

Contact: Tom Blattler

Dan Reid

## **Mopar Dodge//SRT Ready to Return to Racing With Restart of 2020 NHRA Season in Indianapolis**

- Mopar Dodge//SRT get back on track this weekend after a four-month hiatus with the restart of the 2020 National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Mello Yello Drag Racing Series at Lucas Oil Raceway in Indianapolis
- Mopar Dodge//SRT entries return with four Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) Dodge Charger SRT Hellcats in Funny Car and one Mopar Dodge//SRT Top Fuel Dragster at the E3 Spark Plugs NHRA Nationals on July 11-12
- Shortened season will still see Mopar and Dodge//SRT as event title sponsors at four of the remaining 16 NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series races
- All four DSR Dodge Charger Hellcats sit top-5 in Funny Car Championship points standings
- DSR Mopar Dodge//SRT Top Fuel Dragster restarts season top-3 in points standings with Leah Pruett

July 9, 2020, Auburn Hills, Mich. - A much anticipated return to National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Mello Yello Drag Racing Series racing takes place this weekend at Lucas Oil Raceway in Indianapolis for Mopar, Dodge//SRT and the Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) team, following a hiatus of more than four months.

Following the suspension of the 2020 season due to the COVID-19 pandemic on March 12, just prior to the third event of the year at the NHRA Gatornationals in Gainesville, Florida, the remaining 16-event shortened schedule kicks off with a pair of weekend events in Indianapolis. Race weekends will be shortened to two-day events with qualifying held Saturday only and final eliminations on Sunday.

The E3 Spark Plugs NHRA Nationals on July 11-12 and Lucas Oil NHRA Summernationals on July 18-19 will be the first major-league auto-racing events in the state of Indiana to allow fans this year. Beginning Aug. 7-9, the series begins a 13-consecutive-week stretch of non-stop drag racing to battle for pro-category championships. During that stretch, Mopar and Dodge//SRT remain event title sponsors at four national events on the new schedule:

- Aug. 7-9 – Dodge Mile-High NHRA Nationals in Denver
- Sept. 11-13 – Mopar Express Lane NHRA Nationals in Reading, Pennsylvania
- Oct. 23-25 – Mopar Express Lane NHRA SpringNationals Presented By Pennzoil near Houston
- Oct. 30-Nov. 1 – Dodge NHRA Nationals in Las Vegas

### **FUNNY CAR NOTES & QUOTES**

Mopar Dodge//SRT restart their 18th season with DSR with all four Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Cars in the top 5 in points. Mopar Dodge//SRT enters this weekend's competition with five consecutive drives to the winner's circle at race events dating back to Dallas in October 2019.

#### **Matt Hagan, Mopar Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car**

Two-time Funny Car world champion and driver of the Mopar Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat, Matt Hagan made his professional debut in Indianapolis at the 2008 U.S. Nationals. He is looking to move up from a fifth-place spot in the Funny Car championship standings after a pair of No. 1 qualifier honors and two round wins to start the 2020 season.

"I'm really excited about getting back to racing in Indy. We're such a fan-engaged sport – we're so used to being able to take pictures with the fans, fist bumps, all that, and it'll be a different vibe. We did some virtual autograph sessions with Mopar during our downtime and that was cool and I think our fans really enjoyed that. At the end of the day, we're entertainers and we're going to make sure we entertain our fans and make sure we give them a great show on the race track. I'm just excited to be able to be back and be able to rep our partners in Mopar, Pennzoil and

Sandvik on the track. Every weekend, you're so used to driving 330 mph. I never thought there was anything other than racing, but it's been good being able to spend some time at home growing my businesses. I was able to get a really good handle on these companies I'm growing and now I'm able to fully focus on racing again. We had a really great car when we left off. We were No. 1 qualifier at the first two events and I'm excited to get back in my Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat. Bring it on, let's go do this."

#### **Jack Beckman, Infinite Hero Foundation Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat**

Jack Beckman is the current Funny Car points leader after a win and runner-up finish in the first two events of the season aboard his Infinite Hero Foundation Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat. Beckman is seeking a third consecutive final round appearance in 2020 this weekend and is bolstered by his 2019 performance at Indianapolis when he earned the Funny Car No. 1 qualifier and a runner-up finish in the NHRA U.S. Nationals.

"Everybody is talking about getting back to business as usual and in racing we're going to be getting back to business but there's nothing usual about it. This is completely unprecedented. We're going to lose Friday qualifying at every race from here on out and that could drastically change your approach as a crew chief and as a driver just in qualifying. And then none of us have been in a race car for probably the longest period in our drag racing careers, so we're going to get to make shakedown runs the day before a race weekend. I don't think that's been allowed for nearly 50 years in drag racing. So, the scenario is what it is and we're all going to do our best to make things get back to whatever 'normal' is as quick as possible but I've got to tell you, I've had driving withdrawals and now I feel like it's so sudden. After waiting for so many months I'm looking at the calendar and it's like when you're a kid getting ready to go back to school. I just can't wait to get my bag packed and get on that airplane."

#### **Tommy Johnson Jr., MD Anderson Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car**

Winner of the last event before the season was suspended at the NHRA Arizona Nationals in February, Tommy Johnson Jr. is second in the Funny Car points standings.

"I'm certainly excited about going back racing but it's been a long period of downtime and there are some jitters that go along with that. Being out of the car for so long, it's going to take a few runs to get back into the swing of it. We were doing so well and had some good momentum going before the break and you hope that continues. You park the car and don't touch it for so long and it's been sitting there ready to go for a while. We had an opportunity to improve on it, we put on a new front half. We have a great team and a great car. It'll take a little bit of getting used to those first days back but that's the same for everyone. It's going to be great to get back to some sort of normalcy, even though there will be some restrictions. I'd love nothing more than to pull off a win at both of these Indy races and take the lead in the points."

#### **Ron Capps, NAPA Auto Parts Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car**

Driver of the HEMI®-powered Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat, Ron Capps sits fourth in points and is looking to earn a win at the only racetrack on the circuit at which he has never earned a Wally trophy.

"2020 has been full of surprises, to say the least. It's going to be nice to get a little bit of normalcy back in our racing lives. Once NHRA announced that we had these two races in Indianapolis, it didn't seem like it was going to get here fast enough and now we're finally here. The fact that we're going to be on FOX network on Sunday is a great thing for motorsports fans.

"It's going to be a treacherous, hot, humid weekend, which we know can be very difficult, especially with 11,000-horsepower nitro engines. I brag about the NAPA Know How with our team and we've shown that we can run in those conditions as good as anybody. This is going to test a lot of people. We'll get a couple of shakedown runs on Friday and then it's just two rounds of qualifying on Saturday, so you're not going to have a whole lot of data to go off of. That's why the way that Rahn Tobler and I and our whole NAPA team work together is so important and these conditions will test every bit of every crew member. I'm looking forward to the challenge. Can't wait to get back into the NAPA car and step on the gas for the first time and just relive what made me fall in love with driving a nitro Funny Car. Hopefully, the NAPA team will be on FOX on Sunday afternoon standing with a Wally from Indianapolis."

### **TOP FUEL NOTES & QUOTES**

#### **Leah Pruett, Mopar Dodge//SRT Top Fuel Dragster**

DSR's Mopar Dodge//SRT Top Fuel Dragster returns to competition with Leah Pruett at the helm and sitting third in

points.

"I feel like we've all been living the real-life motorsports version of double-dutch, waiting for the right time and circumstances, and it's finally our turn to return. Excited would normally be the term used for the feeling I get when race week nears, but I honestly feel the more precise description is 'ready.' We already had a strong performing race car when the hiatus began and this Mopar crew has taken this time to ensure that performance stays maximized. I've properly filled my time with various athletic activities and attending/watching other racing, but have confirmed that nothing comes close to the sensory impact of nitro racing. Composure within competition has been a focus of mine during this time and there is nothing more in this world that I am looking forward to more than strapping back into our Mopar Top Fueler and chasing that Wally."

#### **NHRA Championship Points Standings (after two of 18 Nationals events):**

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

1. **Jack Beckman (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 220 (1)**
2. **Tommy Johnson Jr. (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 175 (1)**
3. John Force – 173
4. **Ron Capps (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 128**
5. **Matt Hagan (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 124**
6. Tim Wilkerson – 107
7. Robert Hight – 100
8. Alexis DeJoria – 99
9. Bob Tasca III – 87
10. Paul Lee – 65 and J.R. Todd – 65

##### **TOP FUEL (season wins in parentheses)**

1. Doug Kalitta – 212 (1)
2. Brittany Force – 153
3. **Leah Pruett (Mopar Dodge/SRT) – 137**
4. Austin Prock – 131
5. Steve Torrance – 121 (1)
6. Justin Ashley – 108
7. Antron Brown – 103
8. Shawn Langdon – 91
9. Clay Millican – 85
10. Shawn Reed – 82

#### **DodgeGarage: Digital Hub for Drag Racing News**

Fans can follow all the NHRA's action this season at DodgeGarage, the one-stop portal for Dodge//SRT and Mopar drag-racing news. The site includes daily updates and access to an online racing HQ, news, events, galleries, available downloads, and merchandise. For more information, visit [www.dodgegarage.com](http://www.dodgegarage.com).

#### **@DodgeMoparMotorsports on Instagram**

The [@DodgeMoparMotorsports](https://www.instagram.com/dodge_mopar_motorsports/) Instagram channel continues to share content capturing Dodge//SRT Mopar drivers on the track. Fans can see action from the NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series and NHRA Sportsman grassroots racers competing in classes such as Factory Stock Showdown, Stock and Super Stock, as well as additional motorsports series.

#### **Official Driving School of Dodge//SRT**

Dodge is the official sponsor of the Bondurant School of High Performance Driving in Chandler, Arizona, where guests get behind the wheels of the fastest street-legal cars in the world with professional instruction and time on the track. Customers who buy a new SRT model receive one full-day session as part of the Dodge//SRT Package and have the opportunity to learn how to get the optimum performance from their new vehicles in a controlled environment. For more information, visit [dodgegarage.com/track-experience](http://dodgegarage.com/track-experience).

## **Mopar**

Mopar (a simple contraction of the words MOtor and PARTs) is the service, parts and customer-care brand for FCA vehicles around the globe. Born in 1937 as the name of a line of antifreeze products, the Mopar brand has evolved over more than 80 years to represent both complete care and authentic performance for owners and enthusiasts worldwide.

Mopar made its mark in the 1960s during the muscle-car era, with Mopar Performance Parts to enhance speed and handling for both road and racing use, and expanded to include technical service and customer support. Today, the Mopar brand's global reach distributes more than 500,000 parts and accessories in more than 150 markets. With more than 50 parts distribution centers and 25 customer-contact centers globally, Mopar integrates service, parts and customer-care operations in order to enhance customer and dealer support worldwide.

Complete information on the Mopar brand is available at [www.mopar.com](http://www.mopar.com). Mopar is part of the portfolio of brands offered by global automaker Fiat Chrysler Automobiles. For more information regarding FCA (NYSE: FCAU/ MTA: FCA), please visit [www.fcagroup.com](http://www.fcagroup.com).

## **Dodge//SRT**

For more than 100 years, the Dodge brand has carried on the spirit of brothers John and Horace Dodge. Their influence continues today as Dodge shifts into high gear with muscle cars and SUVs that deliver unrivaled performance in each of the segments where they compete.

2021 marks the year that Dodge is distilled into a pure performance brand, offering Hellcat-powered, 700+ horsepower SRT versions of every model across the lineup. For the 2021 model year, Dodge delivers the drag-strip dominating 807-horsepower Dodge Challenger SRT Super Stock, the new 797-horsepower Dodge Charger SRT Redeye, the most powerful and fastest mass-produced sedan in the world, and the new 710-horsepower Dodge Durango SRT Hellcat, the most powerful SUV ever. Combined, these three muscle cars make Dodge the industry's most powerful brand, offering more horsepower than any other American brand across its entire lineup.

In June 2020, Dodge was named the "#1 Brand in Initial Quality," making it the first domestic brand ever to rank No. 1 in the J.D. Power Initial Quality Study (IQS). Dodge is part of the portfolio of brands offered by global automaker Fiat Chrysler Automobiles. For more information regarding FCA (NYSE: FCAU/ MTA: FCA), please visit [www.fcagroup.com](http://www.fcagroup.com).

## **Follow Dodge, SRT and FCA news and video on:**

Company blog: <http://blog.fcanorthamerica.com>

Media website: <http://media.fcanorthamerica.com>

Dodge brand: [www.dodge.com](http://www.dodge.com)

Dodge Garage: [www.dodgegarage.com](http://www.dodgegarage.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/dodge](https://www.facebook.com/dodge) or <https://www.facebook.com/FiatChrysler.NorthAmerica/>

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/dodgeofficial](https://www.instagram.com/dodgeofficial) or [www.instagram.com/FiatChrysler\\_NA](https://www.instagram.com/FiatChrysler_NA)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/dodge](https://www.twitter.com/dodge) or [www.twitter.com/FiatChrysler\\_NA](https://www.twitter.com/FiatChrysler_NA)

YouTube: [www.youtube.com/dodge](https://www.youtube.com/dodge) or [www.youtube.com/fcanorthamerica](https://www.youtube.com/fcanorthamerica)

-###-

Additional information and news from Stellantis are available at: <https://media.stellantisnorthamerica.com>