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Funny Car Championship Leader Capps Drives Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat into Eliminations as No. 2 Qualifier at NHRA Season Finale

- Three championship contending Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Cars performed well in qualifying, collected bonus points, and find themselves in the top half of the eliminations ladder to set up a dramatic final showdown at Auto Club NHRA Finals to determine the winner of the Funny Car World Championship
- Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) driver and category points leader Ron Capps drives his NAPA AUTO PARTS Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat into Funny Car eliminations at Auto Club Raceway at Pomona as the No. 2 qualifier
- The Direct Connection Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat of Matt Hagan is second in the Funny Car standings and seeded seventh heading into the final race day of the 2021 National Hot Rod Association Camping World Drag Racing series season
- Should Capps and Hagan advanced past the opening round, that will set up a quarterfinal battle between the DSR teammates with championship implications
- Third HEMI-powered contender for the Funny Car crown, Cruz Pedregon qualified his Snap-on Tools Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat sixth on the eliminations ladder and remains in the championship mix
- DSR pilot Leah Pruett earned the No. 3 spot on the Top Fuel eliminations ladder and five bonus points with her final qualifying runs of the season aboard her Direct Connection dragster

November 13, 2021, Pomona, California - With the last qualifying runs of the 2021 National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Camping World Drag Racing Series season completed at Auto Club Raceway at Pomona, the stage is now set for a dramatic final showdown between the three Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Cars of points leader Ron Capps, reigning world champion Matt Hagan, and winner of last week's Dodge//SRT Nationals at Las Vegas, Cruz Pedregon.

Capps heads into the Auto Club NHRA Finals as the No. 2 qualifier after securing his spot by driving his NAPA AUTO PARTS Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat to a 3.908-second/ 329.83 mph run, the second quickest of the first session. He collected three bonus points for that effort, then added another four by posting the quickest time in the second session to help extend his lead over his Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) teammate Hagan to 67 points heading into Sunday's eliminations rounds where round wins are worth 30 points.

Capps, who has taken home four Wally trophies from the Pomona Fairplex venue including the one earned this August, will begin his race day against No. 16 seed Terry Haddock and with the knowledge that he only needs to turn on two win lights on Sunday to secure his second Funny Car world championship title.

Three-time and defending series champion, Hagan is second in the Funny Car standings and heads to eliminations as the No. 7 seed after taking his Direct Connection Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat for a 3.956-second drive at 319.75 mph in the second qualifying session to add two bonus points to his total. He'll have No. 10 seed Tony Jurado as his first round opponent and should both Hagan and Capps advance past the opening round, the DSR teammates will battle each other in the quarterfinals.

Meanwhile, Cruz Pedregon is still in the championship mix despite a 91 point deficit and eyeing his third Funny Car title after his victory at the Dodge//SRT Nationals in Las Vegas put him in contention. Pedregon qualified his Snap-On Tools Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat sixth on the eliminations ladder with consistent qualifying runs that put him fourth on the timing sheets in the first two sessions and provided two extra points for his efforts. Pedregon will have No. 11 seed Tim Wilkerson in the lane next to him for the opening round match up.

While a plethora of scenarios are possible, one thing is certain: a Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat will be crowned a Funny Car World Champion for the sixth time in 10 seasons. What makes the anticipation heading into the final showdown that much more thrilling is that any one of the three drivers could win it. Here is how that might happen:

- By winning the first two rounds, Ron Capps will clinch his second Funny Car World Championship title.
- To defend his Funny Car crown, Hagan has to drive his Direct Connection Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat to the final round or, in the event Capps advances past the first round, to the winner's circle.
- For Cruz Pedregon to win his third career NHRA championship, he will have to turn on four win lights and Capps will need to lose the opening round.

Having earned the Top Fuel Wally trophy at the rescheduled August Winternationals at Pomona, DSR pilot Leah Pruett's mindset heading into this weekend has been on repeating that feat to end the season on a high note. She put herself in a good position to do that with steady improvement through qualifying, recording the third-quickest pass of the second session and second-quickest run in the final session, a 3.706 second lap at 327.59 mph. That qualifying effort was rewarded with five bonus points and put her Direct Connection dragster in the No. 3 position on the eliminations ladder. Pruett will begin her race day with lane choice over No. 14 seed Cameron Ferre.

Qualifying highlights will air on FS1 on Sunday, Nov. 14, from 2-4 p.m. ET followed by coverage of the elimination rounds from the Auto Club NHRA Finals, including live coverage of the final round, from 4-7 p.m. ET to close out the 2021 NHRA Camping World Series season.

ADDITIONAL NOTES and QUOTES

FUNNY CAR:

Matt Hagan, DSR Direct Connection Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Redeye

(No. 7 Qualifier – 3.956 seconds at 319.75 mph)

Qualifying 1: 4.483 seconds at 187.65 mph

Qualifying 2: 3.956 seconds at 319.75 mph (2 bonus points for third quickest time of Q2)

Qualifying 3: 4.045 seconds at 263.87 mph

"It's about as simple as it gets. We have to win the race. If we want to win the championship, we have to win the race. If we do that, we've done what we set out to do here and all year long. I don't know how it worked out that way, but the good lord above shined on us today and gave us a shot to make our own fate. It all falls on us. I know we have the car, team and people to do this and I'm excited to have a shot. Ron Capps and that team are great, but we're going to try and ruin their day. That's what we do out here when we race and let's see how it plays out tomorrow."

Ron Capps, DSR Pennzoil Synthetics NAPA Auto Parts Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat

(No. 2 Qualifier – 3.908 seconds at 329.83 mph)

Qualifying 1: 3.908 seconds at 329.83 mph (3 bonus points for second quickest run of Q1)

Qualifying 2: 3.935 seconds at 325.45 mph (4 bonus points for quickest run of Q2)

Qualifying 3: 5.124 seconds and 143.87 mph

"We always talk about these goals that we have with this NAPA AutoCare team and we saw how crazy qualifying was. Our first goal is always to qualify because you're not guaranteed to race on Sunday in NHRA drag racing. There are no provisionals. We accomplished that right off the bat on Friday in Q1. Secondly, we wanted to gain some of those important small bonus points and put it over the 60-point threshold with (Matt) Hagan. It's a nice cushion. That's a hole neither round that they'd have to win to go around us. We want to wake up tomorrow morning with the thought of winning the race and it will take care of itself. We saw what happened in (Las) Vegas and anything can happen in NHRA drag racing. The goal is to win the race. We have Terry Haddock first round and we're focused on that and that alone. If things line up second round against Hagan, then we'll focus on that. Waking up Sunday morning in November at Pomona with a chance to win a world championship is something I've done a lot. We did it in 2016, but I've been here a lot where we didn't accomplish the goal. And that's made me better in the seat as a

driver. I'm just focused on the same thing and that's drive this great NAPA Dodge that Guido (Dean Antonelli) and this AutoCare team has given me."

Cruz Pedregon, Cruz Pedregon Racing Snap-on® Tools Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat

(No. 6 Qualifier – 3.939 seconds at 321.96 mph)

Qualifying 1: 3.939 seconds at 321.96 mph (1 bonus point for fourth quickest run of Q1)

Qualifying 2: 3.961 seconds at 316.52 mph (1 bonus point for fourth quickest run of Q2)

Qualifying 3: 3.979 seconds at 272.34 mph

"The Snap-on Tools Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat was very consistent through qualifying and I'm very happy about that. We tried to push the limits in the last session to try to get up higher in the field and we were on pace to run second or third quickest in the session, but the car drifted out of the groove on me and I made the choice to shut it off. What's going to help us win the race and championship is just to take care of our business on our side of the ladder. We had a great car that was consistent in the heat, so we'll take that information and apply it on race day. The exciting part about this is nobody knows what's going to happen. I think we're going to have a good race. I feel confident that we are ready for what comes and that we will have a good race."

TOP FUEL:

Leah Pruett, DSR Direct Connection Mopar Dodge//SRT Dragster

(No. 3 Qualifier – 3.706 seconds at 327.59 mph)

Qualifying 1: 4.954 seconds at 145.83 mph

Qualifying 2: 3.751 seconds at 324.83 mph (2 bonus points for third quickest run of Q2)

Qualifying 3: 3.706 seconds at 327.59 mph (3 bonus points for the second quickest run of Q3)

"We started out in Q1 on Friday with the barrel fully loaded and we just missed it. We knew we needed a solid run on Q2, and we did that with a beautiful 3.75 pass in the heat of the day and that gave this Direct Connection team all the confidence for Q3 to step up with that great 3.70 for the No. 3 spot. (Crew chiefs) Todd (Okuhara) and Neal (Strausbaugh) are tuning with a great amount of confidence and I'm looking forward to the final race of the season to be the culmination for this team. We want to shove this Dodge//SRT dragster into the winner's circle tomorrow like we did here in July."

NHRA Championship Points Standings:

Following qualifying at Auto Club NHRA Finals at Pomona

FUNNY CAR (season wins in parentheses)

1. Ron Capps (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 2,646 (2)

2. Matt Hagan (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 2,579 (3/1-Tommy Johnson Jr.)

3. Cruz Pedregon (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 2,555 (2)

4. J.R. Todd – 2,498 (1)

5. John Force – 2,483 (3)

6. Robert Hight – 2,478 (2)

7. Bob Tasca III – 2,466 (2)

8. Alexis DeJoria – 2,436 (1)

9. Tim Wilkerson – 2,331 (1)

10. Blake Alexander – 2,208

TOP FUEL (season wins in parentheses)

1. Steve Torrance – 2753 (10)

2. Brittany Force – 2,637 (1)

3. Mike Salinas – 2,589 (1)

4. Justin Ashley – 2,556 (2)

5. Billy Torrence – 2,468 (2)

6. Leah Pruett (Mopar Dodge//SRT) – 2,401 (1)

7. Clay Millican – 2,354

8. Antron Brown – 2,337 (1)

9. Shawn Langdon – 2,310

10. Doug Kalitta – 2,260

DodgeGarage: Digital Hub for Drag Racing News

Fans can follow all the NHRA 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 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.

Mopar

Mopar (a simple contraction of the words MOtor and PARts) offers exceptional service, parts and customer care. 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 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, the brand expanded to include technical service and customer support. Today, Mopar integrates service, parts and customer-care operations in order to enhance customer and dealer support worldwide.

Mopar is part of the portfolio of brands offered by leading global automaker and mobility provider Stellantis. For more information regarding Stellantis (NYSE: STLA), please visit www.stellantis.com.

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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-plus-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 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). The Dodge brand also [ranked No. 1](#) in the J.D. Power APEAL Study (mass market). These results are historic because it marks the first time a domestic brand has earned top spots in both J.D. Power studies in the same year.

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