

Team Mopar® Driver Johnson Advances to Semis at NHRA Finals, Takes Fourth in Pro Stock Standings

November 13, 2011, Pomona, Calif. - Mopar® Dodge Avenger NHRA Full Throttle Drag Racing Series Pro Stock driver Allen Johnson advanced to the semifinals on Sunday, Nov. 13 in the Auto Club NHRA Finals at Auto Club Raceway at Pomona, moving up to fourth in the final NHRA Pro Stock standings and tying his best finish in the points.

Johnson ended the year with one victory, three runner-up finishes, three No. 1 Qualifier awards and a 28-21 round win record. The Team Mopar veteran finished in the top 10 in the standings for the ninth time in his career.

"It was a strong ending to the year, two finals and a semis appearance in the last three races," said Johnson, who completed his 16th year behind the wheel of a Mopar-powered Dodge Pro Stock car.

Johnson, the No. 9 qualifier, dodged a bullet in the first round in a Mopar vs. Mopar fight with rookie sensation and No. 8 starter Vincent Nobile, who competes with Mopar HEMI® engines supplied by Johnson's J&J Racing team. The matchup was the fifth of the season between the two Mopar Pro Stockers. Johnson shook the tires and slowed shortly after launching to record a 12.493-second elapsed time at 71.35 mph and watched Nobile cross the line first, but the win light went to Johnson as Nobile left the starting line too soon, losing on a red-light foul.

Johnson was much stronger in his quarterfinals duel with No. 1 Qualifier Mike Edwards, posting a 6.603/210.57 run to the 6.634/189.20 effort of Edwards, who also red-lighted. The pass gave Johnson lane choice against Greg Stanfield in the semis. A.J. had Stanfield beat as far as the 1,000-ft mark down track, but his Mopar Dodge got out of the groove and drifted towards the centerline. Johnson almost corrected it but was forced to lift, posting a losing 6.737/177.46 effort to Stanfield's 6.609/209.23 run.

"On that run, we had him (Stanfield) beat, even at the 1000-ft. mark," said Johnson. "The car got loose and actually almost crashed. That's the closest I've come to turning one upside down in a few years.

"But overall, we finished strong and got momentum for the Mopar/J&J Racing team for the 2012 campaign. I think we're on to something with this new car. We'll test in the winter and come back strong at Pomona in February. We were fourth in points, tying the best finish of my career. Next year might be the year for Mopar."

Johnson's crew chief, Mark Ingersoll, also turned the wrenches on Nobile's car, putting two Mopar HEMI-powered Dodge Avenger Pro Stock cars in the top five of the final standings.

"I think we had a solid year," said Ingersoll. "We made a big step forward with the Mopar Dodge car. It's much more consistent. The last three races we're excellent and we made a lot of headway. It's a good way to head into next year. We'll test this winter and spend some more time with this Mopar Dodge. The consistency is there. We just need to make it a little faster, and we will next year."

Nobile was stellar in his rookie campaign behind the wheel of his Mopar-powered Mountain View Dodge Avenger. He wrapped up his rookie season in the top five of the standings, with three wins and two runner-up finishes.

"It was a great year with Mopar," said Nobile. "We went to five finals and won three times, and finished fifth in the points. I couldn't be any happier. I have to wait a day and I find out if I won Rookie of the Year. I'm excited about that, and I'm really looking forward to next year."

Mopar-First Features

Mopar has introduced numerous industry-first features including:

- Camper trailers: first to introduce off-road camper trailers

- Vehicle-information apps: first to introduce smartphone vehicle-information applications, a new channel of communication with consumers
- Electronic owner manuals: first to introduce traditional owner manuals in a DVD and brief user-guide format
- 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
- 2011 Mopar Challenger Drag Pak: first to introduce a 500-plus cubic-inch V-10 drag-race package car
- Wi-Fi: first to offer customers the ability to make their vehicle a wireless hot spot
- WiTECH: first to support vehicle diagnosis and software updates leveraging off-the-shelf personal computers and a dedicated wireless tool network

About the Mopar Brand

Mopar is Chrysler Group LLC's service, parts and customer-care brand.

Mopar distributes approximately 280,000 parts and accessories in more than 90 countries and is the source for all original-equipment parts for Chrysler, Jeep®, Dodge and Ram Truck vehicles. Mopar parts are unique in that they are engineered with the same teams that create factory-authorized vehicle specifications for Chrysler, Jeep, Dodge and Ram vehicles—a direct connection that no other aftermarket parts company can provide. A complete list of Mopar accessories and performance parts is available at <http://www.mopar.com>.

More than 70 Years of Mopar

When Chrysler bought Dodge in 1928, the need for a dedicated parts manufacturer, supplier and distribution system to support the growing enterprise led to the formation of the Chrysler Motor Parts Corporation (CMPC) in 1929.

Mopar (a simple contraction of the words MOtor and PARts) was trademarked for a line of antifreeze products in 1937. It also was widely used as a moniker for the CMPC. The Mopar brand made its mark in the 1960s—the muscle-car era. The Chrysler Corporation built race-ready Dodge and Plymouth “package cars” equipped with special high-performance parts. Mopar carried a line of “special parts” for super-stock drag racers and developed its racing parts division called Mopar Performance Parts to enhance speed and handling for both road and racing use.

-###-

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