and reevaluate and focus and move forward."

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

**(No. 7 Qualifier – 3.944 ET)**

Rd. 1: (.083-second reaction time, 3.959 seconds at 324.28 mph) beat No. 10 Bob Tasca (.076/3.981/325.30)  
Rd. 2: (.074/4.060/317.64) beat No. 2 Courtney Force (.096/8.255/88.83)  
Rd. 3: (.072/9.134/81.86) lost to No. 6 Matt Hagan (.088/4.056/310.91)

"You know, it's such a big race, the Gatornationals. These big races seem to take a little bit more to get over. And the further you go on Sunday, like we did getting to the semifinals, you feel like you have a good shot. The way I look at it, the more runs you give (crew chief) Rahn Tobler, the more competitive our car is going to get, and I really felt like we had a handle on it. For some reason, it (the car) smoked the tires at the hit of the throttle, and we haven't done that in a long time. We'll have to look and see what it did, and go on to the next race."

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

**(No. 5 Qualifier – 3.933 ET)**

Rd. 1: (.062-second reaction time, 3.995 seconds at 325.69 mph) beat No. 12 Cruz Pedregon (.073/4.083/298.87)  
Rd. 2: (.056/4.841/172.10) lost to No. 4 Shawn Langdon (.078/4.025/313.37)

"We're making a little progress, but we're going to have to keep working at it. We've got good data on the six-disc (clutch). When track conditions are good we run well and qualify well. We just need to keep learning on what adjustments to make when the track conditions change and it gets hot out. So, we're making some strides, we're still going a round or two. If we can continue this progress, we'll get better and better."

#### **Leah Pritchett, Mopar Dodge Top Fuel Dragster**

**(No. 6 Qualifier – 3.811 ET)**

Rd. 1: (.053-second reaction time, 3.735 seconds at 321.50 mph) beat No. 11 Terry Haddock (.134/4.032/284.75)  
Rd. 2: (.098/3.779/327.51) lost to No. 3 Antron Brown (.067/3.793/324.20)

"We are still making progress. I feel like we have our gremlins out of the way. Our hot rod is back and it showed it on the track today. I take the blame for losing to my U.S. Army teammate Antron Brown. He came out stronger. It's extremely frustrating. I missed it. I've been on it all weekend in both cars and missed it when it counted most. We win together as a team and it feels great. The highs are high and the lows are low. This has been an exciting, very high-paced weekend in Gainesville. I'm disappointed it ended early, and on my shoulders, but we'll bounce back."

"I feel like weekends like this where I have the chance to stretch my capabilities will only continue to help me in the future. Learning how to differentiate between cars (her Top Fuel and Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Pak) in a moment's notice is something that requires a lot of focus and versatility. We're getting better at it and I'm excited to have a handful more weekends like this ahead of me in 2018."

**Tony Schumacher, U.S. Army Top Fuel Dragster**  
**(No. 4 Qualifier – 3.785 ET)**

Rd. 1: (.060-second reaction time, 3.717 seconds at 329.26 mph) beat No. 13 Brittany Force (.085/3.742/329.10)  
Rd. 2: (.069/4.604/200.77) lost to No. 12 Shawn Reed (.094/4.027/245.58)

"We worked hard all weekend to put ourselves in a good position today and that showed in the first round when we made our best pass of the weekend. This U.S. Army team won't quit. We all want to win so bad. We'll get back after it and just keep plugging away. This was a great weekend for the fans of NHRA and we were just hoping to make Gatornationals history today. We'll have to come back next year and try again."

**Mopar Dodge//SRT NHRA Sportsman Spotlight**

Leah Pritchett's busy schedule at the NHRA Gatornationals included an entry in the NHRA Sportsman Factory Stock Showdown category in the seat of a supercharged Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Pak, along with her usual Top Fuel duties.

The DSR star drove to the No. 7 qualifying spot and a victory in the first round of eliminations. Pritchett was first off the starting line with a .038 reaction time in round two against Randy Taylor (.110), but was unable to beat her opponent to the stripe, posting a 8.353/163.91 pass to Taylor's 8.189/165.99 run.

A pair of Mopar-powered NHRA Sportsman racers came away with Dodge Top Finisher awards at the NHRA Gatornationals. Jim Nichols from Centerburg, Ohio, drove his high-flying AA/SA HEMI-powered 1965 Plymouth Belvedere to the second round at the NHRA Gatornationals, earning the award and \$500 bonus in Super Stock. In the Stock category, Richard Kay of East Meadow, New York, raced his small block Mopar engine-powered SS/BM 1969 Plymouth Valiant to a third-round finish. Kay, who claimed a Dodge Top Finisher award in 2017, scored his second at Gainesville.

**Dodge Garage: New Digital Hub for Drag Racing News**

Fans now have a new one-stop destination for Mopar and Dodge drag racing news.

Dodge Garage (<http://www.dodgegarage.com>) is a digital content hub and premier destination for drag racing and muscle car enthusiasts.

Fans can view daily updates and get access to an online racing HQ, news, events, galleries, available downloads and merchandise. Dodge Garage features include exclusive content, such as a three-part video series "Chasing the Title," that offers fans a unique, behind-the-scenes glimpse at Pritchett and her DSR team in action.

For information on Mopar on and off the track, check out the Mopar brand's official blog, <http://blog.mopar.com>.

**Up Next: NHRA Four-Wide Nationals**

Next on the schedule for the Mopar and Dodge//SRT squad is the NHRA Four-Wide Nationals, scheduled for April 6-8 at The Strip at Las Vegas Motor Speedway. The event will be the first at the venue since the dragstrip was reconfigured to accommodate the unique "four-wide" drag racing format, which features drivers competing in four separate lanes simultaneously.

**2018 NHRA Championship — Point Standings After Round 3 of 24**  
**(Season Wins in Parentheses)**

**NHRA Funny Car**

- 1. Matt Hagan, Dodge Charger R/T (1) – 268**
- 2. Jack Beckman, Dodge Charger R/T (1) – 247**
3. Courtney Force (1) – 219
- 4. Ron Capps, Dodge Charger R/T – 218**
5. Robert Hight – 185
- 6. Tommy Johnson Jr., Dodge Charger R/T – 182**
7. Shawn Langdon – 174

8t. Jonnie Lindberg – 117

8t. J.R. Todd – 117

10. Del Worsham – 116

#### **NHRA Top Fuel**

1. Steve Torrence (1) –217

2. Antron Brown – 210

3. Clay Millican – 204

**4. Tony Schumacher, Mopar HEMI – 198**

5. Doug Kalitta (1) – 182

6. Richie Crampton (1) – 163

7. Scott Palmer –161

**8. Leah Pritchett, Mopar Dodge HEMI – 147**

9. Brittany Force – 117

10. Terry McMillen – 116

#### **About Dodge//SRT**

Dodge//SRT offers a complete lineup of performance vehicles that stand out in their own segments. Dodge is FCA North America's mainstream performance brand, and SRT is positioned as the ultimate performance halo of the Dodge brand, together creating a complete and balanced performance brand with one vision and one voice.

For more than 100 years, the Dodge brand has carried on the spirit of brothers John and Horace Dodge, who founded the company in 1914. Their influence continues today. New for 2018, the 840-horsepower Dodge Challenger SRT Demon, the fastest quarter-mile production car in the world and most powerful muscle car ever, is taking the world by storm, along with the new 2018 Dodge Durango SRT, America's fastest, most powerful and most capable three-row SUV, and the 707-horsepower Dodge Challenger SRT Hellcat Widebody. These new SRT ultimate performance models join a brand lineup that includes the Durango, Grand Caravan, Journey, Charger and Challenger, including the 707-horsepower Challenger SRT Hellcat and the Charger SRT Hellcat, the quickest, fastest and most powerful sedan in the world.

#### **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 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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