

## **Enders Starting Season-High No. 2 in Dodge Dart Pro Stocker at Mopar Mile-High Nationals**

- Mopar Performance Dodge Dart Pro Stock driver Erica Enders No. 2 at 37th annual Mopar Mile-High NHRA Nationals
- Start from No. 2 position is Enders' best since NHRA Las Vegas last fall
- Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) Top Fuel driver Leah Pritchett No. 10 in Mopar/Pennzoil® dragster
- DSR pilot Jack Beckman No. 6 seed, leads Dodge Charger R/T Funny Cars on "the mountain"
- New "Mopar Road Ready Powered by Dodge" schedule announced
- Mopar History at Bandimere Speedway

July 23, 2016, Morrison, Colorado - Qualifying is complete at the 37th annual Mopar Mile-High NHRA Nationals, and back-to-back Pro Stock world champion Erica Enders is set to start from the No. 2 position in her Mopar Performance Dodge Dart – her highest qualifying position of the season and best since she was No. 1 at the NHRA Las Vegas event last fall. Team Mopar driver Enders, who races out of the Elite Motorsports stable, rocketed to a 6.933-second pass at 198.04 mph to secure the lofty position. Enders will race fellow Dodge Dart campaigner Alan Prusiensky in the first round on Sunday at Bandimere Speedway.

On Friday at the Mopar Mile-High Nationals, Enders had possession of the pole for the first time this season on a strong 6.963/197.74 that had the fans in the Bandimere Speedway stands on their feet. She barely missed keeping hold of the top spot when Alex Laughlin surged ahead in their head-to-head meeting in the final pair of Pro Stockers to race down the track on Saturday. Laughlin was quicker by just .007-second to snatch his first No. 1 right out of Enders' grasp.

"No. 1 doesn't mean anything to me, except it's cool to get a green hat," said Enders, a 21-time NHRA Pro Stock winner, who will be chasing her first Denver title on race day and battling for a position in the Pro Stock top 10. "That's what I was talking to my guys about on the radio before we even made the run after we knew that a handful of people had run 6.93s. The benefit of running last is that you get to see what everybody does. I told my guys, either way – stay on the pole or not, get it back or not – that was an awesome turnaround we've had this weekend, and we will out-tune and out-drive them tomorrow. No matter what, it's such an awesome step in the right direction, and it goes to show that hard work really pays off.

"This is where we get to really, really dig deep and see if we can battle back into the Countdown [to the Championship]. I'm super proud of our showing thus far, and we've got our day cut out for us tomorrow. But I wouldn't want to go to battle with anyone else. I'm proud to have performed so well in our Mopar Dodge Dart at the Mopar Mile-High Nationals, and we'll see if we can bring home a Wally trophy to Detroit."

Enders' Mopar teammate Jeg Coughlin Jr., driver of the "Magneti Marelli Offered by Mopar" Dodge Dart, qualified in the No. 8 spot and drew Elite Motorsports teammate Vincent Nobile for the first round.

Allen Johnson, driving his Mopar-powered Marathon Petroleum Dodge Dart, will start 10th and race Drew Skillman, whom he last raced – and got the better of – in Houston earlier this season. HEMI®-powered Richie Stevens Jr. and Deric Kramer, racing under the American Ethanol umbrella, are No. 12 and 13, respectively. Stevens Jr. will challenge Bo Butner to kick off Sunday's competition, and Kramer will race Jason Line.

### **Mopar in Top Fuel**

In the Top Fuel category, Team Mopar's newest addition, Leah Pritchett, ended the first day of qualifying with a speedy 3.881-second pass at 312.35 mph and opened up Saturday with an even better 3.866/313.37 in the

Mopar/Pennzoil® Top Fuel dragster. The final round was a bit more of a challenge, however, and Pritchett did not improve. She will start from the No. 10 position in her HEMI-powered dragster and race fellow DSR driver and another former Jr. Drag Racing League participant in the first round, Shawn Langdon.

"The weekend has been just as high as the mountaintop that we're on," said Pritchett. "Being able to make a couple of solid runs down the track like we have is extremely promising, and in large part due to the efforts of the crew chiefs working together. For [crew chiefs] Mike Guger and Joe Barlam, they've had a huge amount of success here being No. 1 qualifier with a setup that they're familiar with, and within the past four races they have gotten familiar with the DSR setup. Unfortunately, we are running our teammate tomorrow, and that is not the picture that we wanted to paint. But at the end of the day, we've had a phenomenal showing, getting down the track consistently at our main sponsor's title event, the Mopar Mile-High Nationals.

"We have a lot of confidence going into race day. I'm feeling extremely confident and positive about our entire weekend so far. Tomorrow is a really big day for us. We're going to persevere."

Tony Schumacher, the No. 9 seed in Denver, made his best pass of the weekend in his HEMI-powered U.S. Army Top Fuel dragster in the second round on Friday, clocking a brisk 3.836/313.07. Last season's runner-up and two-time Mopar Mile-High Nationals winner will square off with Doug Kalitta in the first round.

### **Beckman Leads the Charge for Mopar Funny Cars**

HEMI-powered Jack Beckman made a big move in the final qualifying session following an extended rain delay on Saturday at the Mopar Mile-High Nationals. Beckman, pilot of the Infinite Hero Dodge Charger R/T and defending event champion, joined the Bandimere Speedway 3-second club with a powerful 3.985-second pass at 312.78 mph to send him up to the No. 6 position and line-up a first-round meeting with DSR teammate Ron Capps, whose best qualifying pass was a 4.062/309.84.

Beckman's first two passes down the racetrack included a pair of fairly sizable wheelstands that brought an unexpected challenge to the team.

"We were looking for anything steel last night that wasn't bolted down to bolt onto the front of the Infinite Hero Dodge," said Beckman. "Two runs, we wheel-stood the car. That's what happens when you're pushing hard. It's the first time we've been back here with this style of header – and you don't want to hurt the race car too badly. We emptied every piece of scrap metal out of the cabinets that we could and bolted it on the front of the car. We're heavy, and we know it's a weight penalty that's going to affect us a little bit, but the car is very drivable, and we can tune around that. We made good improvements in the third and fourth qualifying sessions, and I know we're heading in the right direction. I don't know if you have to throw everything out that we learned at the night sessions once we go into raceday in the heat of the sun, but we figured it out last year okay. It's nice to go into Sunday feeling like you can get that trophy."

Tommy Johnson Jr., who was runner-up to Joe Amato in Denver in 1991, clocked a best time of 4.029/283.01 and will start from the No. 9 position. He will race Chad Head in round one. Matt Hagan, driver of the Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T, qualified in the No. 7 position and will race Tim Wilkerson.

Championship eliminations at the 37th annual Mopar Mile-High NHRA Nationals will begin at 11 a.m. MT on Sunday, July 23, 2016.

### **Mopar Renews Commitment to Teen Driver Safety at Mopar Mile-High NHRA Nationals**

During qualifying in Denver, Mopar announced an extended commitment to promoting teen safety behind the wheel and presented the NHRA Motorsports Museum with a check for \$350,000 as a show of support for the "Mopar Road Ready Powered by Dodge" program. The event will return for seven additional events and a third year of teaching teens the importance of being safe behind the wheel.

The 2016/2017 "Mopar Road Ready Powered by Dodge" program has confirmed a return to the Metro Detroit area in Center Line, Michigan, October 8-9; a stop for the second consecutive year at Bandimere Speedway, October 22-23; and then two new venues, including Austin, Texas, December 3-4; and Phoenix in February of 2017. The program will wrap up with a visit to Englishtown, New Jersey, April 22-23, 2017; Sarasota/Bradenton in Florida, May 20-21, 2017;

and a final two-day visit to Metro Detroit in May.

"Mopar Road Ready Powered by Dodge" is aided by a collaboration with the National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Motorsports Museum and B.R.A.K.E.S. (Be Responsible and Keep Everyone Safe).

Parents can register teens for a 2016/2017 "Mopar Road Ready Powered by Dodge" event at [www.mopar.com/road-ready/register](http://www.mopar.com/road-ready/register).

### **Mopar History at Bandimere Speedway**

This weekend's performance is nothing new for Team Mopar at the Mile-High Nationals. Success for the Mopar brand has long been established on "the mountain," and in fact, the very first NHRA national event held at Bandimere Speedway ended with a pair of Mopar entries in the winner's circle. In 1979, Billy Meyer came out on top in the Funny Car category in his '79 Arrow, and Pro Stock driver Randy Humphrey claimed the trophy in his '79 Volare.

### **About Mopar Motorsports**

The Mopar brand'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 2016, Mopar will look to once again vie for a NHRA World Championship title in both Pro Stock and Funny Car categories. While Mopar remains involved in a various professional motorsports series, it continues to honor its roots by being a proud supporter of Sportsman racing within the NHRA with its sponsorship of the HEMI Challenge and Mopar's Tom Hoover Sportsman Challenge.

### **Mopar**

Mopar is the global name for Stellantis genuine parts and authentic accessories.

A simple combination of the words MOtor and PARts, Mopar offers exceptional service, parts and customer-care. Born in 1937 as the name of a line of antifreeze products, Mopar has evolved over more than 85 years to represent both complete vehicle care and authentic performance for owners and enthusiasts worldwide.

Mopar made its mark in the 1960s during the muscle-car era with performance parts to enhance speed and handling for both on-road and racing use. Later, Mopar expanded to include technical service and customer support, and today integrates service, parts and customer-care operations in order to enhance customer and dealer support worldwide.

Complete information on Mopar is available at [www.mopar.com](http://www.mopar.com) and the Mopar blog at [www.blog.mopar.com](http://www.blog.mopar.com). For more information regarding Stellantis (NYSE: STLA), please visit [www.stellantis.com](http://www.stellantis.com).

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