

Leah Pruett Steps Away From NHRA Competition to Focus on Family, Hall of Fame Racer Tony Stewart to Drive Dodge//SRT Direct Connection NHRA Top Fuel Dragster in 2024

- Tony Stewart Racing (TSR) announced that Top Fuel driver Leah Pruett will temporarily step away from 2024 NHRA competition in her Dodge//SRT Direct Connection dragster to focus on starting a family with husband Tony Stewart
- Stewart, the former NASCAR, IndyCar and USAC champion, will take over the driving chores in the TSR Dodge//SRT Direct Connection Top Fueler after finishing second in the 2023 NHRA national Top Alcohol Dragster division in his rookie campaign in NHRA competition
- Stewart, a 13-time motorsports series champion and NASCAR Hall of Famer, made his NHRA full-season debut last year, scoring two national and two regional event wins
- Pruett drove the TSR Dodge//SRT Direct Connection dragster to third in the 2023 NHRA Top Fuel points with victories at Norwalk, Ohio, and Dallas, Texas
- Pruett's 2023 campaign led her to a chance to capture the Top Fuel World Championship in the final round at the final race at Pomona, California
- Pruett will remain as a Dodge Direct Connection and Mopar brand ambassador and continue to be involved in various aspects of the TSR Nitro organization
- Stewart's 2024 NHRA Top Fuel effort will be led by crew chief Neal Strausbaugh and car chief Mike Domagala in the 21-event national campaign
- Stewart will team with reigning NHRA Funny Car World Champion Matt Hagan in the 21-race 2024 NHRA Mission Foods Pro Drag Racing Series in the two-car TSR Dodge//SRT Direct Connection nitro operation
- In 2023, Pruett and Hagan combined for eight NHRA national event victories for TSR with Hagan scoring the team's first World Championship
- Follow Dodge in NHRA action at [DodgeGarage.com](https://www.dodgegarage.com)

December 7, 2023, Auburn Hills, Mich. - The motorsports duo of Leah Pruett and Tony Stewart made major news today regarding their respective racing careers, with Pruett announcing she will temporarily step away from driving duties in the 2024 NHRA Mission Foods Pro Drag Racing Series to focus on starting a family with husband Stewart, who will race the full season in her place in the Tony Stewart Racing (TSR) team's 11,000-horsepower Dodge//SRT Direct Connection Top Fuel dragster.

Just one round win away from earning the coveted NHRA Top Fuel World Championship last month at the season-ending NHRA Finals in Pomona, California, Pruett enjoyed her greatest Top Fuel season in 2023 with two wins and a third-place finish in the final Top Fuel points standings, proving her TSR Dodge//SRT Direct Connection dragster was a top contender against the highly competitive Top Fuel field. Pruett, a fan favorite who has driven almost her entire NHRA pro career under the Dodge and Mopar banner, will continue as a Dodge Direct Connection and Mopar brand ambassador during the 2024 season.

Motorsports legend Stewart, a series champion in NASCAR, IndyCar and in USAC, takes over the controls of the team's Top Fuel machine in 2024 with another championship in his sights. Stewart will make his 2024 Top Fuel driving debut at the season-opening NHRA Gatornationals, March 7-10.

"We are thrilled to welcome Hall of Fame racer Tony Stewart as the new full-time driver of the Dodge//SRT Direct Connection Top Fuel dragster for the upcoming 2024 NHRA Mission Foods Pro Drag Racing Series," said Tim Kuniskis, Dodge brand chief executive officer – Stellantis. "With her decision to temporarily step back from a full-time

racing career, we also recognize all Leah Pruett has accomplished in her many years competing and winning under the Dodge and Mopar banners. We're extremely excited that Leah will continue next year as an at-track ambassador for our brands. Tony is a motorsports legend, and along with 2023 NHRA Funny Car champion Matt Hagan, we know the Tony Stewart Racing team will continue to demonstrate that Direct Connection parts are championship-proven examples of premier performance on the track and on the street."

With her desire to focus on starting a family with Stewart, and after consultation with TSR team owner Stewart, crew chief Neal Strausbaugh and car chief Mike Domagala, Pruett, with a 27-year drag-racing career, made the decision to step away and hand the reigns of the Top Fuel dragster to her husband.

"This decision did not happen overnight, and I feel that stepping out of the seat right now is what's best for myself and Tony to start a family," said Pruett, a 12-time NHRA Top Fuel national event winner. "This has been one of the most difficult decisions to make because of what we have collectively created at TSR, a highly successful program and enjoyable operation. I'm excited about how competitive this team is, and to be able to have Tony compete in a very safe, vetted, well-performing car with an established team."

It was Pruett's decision to step away from driving at this time but the veteran racer will be actively involved in the TSR organization and team strategies.

"I am very proud of my wife," said Stewart. "To make a decision like this must be extremely hard. We had discussed starting a family and this was her decision. I was very supportive as to whether she wanted to do it now or years from now. I'm very humbled that Leah and Neal felt I was the driver to fill in for her. I feel honored that I can do that for my wife and this team."

Stewart's drag-racing career began in 2022 with a close loss in his debut in the Top Alcohol Dragster category in Las Vegas, but the Indiana driver returned for a full season this year and placed second in the NHRA national points, including wins at Las Vegas and Reading.

"I enjoyed my time in the Top Alcohol Dragster class," explained Stewart. "I absolutely loved racing with the McPhillips Racing family. But to have an opportunity like this, where you have your wife, who's also a driver, and the crew chief feel I'm capable to come in and drive the car is very flattering. It's an honor to be able to fill in for her until she's ready to come back."

Stewart's teammate will be reigning Funny Car World Champion Matt Hagan, who scored his fourth title last month at the NHRA Finals in the TSR Direct Connection Dodge//SRT Hellcat. Hagan believes his team owner will be an excellent addition.

"It's a great move for Leah, who wanted to start a family," said Hagan. "I'm so happy for the two of them. It was challenging for Leah to step out of the seat. It's a personal and private situation for Leah and Tony and I respect that. And she can come back when she wants as well. And for Tony, he's a natural and a champion in whatever he has driven. He's a great team owner as well, and has driven Leah's car and my car in testing. He was outstanding in both of them. I believe Tony will be a contender this year."

Stewart will start his NHRA Top Fuel career in the TSR Dodge//SRT Direct Connection dragster in the season-opening NHRA Gatornationals on March 7-10 at Gainesville, Florida, while Pruett is expected to drive in the PRO Superstar Shootout on Feb. 8-10 in Bradenton, Florida.

@DodgeMoparMotorsports on Instagram

The [@DodgeMoparMotorsports](#) Instagram channel continues to share content capturing Dodge//SRT Mopar drivers on the track. Fans can see action from the NHRA Camping World 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.

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 a lineup that delivers unrivaled performance in each of the segments in which the brand competes while moving forward to a future that includes electrified muscle in the

form of the next-generation, all-new Dodge Charger.

The next-generation Dodge Charger electrifies a legend, with the Charger retaining its title as the world's quickest and most powerful muscle car led by the all-new, all-electric 2024 Dodge Charger Daytona Scat Pack. The all-new Dodge Charger will also offer performance choices via multi-energy powertrain options, including the 550-horsepower Dodge Charger SIXPACK H.O., powered by the 3.0L Twin Turbo Hurricane High Output engine.

Dodge also keeps its foot on the gas as a pure performance brand with the 710-horsepower Dodge Durango SRT Hellcat, the most powerful SUV ever, and best-in-class standard performance in the compact utility vehicle segment with the Dodge Hornet.

In 2022, the Dodge brand ranked No. 1 in the [J.D. Power APEAL Study](#) (mass market), making it the only domestic brand ever to do so three years in a row. In 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).

Fans can follow all the NHRA action this season at [DodgeGarage](#), the one-stop portal for Dodge//SRT and Mopar drag-racing news, including daily updates and access to an online racing HQ, news, events, galleries, available downloads and merchandise. Dodge is part of the portfolio of brands offered by leading global automaker and mobility provider [Stellantis](#) (NYSE: STLA).

Mopar

Mopar is the global name for Stellantis genuine parts and authentic accessories.

A simple combination of the words MOTO 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.

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