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Mopar Teams Revved Up for the NHRA U.S. Nationals

Capps and Hagan Drive Mopar Machines to Top-3 in Provisional Qualifying

- Capps, Hagan, and Beckman drive their Mopars to three of top four quickest Funny Car qualifying runs
- Capps will face John Force in Saturday night qualifying session to determine winner of rain delayed previous event in a final elimination shootout
- Last year's No.1 qualifier, Hagan will run special 50th anniversary HEMI paint scheme this weekend and is provisionally third
- Beckman qualified fourth as he tries to earn the last spot in NHRA "Countdown to the Championship"
- Johnson and Coughlin Jr. are sixth and tenth in Pro Stock Qualifying while last year's runner-up, V.Gaines sits eighth

August 29, 2014, Brownsburg, Indiana - HEMI engines are revving to go as qualifying has begun for Mopar teams and drivers at the oldest and most prestigious drag racing event of the season, 60th annual National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) U.S. Nationals. Don Schumacher Racing's Mopar machines were certainly firing on all cylinders as three of their drivers got started on and with the right foot at the historic Lucas Oil Raceway near Indianapolis, Indiana.

Ron Capps and Matt Hagan drove their Dodge Charger R/T Funny Cars into the provisional no.2 and no.3 spots respectively with DSR teammate Jack Beckman right on their heels with the fourth quickest run on the timing sheets.

Capps, posted an elapsed time run of 4.052 seconds (316.01 miles per hour) and is working on getting a chance at his very first U.S. Nationals final round appearance and a shot at the much sought-after title win.

Also on the agenda for Saturday night's qualifying run is some unfinished business from the rain delayed Brainerd event two weeks ago. Capps will face John Force in the third qualifying session doubling as a final elimination to determine the title winner for that event.

"It's cliché to say we needed a good start, a good qualifying position, but it's Indy," said Capps who currently sits third in the Funny Car championship standings. "And on top of that we have the final round from Brainerd to run on Saturday night. (Crew Chief Rahn) Tobler really wanted to throw down and see what the track would hold and that's a tough thing for a crew chief to do."

"It was big in a lot of ways," Capps added. "It's been several years where we've kicked off qualifying with a run like that and gotten us in a good position but I think Tobler is really motivated to go after (Force crew chief) Jimmy Prock tomorrow night. It's going to be a fun, fun race."

Hagan qualified the special 50th anniversary 426 HEMI tribute car third with a time of 4.067 seconds and posted the best speed of the session at 318.47 mph. After qualifying in the top-five at four of the last five events, the Mopar Express Lane driver was happy to see his team add to that momentum with the confidence they earned testing at the Indianapolis facility last week in preparation for the event, and then again on their first pass of the weekend.

"It's a huge load off your shoulders when you can qualify like that on your first qualifying run for the U.S. Nationals," said Hagan who earned the No. 1 qualifier at this event last year and still holds the track record. "Going out there and snagging a point, it definitely helps the morale of the guys and is a huge way to start things off at Indy. This is the best I've felt about our Mopar race car and our team this year. I'm pretty excited about it and I'd really like to put our awesome 50th anniversary HEMI edition car in the winner's circle here."

Beckman, who is making every effort to work his way into the 10 and final spot in the NHRA "Countdown to the Championship" at this last event before the playoffs, had a strong run posting a 4.071-second e.t. at 314.90 mph to take the provisional fourth place spot.

Teammate Tommy Johnson Jr.'s #RileyDreamRacer, in support of DSR's official charity Riley Children's Foundation, didn't fair quite as well as he sits 14th after the tires shook and he lost traction. However, Johnson Jr. has been consecutive No.1 qualifier at Indy in 1999-2000 and also has the experience of a runner-up finish to John Force (2002) to keep him focused.

The provisional Funny Car pole position was granted to Del Worsham for his 4.044 sec / 313.73 mph effort.

In Pro Stock action, teammates Allen Johnson and Jeg Coughlin Jr. weren't very pleased with their first runs. Johnson's 6.653 sec/ 206.92 mph run in the "Magneti Marelli Offered by Mopar" Dodge Dart put him sixth, while Coughlin's 6.681 sec/ 206.39 mph had him in tenth place.

Coughlin Jr. is the only current Mopar driver to have won at Indianapolis. In 14 career appearances at Indianapolis, Coughlin Jr. has won three Pro Stock titles at the U.S. Nationals (2000, 2002, and 2009) and has a 23-10 round-win record.

Fellow HEMI-powered Dodge Dart driver, V. Gaines finished runner-up at this event in 2013. He drove his Western Motorsports entry to a 6.672 sec / 207.88 mph run for the eighth place spot in qualifying on Friday while the provisional No.1 qualifier honours went to the 6.623-second / 208.78 mph effort put forth by current points leader, Jason Line.

Four more qualifying sessions are scheduled to be held on Saturday and Sunday at Lucas Oil Raceway. ESPN2 will televise four hours of qualifying highlights on Sunday at 11 a.m. and then another two hours of qualifying coverage starting at 5 p.m. ET from the 60th annual Chevrolet Performance U.S. Nationals, the 18th of 24 events on the NHRA Mello Yellow Drag Racing series schedule.

Six hours of eliminations coverage will be televised on ESPN2 on Monday, Sept. 1, starting at noon ET.

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2014 NHRA Points Standings
(UNOFFICIAL after rain delayed the NHRA Lucas Oil in Brainerd, Minnesota)

PRO STOCK (season wins in parentheses)

1. Jason Line – 1278 (1)

2. Erica Enders-Stevens – 1269* (4)
3. **Allen Johnson – Dodge Dart – 1262* (4)**
4. **Jeg Coughlin Jr. – Dodge Dart – 1202* (2)**
5. Dave Connolly – 1130* (1)
6. Shane Gray – 1068*
7. Vincent Nobile – 1032* (1)
8. V. Gaines – Dodge Dart – 744
9. Chris McGaha – 750
10. Greg Anderson – 685

FUNNY CAR (season wins in parentheses)

1. John Force – 1326* (2)
2. Robert Hight – 1308* (5)
3. **Ron Capps – Dodge Charger R/T – 1090 (1)**
4. **Tommy Johnson Jr. – Dodge Charger R/T – 1052 (1)**
5. Alexis DeJoria – 1035 (2)
6. Courtney Force – 1015 (2)
7. **Matt Hagan – Dodge Charger R/T – 1009 (1)**
8. Cruz Pedregon – 929 (1)
9. Del Worsham – 900
10. Tim Wilkerson – 848
11. Jack Beckman – Dodge Charger R/T – 832

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

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