

NHRA Carolina Nationals Elimination Rounds Postponed after Rain and On-Track Incident Halts Racing

- Eliminations rounds at the National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Carolina postponed after rain halted racing following on track incident
- Carolina Nationals eliminations to be completed at the next scheduled event in Ennis, Texas, at the NHRA FallNationals
- Mopar driver V. Gaines emerges uninjured after first round incident that heavily damaged his Dodge Dart Pro Stock vehicle
- Jeg Coughlin Jr. earns first round win to keep alive hopes of defending Carolina Nationals Pro Stock title
- Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) drivers Matt Hagan and Ron Capps advance past the first round of Funny Car eliminations

September 14, 2014, Concord, North Carolina - Mopar motorsports fans will have to wait a week to see the completion of the seventh annual Pep Boys National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Carolina Nationals, the first national event of the six-race playoff series called the "Countdown to the Championship", after eliminations rounds were halted by rain shortly after a first round on-track incident involving Mopar driver V. Gaines at zMAX Dragway near Charlotte, North Carolina. The postponed elimination rounds will be completed at the following scheduled event in Ennis, Texas, next weekend at the NHRA FallNationals.

The on-track incident took place during the Pro Stock category first round match-up between fifth place qualifier Allen Johnson aboard his "Magneti Marelli Offered by Mopar" Dodge Dart, in the right lane and V. Gaines' HEMI-Powered Dodge Dart, which was qualified 12th on the eliminations ladder, in the left lane. Shortly after the cars launched, Johnson's machine sashayed its way over the centerline for disqualification, but all eyes were on V. Gaines moments later as his car made an unexpected move to the left and gave the affable driver a wild ride that led to a few tense moments. Gaines emerged uninjured from his heavily damaged vehicle.

"Nobody made it down that left lane so I was fully prepared to let out of it the minute it did anything stupid," said Gaines who came into the Countdown eighth in points. "I was going right down the middle of the groove and everything was good. I knew I was ahead of Allen (Johnson) and then, boy, it just went. It just took a left turn on me and there was no correcting. It was just gone."

Despite the unfortunate finish to his lap, Gaines earned the round win against Johnson and the NHRA will allow the use of a replacement car for the continuation of eliminations in Texas next weekend.

"I'm sad to lose the new car but we'll come back from this," Gaines said. "We're here to fight in the Countdown. It was a hard way to get twenty points but we'll get our (Dodge) Avenger out and do what we can."

Also advancing to the second round of eliminations is the JEGS.com Mopar Dodge Dart driven by Jeg Coughlin Jr. who won his first round match-up against Greg Anderson to keep alive hopes of defending his Carolina Nationals Pro Stock title from last year. Match-ups will be determined after the final four pairs of cars in Pro Stock have a chance to finish their first round of eliminations.

Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) Dodge Charger R/T drivers and teammates Matt Hagan and Ron Capps won their respective first round match ups and will advance to the rescheduled Funny Car quarterfinals next week that will run at the same time as qualifications for the FallNationals.

Hagan drove his Rocky Boots/ Mopar Express Lane machine to a 4.087 second elapsed time pass at 313.29 miles

per hour over Tony Pedregon (4.478/227.42) for the round win and a second round match-up against Tim Wilkerson. Capps (4.068/314.39) eliminated teammate Tommy Johnson Jr. (4.075/311.85) to face Bob Tasca in the next round, while fellow Dodge Charger R/T driver Jack Beckman lost his first round battle against Wilkerson.

The completion of the Carolina Nationals elimination rounds will take place next week when the NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing series heads west to Ennis, Texas, and will run concurrently to qualifications for the 29th annual AAA Texas NHRA Fall Nationals at Texas Motorplex on Sept. 19-21. It is the second of four consecutive weekend events and the second scheduled stop in the six-event playoff series called the "Countdown to the Championship".

2014 Countdown to the Championship Standings

(Following final qualifying at the NHRA Carolina Nationals)

PRO STOCK (season wins in parentheses)

1. Jason Line – 2146 (4)
2. Erica Enders-Stevens – 2130 (4)
3. **Allen Johnson – Dodge Dart – 2104 (4)**
4. **Jeg Coughlin Jr. – Dodge Dart – 2097 (2)**
5. Dave Connolly – 2090 (1)
6. Shane Gray – 2073 (1)
7. Vincent Nobile – 2069 (1)
8. **V. Gaines – Dodge Dart – 2052**
9. Chris McGaha – 2042
10. Jonathan Gray – 2035

FUNNY CAR (season wins in parentheses)

1. John Force – 2142 (3)
2. Robert Hight – 2121 (5)
3. **Ron Capps – Dodge Charger R/T – 2106 (2)**
4. Alexis DeJoria – 2104 (3)
5. **Tommy Johnson Jr. – Dodge Charger R/T – 2084 (1)**
6. Courtney Force – 2076 (2)
7. **Matt Hagan – Dodge Charger R/T – 2070 (1)**
8. Cruz Pedregon – 2057 (1)
9. Del Worsham – 2043
10. Tim Wilkerson – 2032
11. **Jack Beckman – Dodge Charger R/T – 908**

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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