

Mopar Set for Eliminations at NHRA Sonoma Nationals

- Allen Johnson clinches Pro Stock playoff berth with No.3 qualifying effort at National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Sonoma Nationals
- Jack Beckman leads DSR teammates with No. 4 seeding for Funny Car eliminations
- Defending Funny Car title winner at Sonoma Raceway Ron Capps and DSR teammate Tommy Johnson Jr. are quickest respectively on final qualifying run
- Matt Hagan puts the HEMI 50th Anniversary tribute Mopar fifth on the eliminations ladder

July 26, 2014, Sonoma, California - The elimination ladders are set for the 27th annual National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Sonoma Nationals, the second stop on the three race NHRA western swing, and Mopar's Pro Stock and Funny Car drivers are ready to test their mettle at Sonoma Raceway.

Allen Johnson and the "Magneti Marelli Offered by Mopar" Dodge Dart secured the No. 3 qualifying position for Sunday's Pro Stock eliminations with his quickest pass of the weekend on his final lap by posting an elapsed time run of 6.547 seconds / 212.16 mph pass. Johnson's Mopar was second quickest in that final session to give him a total of six bonus points earned over four qualifying runs to officially clinch a playoff berth for the "Countdown to the Championship." He will see Tommy Lee as his first round opponent on Sunday.

"The good news is that Jeg (Coughlin Jr.) and I are on opposite sides of the ladder so an all-Mopar final is in the realm of possibility on race day and that's what we're aiming for," said Johnson, who would like to repeat the HEMI sweep that the Roy Johnson-tuned engines achieved last year on the NHRA western swing. "We broke a motor in the first session today, but it's all in the recovery and better it happen today than tomorrow. We're feeling pretty good about sending a HEMI to another final round."

Reigning NHRA Pro Stock World Champ Jeg Coughlin Jr. was third quickest in the third qualifying session, earning a single bonus point, to put him fifth on the eliminations ladder with his best pass of 6.552 sec /212.03 mph. For a second consecutive week, Coughlin will have Deric Kramer and his Dodge Avenger, seeded 12th with a 6.613 / 209.56, as his first round opponent. The JEGS.com Mopar Dodge Dart can clinch a berth in the playoffs with a second round appearance on Sunday.

Fellow HEMI-powered Dodge Dart driver V. Gaines was ninth overall with a 6.583 /211.16 pass and will see Chris McGaha in the opposite lane for the first round of eliminations. Matt Hartford and his Dodge Avenger qualified 11th with a 6.613/ 211.00 effort to match up against Dave Connolly.

Competitor Shane Gray took his third pole position of the year by dislodging Friday's provisional No. 1 Jason Line in the third qualifying session with a 6.539 second / 212.13 mph pass and will have a bye in the first round with 15 qualified entries for eliminations.

Although the quickest Funny Car qualifying times were set in cooler Friday evening conditions, keeping Courtney Force as No.1 qualifier, Don Schumacher Racing's Ron Capps (4.140 / 304.60) and Tommy Johnson Jr. (4.147 /302.01) posted the quickest passes respectively in Saturday's final session in the heat of the day and closer to expected race day temperatures. Capps, who currently sits third in the Funny Car standings, remained seventh on the qualifying timing sheets with the 4.093 sec / 314.61 mph run he posted on Friday evening and will see Alexis DeJoria in the opening round. Johnson Jr. ended up 11th with his final pass and will face Robert Hight as his first opponent.

However, it was DSR teammate Jack Beckman, battling to make his way back into the top-ten in points, who was the top Mopar after retaining the fourth place seeding for his Dodge Charger R/T on the eliminations ladder based on his Friday evening 4.075 second / 314.83 mph pass. He will see Tim Wilkerson, who he is battling for that 10th place spot in the points standings and to whom he lost in the second round at Denver last weekend, as his first round opponent.

Seeded fifth is Mopar Express Lane driver Matt Hagan based on his 4.075 / 307.30 run Friday night as well. He'll line up his Dodge Charger R/T, which will sport the 50th anniversary of the 426 Race HEMI tribute paint scheme for the balance of the NHRA western swing, against Tony Pedregon in the opening round in the hopes of making his way through the ladder to post a second win this season.

"We just need to go rounds on Sunday and gain some more points," Hagan said. "It would be pretty cool to get this special HEMI 50th anniversary car in the winner's circle for all the folks at Mopar."

Three hours of elimination round coverage from the Sonoma NHRA Nationals, the 15th of 24 national events, will be broadcast on ESPN on Sunday, July 27, starting at 9 p.m. (ET).

2014 NHRA Points Standings (Following the Mopar Mile-High NHRA Nationals Race Final)

PRO STOCK (season wins in parentheses)

1. Erica Enders-Stevens – 1229 (4)
2. **Allen Johnson – Dodge Dart – 1045 (4)**
3. **Jeg Coughlin Jr. – Dodge Dart – 998 (2)**
4. Jason Line – 951 (1)
5. Dave Connolly – 948 (1)
6. Vincent Nobile – 893 (1)
7. Shane Gray – 865
8. Chris McGaha – 653
9. **V. Gaines – Dodge Dart – 596**
10. Jonathan Gray – 516

FUNNY CAR (season wins in parentheses)

1. Robert Hight – 1179 (5)
2. John Force – 998 (2)
3. **Ron Capps – Dodge Charger R/T – 921 (1)**
4. **Tommy Johnson Jr. – Dodge Charger R/T – 882 (1)**
5. Courtney Force – 817 (1)
6. Alexis DeJoria – 811 (2)
7. **Matt Hagan – Dodge Charger R/T – 794 (1)**
8. Cruz Pedregon – 781 (1)
9. Del Worsham – 780
10. Tim Wilkerson – 711
11. **Jack Beckman – Dodge Charger R/T – 708**

About Mopar Motorsports

Mopar'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 2014, Mopar celebrates the 50th anniversary of the introduction of the GEN III 426 Race HEMI® and looks to defend back-to-back NHRA World Championship titles (2012-2013) in the Pro Stock class and battle for another Funny Car World Championship after wins in 2011-2012. While Mopar remains involved in a various professional motorsports series, it continues to honour its roots by being a proud supporter of amateur racing within the NHRA with its sponsorship of the HEMI Challenge and Mopar Sportsman Cup.

Mopar Brand

Mopar (a simple contraction of the words Motor and PARTs) was trademarked in 1937 with the launch of an antifreeze product but 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 more than 130 markets, integrating 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 unique in that they are engineered with the same teams that create factory-authorized vehicle specifications for FCA vehicles – 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>