Contact: Scott Brown

Tom Blattler

Off-Road Return for Mopar at 'King of The Hammers'

HEMI® Crate Engines Power Spec Class for Second Year in Every Man Challenge Race

- Mopar returned to the California desert for a second year to compete in the 2015 NItto 'King of The Hammers' off-road race
- 9th annual 'King of The Hammers' is an off-road event combining desert racing and rock crawling with four competitive classes
- Mopar supplied six Gen III 5.7L HEMI® crate engine for Spec class vehicles in the "Every Man Challenge" race category
- Luke Johnson took the HEMI-powered Spec class win over his father Ricky Johnson
- More than 55,000 spectators were on hand for this year's edition with an additional 750,000 viewers tuned into the live online HD broadcast

February 7, 2015, Johnson Valley, California - For a second consecutive year, Mopar, Fiat Chrysler Automobile's (FCA) service, parts and customer-care brand, supplied six GEN III 5.7 liter HEMI® crate engines to power the unique Spec class 4x4 vehicles to allow off-road enthusiasts to compete in the "Every Man Challenge" race category at the 2015 NItto "King of The Hammers" in the southern California desert.

Hosted by the ULTRA4 Racing Series, the week-long event, featuring four competitive classes, combines desert racing and rock crawling and is built around what many consider the toughest one-day off-road race in the world. Held every February since 2007, the contest takes place on public lands in Johnson Valley, Ca. in an off-highway vehicle area known as "The Hammers."

This year, competitors attempted to complete laps over the treacherous and variable terrain of a 215 mile race course. The circuit incorporates high desert track conditions with the infamous rocky canyons and trails from which the event takes its name. The event drew more than 55,000 spectators with an additional 700,000 tuned into the online HD broadcast that was steamed live on the ULTRA4 Racing website and also accessible via Mopar.com.

The "4700 Spec Class" was created in 2014 for the "Every Man Challenge" race category with Mopar's GEN III 5.7 liter HEMI® crate engine powering all six unique 4x4 entries that have been built with a custom tube frame design based loosely on a Jeep® Wrangler, and each equally outfitted with the same best industry-leading parts the off-road world has to offer.

Based on the GEN II 426 Race HEMI, the 5.7L HEMI crate engines provided for this spec class are the off-road race version of the newest generation in the lineage of Mopar engines. Taking on the "Every Man Challenge" helps put the crate engine to the test with the extreme demands of off-road racing's toughest conditions, thus providing a proving ground for the brand's quality products.

For the past two years, both professional and first-time enthusiasts have been given the opportunity to take the wheel of the Mopar-powered 4700 Spec Class to experience what ULTRA4 Racing is all about. The turnkey solution gives enthusiasts the chance to race off-road in a fully capable four-wheel drive vehicle without the expense and challenges of building one of their own.

"The Mopar-powered Spec car and class has been extremely well received and successful," said David Cole, Executive Director of ULTRA4 Racing Series. "Not only is it bringing new people into the sport at an affordable price,

but the vehicle is competitive and durable, providing an exceptional and turnkey experience. We're very happy to have the HEMI powering the 4700 Spec Class and working with Mopar to create this unique opportunity for enthusiasts."

The six unique Mopar-powered 4x4 vehicles took to the track for the “Every Man Challenge” with an 8:00 a.m. (PT) 30-second staggered start on a course that featured a route much rockier and arduous than previous ones, but still included aptly named segments such as the infamous “Backdoor” rock ledge, “the Wrecking Ball”, “Clawhammer”, Devil’s Slide, Jackhammer, and fan favorite Chocolate Thunder.

The HEMI-powered vehicles saw some familiar names get behind the wheel for this year’s challenge. While neither Ricky Johnson, an AMA motocross legend and Pro 4 champ, or his son Luke, who competes in the TORC series, are strangers to winning, both were competing in their first Ultra4 event.

But that didn’t stop the younger Johnson from beating his father to the finish line by more than an hour and a half to take the class win and finish the "Every Man Challenge" fourth overall. The elder Johnson, who has one of the most extensive racing backgrounds of anyone competing at this year’s event, found his first Ultra4 experience extremely challenging.

“There were times when I thought I was lost,” Johnson joked. “Because I would get somewhere and it didn’t even look like a trail.”

The Spec class race did not lack in drama as the first HEMI-powered vehicle to actually cross the finish line and third overall, was driven by Lance Clifford with a time of six hours and 56:49 minutes but the driver had his time disqualified after receiving outside help during his run.

Known as the fastest woman on four wheels following a 2013 record breaking land speed run in Utah's Salt Lake Flats, TV personality and gear head, Jessi Combs, returned for her second time at the helm of a HEMI-powered Spec class 4x4 for Team Falken after winning the 2014 edition of the Challenge. However, this year things didn’t go as planned when her ride succumbed to the difficult course on her second lap.

#4700 Spec Class Final Results

Pos.	Car#	Driver Name	Start time	Lap 1	Lap 2	Total Time
1	4714	LUKE JOHNSON	8:13:00	9:57:09	15:16:26	7:03:26
2	4748	RICKY JOHNSON	8:13:30	10:12:18	16:57:32	8:44:02
DQ	4705	LANCE CLIFFORD	8:14:00	9:50:44	15:10:49	6:56:49
DNF	4703	JESSI COMBS	8:13:00	10:21:05		
DNF	4702	LARRY NICKELL	8:13:30	10:56:26		
DNF	4704	BAILEY COLE	8:14:00			

One of the Mopar-powered Spec class vehicles returned to the track with Belgian driver Axel Burmann aboard for Friday’s signature “King of the Hammers” race to compete against the professionals in a battle to conquer the course by completing three laps in under 14 hours.

Only 17 entries finished the event, with Randy Slawson completing the three laps in eight hours and 52:23 minutes to take the “King of The Hammer’s title. Burmann’s spec class car was among the 118 entries that were unable to finish the race.

Mopar was also a co-sponsor of the “King Of The Hammers” media center, providing meals for more than 300 member of the press served from a modified Ram ProMaster that was unveiled at the 2014 Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA) Show. The Ram ProMaster Hospitality Van was converted by Mopar into a mobile lounge and equipped with refrigeration to serve refreshing, ice cold beverages from a large swing-open side panel.

Also on display and making an appearance at various fan viewing sites along the race course was the Mopar-modified Jeep Wrangler MOJO (the “OJ” in the name stands for “Orange Jeep”) featuring a 3.6-liter V-6 engine, Jeep Performance Parts 2-inch lift, locking Dana 44 front and rear axles, a 4:1 Rock-Trac transfer case, a cold air intake and low restriction exhaust system.

Mopar has now participated in both the 2014 and 2015 editions the “Every Man Challenge” Race as part of the Nitto “King of The Hammers”. The HEMI-powered vehicles also will compete in a number of Regional ULTRA4 Series events throughout the 2015 season.

About Mopar Brand

Mopar (a simple contraction of the words Motor and PARts) was trademarked in 1937 with the launch of an antifreeze product, but it truly made its mark in the 1960s during the muscle-car era. From Mopar Performance Parts to enhance speed and handling for both road and racing use, the brand soon expanded to include technical service and customer support.

Today, Mopar is FCA’s service, parts and customer-care brand and distributes more than 500,000 parts and accessories in over 150 markets around the world. With more than 50 parts distribution centers and 27 customer contact hubs globally, Mopar integrates service, parts and customer-care operations in order to enhance dealer and customer support worldwide. Mopar is the source for genuine parts and accessories for FCA brands.

Mopar parts are engineered together with the same teams that create factory-authorized specifications for FCA vehicles. This offers a direct connection that no other aftermarket parts company can provide. A complete list of Mopar accessories and performance parts is available at: www.mopar.com.

Mopar-first Features

Mopar has introduced numerous industry-first features including:

- Vehicle-information apps: first to introduce smartphone vehicle-information applications, a new channel of communication with customers
- Electronic owner manuals: first to introduce traditional owner manuals in a DVD and brief user-guide format. First to offer complete vehicle-information kits in Spanish
- Wi-Fi: first to offer customers the ability to make their vehicle a wireless hot spot
- Wireless charging: first to introduce in-vehicle wireless charging for portable devices
- Electronic Vehicle Tracking System (EVTS): first to market with interactive vehicle tracking device that sends owner a text when vehicle is driven too fast or too far based on pre-set parameters
- wiADVISOR: first to provide factory-connected tablet technology in the service lane for instant vehicle diagnosis
- wiTECH: first to support vehicle diagnosis and software updates leveraging off-the-shelf personal computers and a dedicated wireless tool network
- 2011 Mopar Challenger Drag Pak: first to introduce a 500-plus cubic-inch V-10 drag-race package car

-###-

Additional information and news from Stellantis are available at: https://media.stellantisnorthamerica.com