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## **Capps Wins Rescheduled Brainerd Final; Mopar Teammate Beckman Grabs Provisional No. 1 Spot at NHRA U.S. Nationals**

### **Coughlin Drives Dodge Dart to Rescheduled Brainerd Final Eliminations**

- Ron Capps takes Mopar to final elimination win against John Force to earn rescheduled Brainerd Nationals title
- Jeg Coughlin Jr. races Dodge Dart to rescheduled Brainerd semifinal win, advances to Brainerd final on Sunday
- Jack Beckman jumps to provisional Funny Car No. 1 qualifier position
- Matt Hagan remains in preliminary third spot after "fiery" pass
- Capps sets Lucas Oil Raceway track record for speed at 320.36 mph on qualifying run for provisional fourth spot
- Harold Leiter Jr.'s 1968 Plymouth Barracuda chosen as third Mopar "Top Eliminator HEMI Heritage" winner

August 30, 2014, Brownsburg, Indiana - Saturday night qualifying at the 60th Annual National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) U.S. Nationals near Indianapolis took a bit of a back seat to some unfinished business left over from the rain delayed nationals two weeks ago in Brainerd, Minnesota. Don Schumacher Racing driver Ron Capps lined up his Mopar machine against John Force for a Funny Car final elimination showdown with Capps earning his 42nd career Funny Car national title by driving his Dodge Charger R/T to a 4.026-second elapsed time run at 320.36 mile per hour with a .074-second reaction time to defeat his opponent's 0.059-reaction time and 4.126 sec / 313.88 mph pass.

"That's great, I'm glad for (Crew Chief Rahn) Tobler," Capps said. "I put it in a little bit (deep at the starting line) so that could've easily been a 4.01 or a 4-flat. Everybody here, nothing against the fans here, but this is for the Brainerd fans. I know there's a lot of Brainerd fans here too."

With that run, Capps surpassed teammate Matt Hagan's speed record from last year at Lucas Oil Raceway raising the bar to 320.36 mph on what was also his qualifying pass, putting him provisionally fourth in qualifying for the U.S. Nationals.

With the title win, Capps is a third of the way towards a possible "hat trick" this weekend as he looks to earn a victory in Sunday's Traxxas Funny Car shootout and the coveted NHRA U.S. Nationals championship title on Monday.

The final Pro Stock qualifying session of the day also served as semifinals for the rescheduled Brainerd event to determine who would advance to a final elimination to be held Sunday evening.

Jeg Coughlin Jr. drove his JEGS.com Mopar Dodge Dart to the round win over Vincent Nobile with a .012 reaction time and 6.638/ 207.88 run to his competition's .016 reaction and 6.715/ 207.85 effort. Coughlin now advances to a final elimination battle against provisional No.1 qualifier for the U.S. Nationals, Jason Line (6.589/209.98), during Sunday's second qualifying session.

"I came into the event knowing I was going to have two runs before the (Brainerd) semifinals, and I kind of approached each run as if it was eliminations," said Coughlin, who would love to add a third title win to his season total heading into the playoffs. "I drove aggressive in both timed runs. I was .009 and triple zero (in reaction time) on my two runs. We worked on the reaction time to slow it down a bit. That part feels great. I'm real confident behind the wheel."

But while Coughlin has his eye on the Brainerd Wally trophy, and his third qualifying run was an improvement from

the previous two, he currently sits on the outside looking in with the 13th quickest time and is not yet qualified for the elimination rounds of the U.S. Nationals.

"We came here and kind of struggled in Q1 in the tenth spot," Coughlin said. "We improved a shade moving up to No. 9, and then I'm sure we just got bumped back even more with that .63. We improved again, but they were handing out pretty good runs out there. That's just the way the weekend has gone. We've got a great team, we've got an extremely strong team, and they've got the biggest cheerleader in me trying to help motivate them and give them ideas to get things sorted out."

"We know we can do it, Coughlin added. "We've got 100 percent of everything we need to go out and win this race tomorrow and qualify well for the U.S. Nationals. That's what we are set on."

Coughlin's HEMI-powered teammate Allen Johnson fared better in Saturday's two qualifying sessions as well, posting his best run at 6.614/208.65 in the Magneti Marelli/ Mopar Dodge Dart to put him provisionally seventh.

"We're just fighting a little virus," said Johnson about some of the difficulties that have kept the team from the top three positions in qualifying. "That run there, we made big, big, big wholesale changes to my car. We'll take that run and tune on it for tomorrow, which will be the best run of the weekend and hopefully step up into the top three or four. I feel a little better tonight than I did last night.

"I'm telling you, Indy is a tough place," Johnson added. "Everyone just steps up their game. Everybody is just so close, within thousands. We've got more left. We know we can run about a hundredth or hundredth and a half quicker than that run. I think if we make the run we can make tomorrow, we'll be in the top two or three."

Fellow HEMI-powered driver V. Gaines took his Dodge Dart for a 6.629/208.71 run to put him ninth on the provisional qualifying sheets.

As much cooler conditions prevailed for Day 2 of qualifying at Lucas Oil Raceway, it provided the opportunity for much quicker qualifying runs and DSR driver Jack Beckman took full advantage.

Beckman improved to a 4.032 /319.07 run on his first pass of the day, then took his Mopar machine straight to top of the timing sheets with a 4.004/ 312.13 pass under the lights to take the provisional No.1 qualifier position. That also gave the Dodge Charger R/T driver some very valuable bonus points that could help him in a last-ditch effort to climb into top-10 in points in order to secure a playoff berth in the last event before the NHRA "Countdown to the Championship."

"We're at the top of the qualifying sheets, but the car did what it's supposed to and what we predicted it was going to do every single time, and when you do that you get a fast car," said Beckman, the 2012 Funny Car world champion. "We wouldn't trade our car for anybody's right now."

DSR teammate Matt Hagan was second quick with his first run of the day in the special 50th anniversary 426 HEMI tribute Mopar improving to a 4.021/ 318.99 mark. That pass put him in the provisional third spot by the end of the day. Unfortunately, after a "fiery" pass on the last run of the day, the team will have to return its usual Mopar Express Lane Dodge body.

Tommy Johnson Jr.'s Dodge Charger R/T #RileyDreamRacer, in support of DSR's official charity Riley Children's Foundation, moved up to the eighth spot with a 4.053/316.67 pass.

Also announced on Saturday was the third Mopar "Top Eliminator HEMI Heritage" winner, the 1968 Plymouth Barracuda Mopar HEMI Challenge car owned and raced by Troy, Ohio, native Harold Leiter Jr. The Mopar HEMI Challenge features competition between 1968 HEMI Dodge Darts and Plymouth Barracudas, the classic muscle cars that contributed to the Mopar brand's legendary reputation and success at the drag strip, and Leiter's Barracuda was one of only two original 1968 package cars to compete in the 26-car HEMI Challenge field at the U.S. Nationals on Friday.

"I was very surprised to be chosen," said Leiter, whose Barracuda is powered by a Mopar 426 HEMI. "It's outstanding being picked as the HEMI Heritage winner."

"These cars were intentionally built to be race cars," said Dale Aldo, Mopar Motorsports. "They weren't built to be show cars. The really outstanding aspect of this car is that it's still racing today and it's still competitive. The 1968 HEMI Dodge Darts and Plymouth Barracudas were so competitive NHRA made a particular class for it — SS/AH —and the Mopar HEMI Challenge is now in its 14th year of highlighting these machines. It's a testament to the durability of those original 1968 Darts and Cudas."

"I never imagined these cars would be so sought after," said Leiter. "I paid \$4,500 for the car and trailer back in 1971. It's great to own a piece of Mopar and HEMI Heritage."

Pro Stock and Funny Car qualifying resumes on Sunday with two final sessions left to make the field for the U.S. Nationals, as well as the Funny Car Traxxas Shootout, with Mopar's Capps and Tommy Johnson Jr. among those battling for the \$100,000 prize payout.

ESPN2 will televise four hours of 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.

#### **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](http://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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