

National Record and Pole for Mopar's Hagan in NHRA Brainerd Qualifying, 50th Win for Capps

- Matt Hagan powers Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T to pole on national record-setting run
- No. 1 is third season for Hagan, 10th of year for Mopar
- Mopar DSR driver Ron Capps claims delayed NHRA Northwestern Nationals trophy in Brainerd qualifying
- Win is milestone 50th of Capps' NHRA nitro career, ninth of season for Mopar in NHRA Funny Car competition
- DSR Top Fuel drivers Leah Pritchett, Tony Schumacher qualify well in top half
- Pritchett effectively protecting position in top 10 for chance to race for Mello Yello Series Top Fuel championship
- Schumacher records career best numbers in HEMI®-powered U.S. Army Top Fuel dragster
- Erica Enders looks to defend 2015 Brainerd title in Mopar Performance Dodge Dart Pro Stock car
- Magneti Marelli Offeredy by Mopar Dodge Dart pilot Jeg Coughlin Jr. Brainerd's most decorated currently competing Pro Stock driver
- Pro Stock's Allen Johnson qualifies season-high No. 3 in Mopar-powered Dodge Dart

August 20, 2016, Brainerd, Minnesota - The season just keeps getting better for Team Mopar, and on Saturday at Brainerd International Raceway, the sun was shining particularly bright on Mopar Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car drivers Ron Capps and Matt Hagan. The Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) competitors knocked the socks off of the spectators with brilliant runs that resulted in victory, a national record, and the pole.

Points leader Capps brought home the tenth Funny Car win of the season for Mopar with a final-round defeat of Del Worsham in the two-week delayed Seattle money round that was contested during Saturday qualifying at the 35th annual NHRA Nationals in Brainerd. Rain washed away the opportunity to finish the job in Seattle, but conditions were fierce on Saturday in Brainerd, with strong numbers across the board. Capps, the second winningest Funny Car driver in NHRA history, powered to a 4.014-second pass at 322.42 mph that easily got the win over Worsham's slowing, tire-shaking 6.01. The victory was the 50th of Capps' career and fifth of the season in his steady Dodge.

"Those guys just bring out the best in us," said Capps. "It's unbelievable to me to have all those wins. Every time I get into the car, I still feel like a rookie. Every time I drive through the gates of a track, I'm ready to learn and listen to everything [crew chief Rahn] Tobler has to say, what he wants me to do, the calls he's going to make. I love soaking that up."

As for his chances at a second title for the weekend on Sunday, Capps should be optimistic. His history at Brainerd is long, dating back to 1997 when he was runner-up to John Force in the final round. Since that time, he has won the event five times – including three straight seasons, from 2012 to 2014. The only currently competing driver to have won more Brainerd trophies than Capps is John Force with 11. He is qualified in the No. 5 position and will race John Hale in the first round of eliminations.

Capps won a title on Saturday, but Hagan stole the glory as he capped off the day with a fantastic pass in the last session as he flew to a stunning, national-record shattering 3.822 paired with a big speed of 333.82 mph in his Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger. Hagan waltzed off with the No. 1 spot unchallenged, securing his third pole of the season and 24th of his career. He will race John Bojec in the first round.

"I have [crew chief] Dickie Venables in my corner, and that guy is so bright and so brilliant," said Hagan, who was the Brainerd low qualifier in 2011 but has yet to secure a win at the facility. "He said, 'Hey kid, it's going to go really fast or nowhere at all.' It's cool to know that you can hang on to a racecar that does that and has the capability to do that. Dickie is smart enough to make it all work. It really comes down to my guys, so when I get to crawl into a racecar, it's a blessing. We have potential to be out here in a championship hunt again this year. One step at a time."

The whole DSR crew made quite a showing of Mopar muscle during qualifying. Tommy Johnson Jr., driving the Make-A-Wish Dodge Charger R/T, qualified No. 3 with a career-best 3.859/327.98. He will race Dale Creasy Jr. in the first round. Jack Beckman and the Infinite Hero Dodge Charger R/T raced to the No. 4 position on a 3.859/326.24. Beckman will square off with Cruz Pedregon.

Mopar Funny Car Qualifying Results

Matt Hagan, Don Schumacher Racing
Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T
Qualified No. 8
Round one: Hagan vs. John Bojec

Tommy Johnson Jr., Don Schumacher Racing
Make-A-Wish Dodge Charger R/T
Qualified No. 3
Round one: Johnson vs. Dale Creasy Jr.

Jack Beckman, Don Schumacher Racing
Infinite Hero Dodge Charger R/T
Qualified No. 5
Round one: Beckman vs. Cruz Pedregon

Ron Capps, Don Schumacher Racing
Dodge Charger R/T
Qualified No. 5
Round one: Capps vs. John Hale

Mopar Top Fuel Qualifying

Leah Pritchett, Don Schumacher Racing
Mopar Top Fuel Dragster
Qualified No. 8
Round one: Pritchett vs. Clay Millican

Hot off of making her career best run in Seattle and flying the colors of Papa John's on her Mopar Top Fuel dragster in Brainerd, Leah Pritchett qualified in the No. 8 position, her fourth top-half effort of the 2016 season. Her best time in Brainerd was a blazing 3.727-second pass at 320 mph recorded in the final session that set her up for a match with Clay Millican in the first round of eliminations.

For Pritchett, every run down the racetrack is of the utmost importance at this critical point in the season. Pritchett would like nothing more than to have a shot at running for her first Top Fuel world championship, but she must first lock into the top 10 before the Countdown to the Championship playoffs kick off in Charlotte next month. The Mopar driver entered the Brainerd event with a 19-point lead over No. 11 Terry McMillen, and there is just one race after this weekend in which points can be claimed – the prestigious U.S. Nationals at Indianapolis.

Tony Schumacher, Don Schumacher Racing
U.S. Army Top Fuel Dragster
Qualified No. 4
Round one: Schumacher vs. Scott Palmer

Tony Schumacher's Mopar-powered U.S. Army Top Fuel dragster was a solid performer in Brainerd International Raceway qualifying. HEMI® power sent Schumacher to a career best run in the third session with an outstanding

3.698-second pass at 332.52 mph that rocketed the eight-time series champion right to the top of the qualifying sheets. The No. 1 spot was in jeopardy heading into the final session, though, as the weather cooled considerably and conditions were nearly ideal. Although Schumacher made another great pass, his 3.694/326.63 was not enough to keep hold of the pole. He qualified No. 4 and will race Scott Palmer in round one.

Mopar Pro Stock Qualifying

Erica Enders, Elite Performance

Mopar Performance Dodge Dart

Qualified No. 11

Round one: Shane Gray vs. Enders

Two-time and defending NHRA Pro Stock Mello Yello Drag Racing Series world champion Erica Enders entered the Brainerd event looking to repeat her victorious performance there last year in which she knocked out Jason Line.

Mopar Performance Dodge Dart driver Enders, who holds the Brainerd International Raceway track record at 6.541-second, is a two-time winner at the event. In addition to the 2015 victory, she scored the trophy in 2012 in a head-to-head final round with Allen Johnson. She was also runner-up in 2011.

In this weekend's qualifying, the 2012 Brainerd pole sitter clocked a best time of 6.660 at 207.08 mph on the second day of the event after a challenging first day that included a time-out at the starting line. Enders will start from the No. 11 spot and race Shane Gray in the opening act on Sunday. Their match will mark the first time this season that the two have met during eliminations.

Jeg Coughlin Jr., Elite Performance

Magneti Marelli Offered by Mopar Dodge Dart

Qualified No. 12

Round one: Bo Butner vs. Coughlin

Five-time NHRA Pro Stock champ Jeg Coughlin Jr. has more wins at Brainerd than any other currently competing driver in the category. Coughlin scored wins at Brainerd International Raceway in 1999, 2002, 2007 and 2010, and he was runner-up in 2000 and 2014. The driver of the Magneti Marelli Offered by Mopar Dodge Dart qualified in the No. 12 position with a best time of 6.661/206.83 and will race Bo Butner in the first round. Coughlin ousted Butner in the first round in Bristol earlier this season en route to a semifinals finish, his best so far this year.

Allen Johnson, J&J Racing

Marathon Petroleum Dodge Dart

Qualified No. 3

Round one: Johnson vs. Mark Hogan

Allen Johnson wheeled his Mopar-powered Marathon Petroleum Dodge Dart to a very quick and fast 6.613/208.59 in Brainerd qualifying to earn a start from the No. 3 position. Johnson, with a J&J Racing bullet beneath the hood of his Mopar Dodge Dart, is making his best start of the 2016 season not too long after winning Mopar's biggest race of the year, the Mopar Mile-High NHRA Nationals at Bandimere Speedway in Denver. The life-long Mopar campaigner will race Mark Hogan in the first round of eliminations, and he will be looking for his first Brainerd win after a runner-up to Erica Enders in 2012. Notably, Johnson knows how to dial into power at Brainerd International Raceway – he was the No. 1 qualifier in 2014.

"We made four really good runs this weekend, and I think this is the best the car has run all season," said Johnson.

"We've got a great racecar. The driver's just got to do his job tomorrow."

Championship eliminations at the 35th annual NHRA Nationals at Brainerd International Raceway will begin at 12 noon EST on Sunday, August 21, 2016.

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.

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