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## **Mopar Driver Hagan Unleashes 3.99-Second Run, Captures No. 1 Spot at NHRA U.S. Nationals**

Runner-Up Finish for Coughlin in Rescheduled Brainerd Pro Stock Final

- Matt Hagan drives Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T to record setting 3-second run at Indy to take Funny Car No. 1 qualifier position
- Hagan claims second-straight Indy pole and third of his career at Lucas Oil Raceway at Indianapolis
- Hagan and Jack Beckman qualify 1-2 in their HEMI-powered Dodge machines
- Jeg Coughlin Jr. finishes runner-up in rescheduled Brainerd final elimination at NHRA U.S. Nationals
- Allen Johnson posts second-quickest run in Q5, moves to No. 6 in qualifying

August 31, 2014, Brownsburg, Indiana - On the final day of qualifying for the historic 60th Annual National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) U.S. Nationals on Sunday, Mopar Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car driver Matt Hagan made a little history of his own. Hagan raced his HEMI-powered Mopar Express Lane machine to the No. 1 qualifier spot with a 3.998-second elapsed time (e.t.), setting the track record and becoming the first driver to run in the three-second range at Lucas Oil Raceway at Indianapolis.

The top spot is Hagan's first of the season, 16th of his career and second consecutive at the U.S. Nationals, and third overall at Indy. The Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) driver will line up his Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T against Bob Bode in the first round of U.S. Nationals eliminations on Monday.

Hagan was ranked second after the first two qualifying sessions, but was bumped down to third in Q3 on Saturday after a bang under the hood resulted in a fiery end to his special 50th anniversary 426 HEMI engine tribute Dodge Charger body. Undaunted, Hagan and his team unleashed their record-setting 3.998 pass in their first attempt in the squad's regular Mopar Express Lane body, recording just the 30th three-second run in NHRA Funny Car history and the 11th by a Mopar Dodge, putting the brand in a tie for the most three-second passes by a single manufacturer. Hagan finished with a 4.103/311.63 mark in Q5.

"She was trucking," said Hagan of his Mopar Dodge. "Just a great, solid run. Everything was so smooth. Those fast runs are smooth like that. For (crew chief) Dickie Venables and my whole group of guys, they were up late last night working on this car. We had a little boom at the other end last night. They put it back together right, and put a great race car underneath me. My hat is off to them."

Hagan was joined in the top-five by Mopar Dodge teammate Jack Beckman, who captured the provisional pole on Saturday with a 4.004/312.13 run and will start No. 2 after his DSR stablemate took the No. 1 position. Beckman smoked the tires in both Q4 and Q5 on Sunday and will open eliminations by battling No. 15 qualifier and fellow Dodge driver Blake Alexander (4.144/299.46). Monday brings Beckman's final shot at overtaking Tim Wilkerson and cracking the top-10 in points in order to clinch a playoff berth in the NHRA "Countdown to the Championship."

Ron Capps, winner of the rain-delayed Brainerd event final, which occurred during Q3 of the U.S. Nationals on Saturday, will start fifth at Indy thanks to the 4.026/320.36 he used to defeat final-round foe John Force. Gunning for a possible "hat trick" at Indy (the Brainerd victory, the Traxxas Funny Car Shootout win and the U.S. Nationals championship title), Capps was denied in the first round of the Traxxas Shootout on Sunday, losing to Courtney Force despite a strong 4.043/319.37 effort. The DSR Dodge driver will attempt to go two out of three at Indy, with a round one match against Chad Head in the U.S. Nationals eliminations on tap.

DSR teammate Tommy Johnson Jr. also suffered defeat in the opening round of the Traxxas Funny Car Shootout on Sunday, as his 4.313/265.17 was not enough to take out Alexis DeJoria. Johnson rebounded with a 4.059 e.t. in Q5 to earn three bonus points and will start Monday from the No. 11 spot on the strength of his 4.053/316.67 in Q3. Johnson can greatly assist teammate Beckman by taking out Wilkerson, his first-round foe in eliminations. No. 13 qualifier Jeff Arend (4.082/314.02) will post his GrimeBoss Charger against Del Worsham.

In Pro Stock action, some unfinished business was wrapped up as Jeg Coughlin Jr. drove his HEMI-powered Dodge Dart to a runner-up finish against Pro Stock points leader Jason Line in what doubled as the final elimination of the rescheduled Brainerd national event and the fourth qualifying session for the NHRA U.S. Nationals. It is the JEGS.com Mopar driver's third runner-up result of the season and the 40th of his career. Coughlin's e.t. of 6.635 seconds at 207.72 miles per hour was good enough to put him seventh in the qualifying session but not enough to beat Line's session-best 6.596/207.40 pass. Line remained No.1 qualifier with the low e.t. run of the event with his 6.589 /209.98 pass.

"I'm not upset with it a bit because it's a tough field out here and there are a lot of teams that have worked so hard this year," Coughlin said. "We've had a great year between now and the first 17 races of the season, with a handful of wins and another handful of runner-ups. I think we're positioning ourselves well, not only for game day here at the 60th annual U.S. Nationals, but also for the Countdown."

Coughlin posted his best effort in the final qualifying session with a 6.623/208.07 to put him ninth overall and pair him with Aaron Stanfield for the first round of eliminations on Monday at the U.S. Nationals.

"This weekend has been, as Allen (Johnson) would say as well, a non-stop thrash," said Coughlin of the hard work put in by the Mopar team to improve the competitiveness of the cars through each session. "I can't thank both teams enough for the effort they have put in to try and get our cars up in the top four like we had set out as our goal. We didn't quite get there with our qualifying efforts, but the show is not over yet. Fortunately here at Indy, both lanes are very, very competitive. I feel confident going into race day tomorrow that we've got a Dodge Dart that can shoot right through the field."

After a challenging start to the weekend, HEMI-powered teammate Allen Johnson made his best run of the meet in the "Magneti Marelli Offered by Mopar" Dodge Dart on his final attempt by posting the second-best pass of the session at 6.610/208.81 to put him sixth on the Pro Stock eliminations ladder. He'll have lane choice over Chris McGaha for the opening round.

"We've struggled since we got here, but these guys just beat on it and beat on it, and with that last run of the weekend we're right there and very competitive," said Johnson, who was much more upbeat about the setup of his Dodge Dart for eliminations. "I feel sure that we can take what we did just then and maybe improve even a little bit more tomorrow. Even if we're not qualified as well as we'd want, we'll go into Monday with one of the best cars for race day, so we're looking forward to going out there and seeing if we can't bring home that first trophy from Indy."

"It's been a long, hard route, but damn we sure needed all five runs to get where we're at now from where we started the weekend," added Johnson, who is hoping to make his way to his first career final elimination at Indianapolis. "It's an exciting, long weekend, but everyone has worked their butts off and really wants this."

V. Gaines, who finished runner-up at this event last year, will start from the 13th spot on the ladder with his best effort of 6.629/208.71 in his HEMI-powered Dodge Dart. Gaines will see Dave Connolly as his first round opponent. Part-time Pro Stock entrant Matt Hartford qualified his Dodge Avenger 15th with a 6.661/207.85 run and will line up against Vincent Nobile for the first round.

ESPN2 will televise six hours of eliminations coverage starting at noon ET on Monday, Sept. 1, from the 60th annual Chevrolet Performance U.S. Nationals, the 18th of 24 events on the NHRA Mello Yellow Drag Racing series schedule, and final national event before the NHRA "Countdown to the Championship" begins.

#### **2014 NHRA Points Standings** **(Following qualifying at the Indianapolis NHRA U.S. Nationals)**

##### **PRO STOCK (season wins in parentheses)**

1. Jason Line\* – 1368 (4)
2. Erica Enders-Stevens\* – 1304 (4)
3. **Allen Johnson\* – Dodge Dart – 1298 (4)**
4. **Jeg Coughlin Jr.\* – Dodge Dart – 1254 (2)**
5. Dave Connolly\* – 1171 (1)

6. Shane Gray\* – 1108
7. Vincent Nobile\* – 1073 (1)
8. **V. Gaines – Dodge Dart – 805**
9. Chris McGaha – 782
10. Greg Anderson – 719

#### **FUNNY CAR (season wins in parentheses)**

1. John Force\* – 1360 (3)
2. Robert Hight\* – 1340 (5)
3. **Ron Capps\* – Dodge Charger R/T – 1148 (2)**
4. **Tommy Johnson Jr.\* – Dodge Charger R/T – 1087 (1)**
5. Alexis DeJoria\* – 1068 (2)
6. **Matt Hagan\* – Dodge Charger R/T – 1054 (1)**
7. Courtney Force\* – 1053 (2)
8. Cruz Pedregon\* – 963 (1)
9. Del Worsham – 941
10. Tim Wilkerson – 883
11. **Jack Beckman – Dodge Charger R/T – 873**

**\*clinched a “Countdown to the Championship” playoff berth**

#### **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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