

Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Pak Drivers Pritchett, Hometown Favorite Johnson Ready to Battle at Bristol in Factory Stock

- Leah Pritchett to race in both Top Fuel dragster and NHRA Factory Stock Showdown Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Pak for third time in 2018
- Tennessee native and 2012 Pro Stock champ Allen Johnson to compete in Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Pak at NHRA Thunder Valley Nationals
- Pritchett's Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) teammate Mark Pawuk to make Factory Stock Showdown debut in Drag Pak at Bristol Dragway

June 12, 2018, Auburn Hills, Mich. - Mopar Dodge NHRA Top Fuel dragster driver Leah Pritchett is set to double her fun at Bristol Dragway this weekend, as the Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) star will also campaign her Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Pak in the SAM Tech Factory Stock Showdown during the NHRA Thunder Valley Nationals, scheduled for June 15-17 at Bristol (Tennessee) Dragway.

Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Pak competitor Allen Johnson, the hometown favorite and longtime Mopar Dodge driver who hails from nearby Greeneville, Tennessee, will join Pritchett in the mix for the Factory Stock Showdown win. Pritchett's new DSR teammate, Mark Pawuk, who announced his Factory Stock entry at the NHRA Charlotte event in April, will also make his Drag Pak debut at Bristol.

Pritchett will compete in both her Top Fuel and Drag Pak machines for the third time this season. She guided her 354-cubic-inch HEMI® engine-powered Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Pak to the No. 1 qualifying spot at the most recent Factory Stock event in Charlotte, and has raced to a win and a runner-up appearance in the last four events in her Top Fuel dragster.

Owner of six career wins in Top Fuel, Pritchett is hoping to claim her first Factory Stock Wally trophy this weekend.

"It's Bristol, baby," said Pritchett. "I always look forward to running in the Thunder Valley. We've got some good track history and data there, with a runner up finish last year. We have a fair amount of momentum happening right now, and even though Bristol presents a unique and difficult atmosphere for tuners, making as much Mopar power and putting it to the track is what I'm looking forward to for this team. Additionally, we've made some suspension changes to our Factory Stock program, and of course gearing changes to compensate for the altitude.

"We feel this program is getting stronger with every race. It will be (teammate) Mark (Pawuk's) first race in FSXX, and I typically never weigh on the side of having any more particular experience in a car or class than a teammate, but I look forward to being the best teammate possible to Mark. He did great during licensing, as expected, and I look forward to his competition-side showing through as we both battle through that stacked field."

For 2012 NHRA Pro Stock World Champion Johnson and his father and crew chief, Roy Johnson, the transition from the pro classes to Sportsman has been a learning process. The chance to shakedown their Drag Pak in recent test sessions at Bristol has the duo feeling optimistic heading into Father's Day weekend.

"We were able to make 16 runs in testing at Bristol, and that's got us feeling really positive heading into this weekend," said Johnson, who stepped away from Pro Stock competition at the end of the 2017 season. "We think we're a lot closer to where we need to be than where we were after the first two Factory Stock races.

"It's always good to be home at Bristol and see all our old friends. No matter what class we're competing in, the fans there have always supported us and had our backs."

Driving the second Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Pak entry for DSR, Pawuk joins the elite team after an 11-year hiatus from NHRA competition. He previously competed in Pro Stock, where Pawuk raced to six victories before making his final Pro Stock appearance at Richmond in 2006. Like teammate Pritchett, Pawuk's Drag Pak will also be prepped and maintained by three-time world champ NHRA Sportsman racer Kevin Helms.

"I never really retired, rather I just sort of stepped away," said Pawuk, known as "The Cowboy" to fans. "I wasn't quite ready to hang up my driving shoes for good just yet, and I felt like I had some unfinished business, so this was a great opportunity to give it another shot. My goal is to go out and get another Wally. I look forward to working with Kevin and my new teammate, Leah, to build this program for DSR and make it a very successful Factory Stock team."

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