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Hagan Takes Mopar 85th Anniversary Funny Car to Semifinals at Heartland Motorsports Park

- Tony Stewart Racing (TSR) Funny Car driver Matt Hagan powered his Mopar 85th Anniversary-themed Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat from the No. 4 qualifier position to the semifinals at Heartland Motorsports Park in Kansas for the 33rd edition of the Menards National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Nationals Presented By PetArmor
- Hagan remains second in the Funny Car points standings after his semifinal performance and also clinched his spot in the "Countdown to the Championship" playoff this weekend with two regular season events remaining
- TSR pilot Leah Pruett drove her Mopar 85th Anniversary Top Fuel dragster from the seventh position on the eliminations ladder to a quarterfinal appearance at the Topeka drag strip and remains sixth in the category's championship battle
- Despite a red light start by the Snap-on Tools Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat, Cruz Pedregon remains seventh in the Funny Car standings

August 14, 2022, Topeka, Kansas - To celebrate Mopar's 85th anniversary, Tony Stewart Racing (TSR) Top Fuel and Funny Car HEMI®-powered racecars donned new paint schemes to honor the legendary performance brand at this weekend's 33rd edition of the Menards National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Nationals presented by PetArmor at Heartland Motorsports Park near Topeka, Kansas.

Matt Hagan took his Mopar 85th Anniversary Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat for a best qualifying run of 3.943 seconds at 320.58 mph at the track known as the "House of Speed," where he holds both ends of the track record for time (3.802 seconds) and speed (338.85 mph) set in May 2017. While this year's August heat kept the track temperatures between 110 and 140 degrees Fahrenheit throughout the weekend and his career best speed safe from any challenge, Hagan's qualifying effort was good enough to put him fourth on the eliminations ladder. He also clinched his spot in the NHRA's "Countdown to the Championship" with two more regular season events left after this weekend's contest, including the Dodge Power Brokers U.S. Nationals in Indianapolis.

Hagan, who took home the Wally trophy from Heartland Motorsports Park in 2017, began his race day against No. 11 seed Chad Green with a quicker start and 3.944-second elapsed time run at 316.52 mph to turn on the win light and advance to the next round, ending a drought that occurred on a difficult three-event NHRA Western Swing.

Hagan had another good performance in his quarterfinal matchup against No. 10 seed Paul Lee with the Mopar 85th Anniversary Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat once again recording a solid lap at 3.999 sec./312.71 mph. That sent Hagan's Mopar to the semifinals to meet up with No. 1 qualifier Bob Tasca III, where both launched with nearly identical reaction times but as cylinders began to drop and his ride began to push toward the wall, Hagan opted to click it off.

Hagan's semifinal appearance, along with his three wins and three runner-up finishes this season, keeps him solidly second in the Funny Car championship standings behind points leader Robert Hight.

In Top Fuel competition, TSR pilot Leah Pruett was seeking a good result aboard her Mopar 85th Anniversary dragster to follow up a string of solid performances on the Western Swing that included a win at the Dodge Power Brokers Mile-High Nationals in Denver, a No. 1 Qualifier award in Sonoma, and a semifinal appearance in Seattle.

Pruett's best qualifying lap of 3.804 seconds at 316.97 mph put her seventh on the eliminations ladder and next to No. 10 seed Doug Foley for the opening round. Pruett took the lead early in the run while her opponent began to

smoke his tires. Then she had to pedal her dragster at half-track but was able to regain control and get the round win.

In the quarterfinals, Pruett's Mopar had the starting line advantage over No. 2 qualifier Justin Ashley but when her dragster began to lose traction Pruett ceded the round win to her opponent. Pruett, who sits sixth in the Top Fuel championship with two regular season events remaining, is now eyeing a position in the top-five ahead of the upcoming Countdown.

Four-time Topeka Funny Car winner Cruz Pedregon qualified his Snap-on Tools Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat 12th for eliminations with a best lap of 4.043 seconds at 284.62 mph to set up a first round pairing with No. 3 seed John Force. The longtime rivals both deep-staged their racecars, with Force going in so far that he flickered the bottom bulb of the tree. That flicker prompted a reaction from Pedregon who hit the throttle prematurely and turned on the red light. Despite the abrupt end to their race day, the Cruz Pedregon Racing team remains seventh in the Funny Car category.

The next stop on the NHRA circuit is the Lucas Oil NHRA Nationals at Brainerd International Raceway, the penultimate event of the regular season, set for Aug. 18-21 in Brainerd, Minnesota.

ADDITIONAL NOTES and QUOTES:

Leah Pruett, Mopar 85th anniversary Top Fuel Dragster

(No. 7 Qualifier – 3.804 seconds at 316.97 mph)

Round 1: (0.148-second reaction time, 4.161seconds at 264.70 mph) defeats No. 10 Doug Foley (0.124/5.149/139.75)

Round 2: (0.071/4.810/225.26) loss to No. 2 Justin Ashley (0.089/3.843/317.57)

"Sometimes you would rather have a little bit of luck on your side and that's what we had going into eliminations today. We've gotten into a comfortable spot with the car because it's been acting so well to be able to push and we pushed a little too hard in E1 (first round of eliminations). We smoked way down track and I was able to pedal twice and recover, which pedaling hasn't particularly been my forte. It's something we've been working on as a team and that worked out for us right there. In E2, we had a compound throttle mounting malfunction that hindered our performance after the line. Even though the results don't quite show it with the win lights, it's one of the best reacting cars that we've had all year. We are making a lot of headway. We're finally able to reference other tracks now and other situations and build on that. That's something for the first quarter of the year we weren't able to do. As we finish out the second quarter, we're really scaling up our drive."

Matt Hagan, Mopar 85th anniversary Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car

(No. 4 Qualifier – 3.943 seconds at 320.58 mph)

Round 1: (0.068-second reaction time, 3.944 seconds at 316.52 mph) defeats No. 11 Chad Green (0.071/4.155/306.26)

Round 2: (0.076/3.999/312.71) defeats No. 10 Paul Lee (0.110/7.341/86.41)

Round 3: (0.062/4.406/223.06) loss to No. 1 Bob Tasca (0.061/4.011/316.30)

"I could definitely taste the final today and wanted it bad up there. Coming off of the Western Swing where we had three first-round exits, I'm really pleased with the momentum we had and the direction we were able to turn the car around in. Qualifying was everything, so it was great qualifying fourth to be in the top-half of the bracket and have a good ladder. We have to stay focused on that Friday night hit and put ourselves in a position to be good for the rest of the weekend, since we're seeing some hot racetracks that make the conditions a bit tougher on Saturday. Unfortunately, something went wrong there in the semifinals. There was some type of ignition issue. It didn't really fire off all the cylinders. It wasn't the typical car we had all weekend. I kind of knew something was wrong off the bat, then some cylinders went out and I had to click it off early so I didn't hit the wall. My guys are going over everything with a fine-toothed comb to figure out what it was to get ready for Brainerd. Brainerd can sometimes be cool out there, so it's one of those racetracks where Dickie Venables (crew chief) really shines."

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

(No. 12 Qualifier – 4.043 seconds at 284.62 mph)

Round 1: (-0.360-second reaction time, 7.982 seconds at 94.20 mph) loss to No. 3 John Force (-0.275/23.671/53.29)

"After qualifying in the number 12 spot with the Snap-on Tools Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat we went off against John Force first round and I red lit. As I'm driving back to the pit area I'm thinking what the heck? What just happened? I felt like there was an unusual light flickering and as a driver you're on a hair trigger. To cut a good light that's what you have to do. I watched the video, it looked like [Force] rolled in and oversteered which caused his light to turn off and on again, which caused me to go. I thought that was my light and my cue to go. It was a foul nonetheless on my part but the car had a cylinder out too, so it was a struggle this weekend.

"I had a great conversation with the team and we'll go back and look everything over for Brainerd. We had the best car there last year so we're really gonna use the strategy we had last year and go back to our notes and look at everything. Weather and temperature should be very similar to last year so I'm confident that we'll get the Snap-on Tools Dodge turned around. We have dropped off a bit but this is a new car and it's going to take some time to get the bugs worked out. Not only from the mechanical standpoint but even driving the car. We have a prototype steering to help it drive better but it's just different from what I'm used to. We're coming up to the time of year where we're going to have to really buckle down here. We've got Brainerd and then we've got the biggest race of the year in Indy with the Dodge Power Brokers U.S. Nationals coming up so I'm confident we'll get things sorted out and be ready for it."

NHRA CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS STANDINGS:

Following the Menards NHRA Nationals Presented By PetArmor at Heartland Motorsports Park

FUNNY CAR (season wins in parentheses)

1. Robert Hight 1334 (6)
2. **Matt Hagan (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat): 1097 (3)**
3. Ron Capps: 1008 (2)
4. John Force: 1002 (1)
5. Bob Tasca III: 921 (2)
6. J.R. Todd: 741
7. **Cruz Pedregon (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat): 718**
8. Alexis DeJoria: 712
9. Tim Wilkerson: 611
10. Jim Campbell: 488

TOP FUEL (season wins in parentheses)

1. Brittany Force: 1122 (4)
2. Mike Salinas: 1091 (4)
3. Justin Ashley: 989 (2)
4. Steve Torrence: 960
5. Josh Hart: 736
6. **Leah Pruett (Dodge Power Brokers): 726 (1)**
7. Shawn Langdon: 709
8. Doug Kalitta: 659
9. Tony Schumacher: 625 (1)
10. Antron Brown 613 (1)

@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 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.

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