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Don Schumacher Racing Looks to Extend Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car Win Streak at NHRA Gatornationals

- The National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) returns to Florida for the 51st annual Amalie Oil Gatornationals at historic Gainesville Raceway after a six-month delay
- The Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Redeye-themed livery remains on Matt Hagan's Funny Car and Leah Pruett's Top Fuel dragster for the Gatornationals
- Don Schumacher Racing's (DSR) quartet of Funny Car drivers look to extend their streak of nine-consecutive event wins at the Gatornationals
- DSR driver Leah Pruett arrives in Gainesville second in the Top Fuel Championship standings with a runner-up finish at NHRA U.S. Nationals
- Mark Pawuk drives Empaco Equipment Mopar Drag Pak to Gainesville staging lanes second in Factory Stock Showdown championship

September 22, 2020, Auburn Hills, Mich. - After four National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Mello Yello Drag Racing Series events were held consecutively in Indianapolis following the mid-July restart of the revamped 2020 season, the championship battle now moves to Florida this weekend for the 51st annual NHRA Amalie Oil Gatornationals. Even a six-month delay from racing in Florida hasn't lessened the anticipation and excitement that comes with the Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) Mopar Dodge//SRT race cars competing at the historic event.

Ron Capps has put his DSR Dodge Charger in the winner's circle at the Gatornationals three times, including back-to-back Wally trophies in 2006-2007 and a victory in 2015, Jack Beckman won in 2018, and Matt Hagan and Tommy Johnson Jr. are hoping to be first-time winners. Leah Pruett is also looking for her first Gatornats event win in either Top Fuel or Factory Stock Showdown competition.

Also returning to the drag strip is the "Demon-possessed" Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Redeye-themed DSR race cars of Hagan and Pruett. For a fifth straight event Hagan's Funny Car and Pruett's Top Fuel dragster will feature the fierce-looking red, black and chrome paint scheme in tribute to the new 797-horsepower Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Redeye, the most powerful and fastest mass-produced sedan in the world.

Adding to the anticipation of competing at the Gatornats this weekend is the opportunity for the DSR quartet of Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Cars to extend a nine-event winning streak that dates back to the October 2019 FallNationals at Texas Motorplex with Hagan's victory aboard the Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Widebody. All four DSR Dodge//SRT entries have contributed to the continuous string of victories with Hagan leading the charge with four wins, Beckman adding three, while Johnson and Capps each providing a Wally trophy to the count. Three of those occasions featured an all-DSR Dodge//SRT final round battle for the win.

The only previous time in series history that a team swept 10 consecutive race wins in a single NHRA category was during the 2017 season when the same lineup of DSR Funny Car drivers contributed to that streak. Capps posted six of those 10 wins, with Beckman adding two, while Hagan and Johnson had one each.

The chance to claim a 10th consecutive win in the Funny Car category at the GatorNats comes after the team achieved an unprecedented milestone of 350 NHRA national event victories at the U.S. Nationals with Beckman's winning drive behind the wheel of his Infinite Hero Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat. It also comes with just five national events left to fight for the 2020 NHRA Funny Car Championship title and all four DSR drivers in a fierce battle atop the top five positions in the standings. Beckman leads with a pair of wins and has Hagan on his heels with a 35-point

deficit and two victories of his own. Johnson stays close in third place just 22 points behind Hagan, while Capps rounds out the top five.

Battling for a championship title in the Top Fuel category is Pruett, who has positioned her Mopar dragster in second place between competitors Doug Kalitta and Steve Torrance. She is challenging for the lead based on her runner-up finish at the U.S. Nationals and while she hasn't yet hoisted a Wally trophy yet this season, she has won a round at every event this year, something that points leader Kalitta can't say.

Pruett is pulling double duty again this weekend as she will compete in the SAMTech.edu NHRA Factory Stock Showdown (FSS) class aboard her Mopar Drag Pak alongside teammate Mark Pawuk, with qualifying scheduled to begin on Friday. Pawuk comes into Gainesville Raceway second in points with four events left after driving his Empaco Equipment Mopar Drag Pak to a No.2 qualifying effort and runner-up finish at the U.S. Nationals.

NHRA qualifying highlights will be broadcast on FS1 on Saturday, September 26, at 5 p.m. ET, while television coverage of the elimination rounds, including LIVE finals at Amalie Motor Oil NHRA Gatornationals, will air on Sunday, September 27, on FS1 beginning at 2 p.m. ET.

ADDITIONAL NOTES and QUOTES:

Jack Beckman, Infinite Hero Foundation Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car

Beckman is the current Funny Car points leader with two wins and two runner-up finishes in six races this season. He won the Gatornationals Funny Car Wally in 2018.

"With a maximum of 20 rounds of eliminations left, and the fact that this championship is the first since 2006 that will be determined based on cumulative points, a win at Gainesville could prove essential to winning this year's championship."

Matt Hagan, Mopar Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Redeye Funny Car

Hagan is second in points with two wins and two No. 1 qualifier positions. While he did make it to a final round of eliminations, he has not yet won at Gainesville Raceway.

"I have never won Gainesville. I've been to the final there, Jack Beckman beat me in 2018, so I really want to put a Gainesville Wally (trophy) on the shelf. We definitely have the car to do that this year. Our Dodge Hellcat Redeye is really responding well to the adjustments (crew chief) Dickie Venables has been making. I've got a really strong race car underneath me, my lights have been great, and I've been pretty shallow and making sure we keep lane choice.

"The package we're creating this year has been great. We've won a few races. The points battle is always a dogfight, but especially this year with no points reset. Everything is coming down to these last few races, and it's going to be a battle to the end. Our DSR team cars are tough, there's just no way around it. My teammates are good drivers, good leavers, they have good race cars, good tuners, and all of the same parts and pieces that we do, so it'll come down to who will have the best tune-up/driver combo. I've won a championship with Dickie (2014), and my first in 2011, so I understand the pressure and what it takes to get there. Sometimes you just have to sit back and trust in your team and allow all of the hard work they've put in over the year and the winter to come to you, so I'm just going to drive this Dodge Hellcat as best as I can, and focus on putting on four win lights this weekend."

Tommy Johnson Jr., MD Anderson Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car

Johnson has one win and one runner-up finish this season along with three No.1 qualifier positions to sit third in points behind his DSR teammates Beckman and Hagan.

"The points battle has come down to three of us from the same team and the pressure is on. We know what the remaining schedule is going to be, we know how many races are left to gain as many points as we can. The U.S. Nationals didn't go the way we had planned. We had some unfortunate parts damage first round that cost us the win and really hurt us with points. We had been looking so good.

"Gainesville isn't necessarily a must-win, but it's a 'must do really well' weekend and we need to get a lot of good points so we can come out of there and still be in the race with my teammates. They're going to be tough. I know what kind of competition they are, and what they have, and we'll have to bring our best. It's just like any other year;

when it comes down to crunch time, you have to be on your game, and hopefully, we've got all of our bad luck and misfortune out of the way and we can make a real run at it these last five and see what we can do."

Ron Capps, NAPA Auto Parts Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car

Capps has one win, one semi-final appearance, and a No.2 qualifier position to put him fifth in points. His runs in eliminations have been ended by DSR teammates in five of six events this season. Capps has three wins at the Gatornationals including back-to-back wins in 2006-2007 and 2015.

"We have a great streak going with the DSR Dodge Funny Cars, but one of the things I love about Don Schumacher is that you'd never know it. He is throttle down and when you talk to him, you'd think that we haven't won a race in two years, and I don't mean that in a negative way. I mean it as in, he wants you to go up there and just absolutely crush your competition, and that's what we're trying to do. He's ultra-competitive.

"I think with the NAPA team, you're going to see more of what you saw at the last two Indy races, and that is, pushing it. We're going to push it quite a bit more than we would have before. We won Indy 3 which was great, and we made up a lot of points there. Qualifying No. 1 during the first session of the U.S. Nationals, and then every other session we gathered those qualifying bonus points. We were one of the top three cars during every run, and I think that's what you're going to see at these last five races because really, it's like a mini Countdown, and that's how you have to approach it. Our teammates and J.R. Todd are ahead of us, but it doesn't matter. When a world championship is on the line, we know we're going to have to defeat the best cars anyways. I'm looking forward to this championship chase because I think you're going to see a different mentality from (crew chief) Rahn Tobler and our NAPA team, and a little more aggressiveness."

Leah Pruett, Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Redeye Top Fuel Dragster

Pruett is second in points on the strength of her runner-up finish at the NHRA U.S. Nationals, three semi-final finishes, a No.2 qualifier position and three No.3 starting positions in six races to date.

"Indy is great, and we're all very fortunate to have been able to run there as many times as we did, but the essence of traveling and seeing our various fan groups across the country is something I've truly missed. We traditionally have not had a great deal of racing success at the Gatornationals, which brings me to my favorite overall Gainesville memory, which was setting the stock Dodge Demon record on a cool late evening with the talented SRT team back in 2017. Now that we are continuing to adorn the Hellcat Redeye livery at the Gatornationals, I hope to create our very best memory there yet, by putting the themed dragster of Dodge's most currently available, highest HP factory produced car, the Hellcat Redeye, in the winners circle. Something I feel we are outrageously close to doing.

"The championship math is simple. We are basically in what some would call 'countdown weather' without a countdown. We are aware of our position two-and-a-half rounds (50 points) behind Doug (Kalitta) and with Steve Torrence half of a round (10 points) behind us, but that is not our focus. They and the other strong competitors are not our focus. Qualifying low, heightening our adaptability and staying focused on our hot rod is what we believe will yield us the results we want."

Mark Pawuk, Empaco Equipment Mopar Drag Pak– Factory Stock Shootout

Coming off his Factory Stock Showdown (FSS) No. 2 qualifying effort and runner-up finish at "the Big Go," Mark Pawuk drives his Empaco Equipment Mopar Drag Pak into the NHRA Gatornationals second in the FSS championship battle.

"After qualifying No. 2 and going to the finals at the U.S. Nationals, we definitely have shown that we have revived our program. I'm looking forward to the Empaco Equipment Dodge Challenger Drag Pak having another nice, long Sunday and going rounds in Gainesville this weekend. The team is going to test with Leah (Pruett) before the race to try out some new parts and pieces which we think will make us be even more competitive. (Crew chief) Kevin Helms did a great job turning our performance around from that first showing in Indy this year, and we look forward to continuing it this weekend."

Leah Pruett, Dodge Challenger Mopar Drag Pak – Factory Stock Shootout

Pruett sits just outside two points out of the top-10 in the FSS standings with four events left.

"We have been unable to test for months until this week, which brings me great joy leading into this race. Heading

into to South Georgia Motorsports Park now with some setup changes Kevin Helms has been wanting to try that will hopefully bring Mark (Pawuk) and I even closer to that win we are both hunting for. I'm proud of Mark and his success in Indy and couldn't ask for a better teammate."

NHRA Championship Points Standings:

Following the 2020 DENSO Spark Plugs NHRA U.S. Nationals

FUNNY CAR (season wins in parentheses)

- 1. Jack Beckman (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 517 (2)**
- 2. Matt Hagan (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 482 (2)**
- 3. Tommy Johnson Jr. (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 460 (1)**
4. J.R. Todd – 387
- 5. Ron Capps (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 376 (1)**
6. Bob Tasca III – 355
7. Tim Wilkerson – 348
8. Alexis DeJoria – 241
9. Cruz Pedregon – 234
10. Paul Lee – 225

TOP FUEL (season wins in parentheses)

1. Doug Kalitta – 492 (1)
- 2. Leah Pruett (Mopar Dodge//SRT) – 442**
3. Steve Torrance – 432 (2)
4. Justin Ashley – 370 (1)
5. Billy Torrance – 331 (1)
6. Shawn Langdon – 330 (1)
7. Antron Brown – 316
8. Terry McMillen – 305
9. Clay Millican – 279
10. TJ Zizzo – 179

DodgeGarage: Digital Hub for Drag Racing News

Fans can follow all the NHRA's action this season at DodgeGarage, the one-stop portal for Dodge//SRT and Mopar drag-racing news. The site includes daily updates and access to an online racing HQ, news, events, galleries, available downloads, and merchandise. For more information, visit www.dodgegarage.com.

@DodgeMoparMotorsports on Instagram

The [@DodgeMoparMotorsports](https://www.instagram.com/dodge_mopar_motorsports/) Instagram channel continues to share content capturing Dodge//SRT Mopar drivers on the track. Fans can see action from the NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series and NHRA Sportsman grassroots racers competing in classes such as Factory Stock Showdown, Stock and Super Stock, as well as additional motorsports series.

Official Driving School of Dodge//SRT

Dodge is the official sponsor of the Bondurant School of High Performance Driving in Chandler, Arizona, where guests get behind the wheels of the fastest street-legal cars in the world with professional instruction and time on the track. Customers who buy a new SRT model receive one full-day session as part of the Dodge//SRT Package and have the opportunity to learn how to get the optimum performance from their new vehicles in a controlled environment. For more information, visit dodgegarage.com/track-experience.

Mopar

Mopar (a simple contraction of the words MOTO and PARTS) is the service, parts and customer-care brand for FCA vehicles around the globe. Born in 1937 as the name of a line of antifreeze products, the Mopar brand has evolved

over more than 80 years to represent both complete care and authentic performance for owners and enthusiasts worldwide.

Mopar made its mark in the 1960s during the muscle-car era, with Mopar Performance Parts to enhance speed and handling for both road and racing use, and expanded to include technical service and customer support. Today, the Mopar brand's global reach distributes more than 500,000 parts and accessories in more than 150 markets. With more than 50 parts distribution centers and 25 customer-contact centers globally, Mopar integrates service, parts and customer-care operations in order to enhance customer and dealer support worldwide.

Complete information on the Mopar brand is available at www.mopar.com. Mopar is part of the portfolio of brands offered by global automaker Fiat Chrysler Automobiles. For more information regarding FCA (NYSE: FCAU/ MTA: FCA), please visit www.fcagroup.com.

Dodge//SRT

For more than 100 years, the Dodge brand has carried on the spirit of brothers John and Horace Dodge. Their influence continues today as Dodge shifts into high gear with muscle cars and SUVs that deliver unrivaled performance in each of the segments where they compete.

2021 marks the year that Dodge is distilled into a pure performance brand, offering Hellcat-powered, 700+ horsepower SRT versions of every model across the lineup. For the 2021 model year, Dodge delivers the drag-strip dominating 807-horsepower Dodge Challenger SRT Super Stock, the new 797-horsepower Dodge Charger SRT Redeye, the most powerful and fastest mass-produced sedan in the world, and the new 710-horsepower Dodge Durango SRT Hellcat, the most powerful SUV ever. Combined, these three muscle cars make Dodge the industry's most powerful brand, offering more horsepower than any other American brand across its entire lineup.

In June 2020, Dodge was named the "#1 Brand in Initial Quality," making it the first domestic brand ever to rank No. 1 in the J.D. Power Initial Quality Study (IQS). Dodge is part of the portfolio of brands offered by global automaker Fiat Chrysler Automobiles. For more information regarding FCA (NYSE: FCAU/ MTA: FCA), please visit www.fcagroup.com.

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