

Wolkwitz Qualifies No. 1 for Mopar HEMI® Challenge, McCandless Honored with President's Award

Geoff Turk and Leah Pritchett Qualify in Top Five for Factory Stock Showdown

- Gary Wolkwitz qualifies No. 1 for 17th annual Mopar HEMI® Challenge at U.S. Nationals with 8.443-second pass
- Herb McCandless honored with Mopar President's Award during Mopar Sportsman Appreciation Night
- Geoff Turk and Leah Pritchett qualify No. 3 and No. 5, respectively, for Factory Stock Showdown driving Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Paks

August 31, 2017, Brownsburg, Ind. - Gary Wolkwitz grabbed the No. 1 qualifying position for the prestigious 17th annual Mopar HEMI® Challenge at this week's U.S. Nationals, turning in a superb pass of 8.443 seconds in his sleek 1968 Dodge Dart at Lucas Oil Raceway. The much-anticipated event pits Super Stock Automatic HEMI (SS/AH) drivers competing in 1968 Dodge Darts and Plymouth Barracudas head to head for a \$15,000 top prize and a unique trophy. The vehicles are the original Mopar package cars and served as the precursor to today's Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Pak.

Wolkwitz is no stranger to very quick times, as he is also the current SS/AH national record holder. However, he said he has struggled to find power recently, making the No. 1 effort a pleasant surprise. Last year's HEMI Challenge winner, Jimmy Daniels, qualified second in his '68 Dart with an 8.501-second elapsed time on the famed quarter mile just outside Indianapolis.

The top 16 finishers in the Mopar HEMI Challenge each receive a cash payout, with all competitors receiving hats, decals and special limited-edition posters. The event has become one of the most anticipated programs for Sportsman racers each year.

Elimination rounds get underway at 10:30 a.m. on Friday morning, with the final round scheduled to take place between the first Funny Car and Top Fuel qualifying sessions later in the evening.

Herb McCandless Presented with President's Award

The annual Mopar Sportsman Appreciation Night took place on Thursday evening at Lucas Oil Raceway, where longtime Mopar ambassador Herb McCandless was honored with the special Mopar President's Award. Mopar Motorsports Marketing Manager Dale Aldo made the presentation.

Known as "Mr. 4-Speed" for his uncanny ability to drive manual transmission race cars, McCandless is a Mopar legend. His fledgling start in 426 HEMI-powered Dodge and Plymouth stock drag cars in the mid '60s led to a successful career racing Super Stock and Pro Stock cars as a member of the U.S. Drag Racing Team for the likes of Sox & Martin and Dick Landy. He founded, owned and operated a successful Direct Connection and Mopar Performance parts business for 22 years, helping Chrysler Corporation develop its dominant small-block race program.

Even today, as a classic vehicle restorer, McCandless has remained loyal to the Mopar brand, Chrysler, Dodge and Plymouth vehicles. His announcing of the Mopar HEMI Challenge at each U.S. Nationals has also become an anticipated part of the event. Recognized by his induction into the North Carolina Drag Racing Hall of Fame in 2008 and Mopar Collectors Guide Hall of Fame in 2012, McCandless has cemented his legacy in the sport of drag racing. The President's Award recognizes his lifelong motorsports success and unwavering support of the Mopar brand.

In addition to the presentation of the President's Award, the event celebrated loyal Mopar Sportsman racers with

food and drinks, special guest speakers, demonstrations by SRT engineers, Mopar raffle giveaways, trivia and more.

Turk, Pritchett Qualify for Factory Stock Showdown

Qualifying has also concluded for the fourth of five Factory Stock Showdown events scheduled for 2017, with Mopar HEMI power claiming the No. 3 and No. 5 positions on the elimination ladder in the 16-car field spotlighting modern American muscle. Geoff Turk made an 8.151-second pass at 165.92 mph in his "Blackbird" Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Pak to claim the third spot. Mopar Top Fuel driver Leah Pritchett meanwhile is making her Factory Stock Showdown debut at this year's "Big Go." She turned in a best lap of 8.199 seconds at 164.09 mph, good enough for the fifth qualifying position in her Challenger Drag Pak entry.

A total of 22 cars made qualifying attempts. The first round of eliminations is slated for noon on Sunday, September 3.

About Mopar Motorsports

The Mopar brand's commitment to professional motorsports competition was established in the 1950s when a partnership ignited with drag racing pioneer Don Garlits, resulting in the breaking of numerous speed and performance barriers in HEMI-powered vehicles over the next several decades. In 2016, thanks to Don Schumacher Racing driver Ron Capps, Mopar captured its fourth NHRA Funny Car World Championship in the last six years. As Mopar celebrates 80 years as a brand in 2017, it will focus its NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series efforts on NHRA Funny Car and, with rising star Leah Pritchett, NHRA Top Fuel Dragster. Mopar will also bolster its commitment to NHRA Sportsman racing with new contingency rewards, factory support and at-track technical advice and guidance.

Mopar-First Features

During the brand's 80 years, Mopar has introduced numerous industry-first features including:

- Vehicle-information apps: first to introduce smartphone vehicle-information applications, a new channel of communication with consumers
- wiADVISOR: first to incorporate a tablet-based service lane tool
- Electronic Vehicle Tracking System (EVTS): first to market with a new interactive vehicle tracking device that sends owner a text when vehicle is driven too fast or too far based on pre-set parameters
- Wi-Fi: first to offer customers the ability to make their vehicle a wireless hot spot
- Electronic owner manuals: first to introduce traditional owner manuals on a smartphone app

Mopar

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

A simple combination of the words MOtor 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 and the newly redesigned Mopar blog at www.blog.mopar.com. For more information regarding Stellantis (NYSE: STLA), please visit www.stellantis.com.

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