

Contact: Dan Reid

Tom Blattler

Beckman Drives Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car to Coveted NHRA U.S. Nationals Win

- Don Schumacher Racing's (DSR) Jack Beckman drove his Infinite Hero Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat to a coveted Funny Car win at the 66th annual National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) U.S. Nationals at Lucas Oil Raceway near Indianapolis
- Beckman's second win of the season moves the HEMI®-powered driver into the Funny Car Championship points lead with five national events remaining in the revamped 2020 NHRA season
- DSR Top Fuel driver Leah Pruett piloted her Mopar Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Redeye dragster to a runner-up finish in her first career final elimination round at the world's most famous drag race
- No. 2 qualifier Mark Pawuk took his Empaco Equipment Mopar Drag Pak to a runner-up result in the "Big Go" edition of the Factory Stock Shootout
- Three DSR HEMI-powered Dodge machines contended for wins with three final-round appearances in three different categories

September 6, 2020, Brownsburg, Ind. - From his seventh-seed position, Jack Beckman drove his Infinite Hero Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat through the eliminations ladder and to a coveted win at arguably the most famous and prestigious drag race in the world, the 66th annual National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) U.S. Nationals at Lucas Oil Raceway in Indianapolis.

Beckman and his crew's consistent efforts this season and throughout the weekend afforded them a chance to advance to a fourth final round appearance in six events thus far this year. The veteran Funny Car driver began his charge through the field with a solid 3.909-second elapsed time (ET) run to defeat Cruz Pedregon. He added a clean pass for a quarterfinal win over DSR teammate Ron Capps before deposing Tim Wilkerson with a holeshot win in the semifinals. For the final elimination round, Beckman staged his Mopar machine next to J.R. Todd then took it straight down the track for a 3.908-second winning effort to beat his opponent's 3.960-second pass.

The win propelled Beckman back atop the NHRA Funny Car world championship leaderboard with just five races left on the 2020 calendar. With his second victory of the year, Beckman also captured a second national event title at the historic race, affectionately known to drag-racing fans as "the Big Go," to accompany the one he earned in 2015.

"This is my second U.S. Nationals Funny Car title and I don't know if we can ever top your first win, but today we showed that we can kill it with consistency, we can have issues and rally back," said Beckman, the 2012 Funny Car world champion. "The crew chiefs made great decisions and the crew guys found a couple anomalies in the pants and jumped right on it. Nobody panicked and we made this car go down the track all four times today. We learned this trophy. We are back in the Funny Car points lead. That's for final rounds this year. It has been a crazy 2020, but I'm thinking we can get a couple more of these with our Dodge Charger."

Beckman was one of three DSR drivers to contend for wins in final-round appearances in three different classes on Sunday. The second driver in DSR's stable with the chance to add more U.S. Nationals hardware to the team's trophy case was Top Fuel pilot Leah Pruett, who drove her fierce new-look Mopar Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Redeye dragster from the No. 6 spot to her first final elimination round appearance at the famed event.

To get there, Pruett powered her way past Terry McMillen in the opening round to meet DSR teammate Tony Schumacher in the quarterfinals. Lady Luck played a part in providing her an opportunity to advance as Schumacher dropped a cylinder early in his run while Pruett's dragster smoked the tires, requiring some pedaling to get back on track and across the finish line to move on to the semifinals against Steve Torrence.

Pruett's 0.053-second reaction time, against her opponent's 0.093, gave her the edge she needed to turn on the win lights with a 3.743-sec /322.34-mph pass to Torrence's quickest run of the event at 3.724/325.14, capturing the holeshot win with a margin of victory of 0.0215 seconds.

Pruett then faced Shawn Langdon for the first time in a final round matchup, but saw her opportunity to battle for the win go up in tire smoke at half-track, settling for a runner-up finish. As a consolation prize, her efforts this weekend moved her into second place in the Top Fuel Championship standings.

"This Big Go did not disappoint on the intensity meter from needing to make a good lap in Q4 just to make the show to throwing down a .70 in the first round against Terry (McMillen) who brought a .72. Those are the conditions we love to flourish in," said Pruett. "After the second round, they moved up the session 35 minutes and in one of the most impressive moments was the preparation for the semifinal round. To see this Dodge SRT team stay cool and calm and deliver what we did in the semis makes me very proud. We fed off of that and tried to duplicate that for the final and had clutch wear issues. Leaving here second in points is incredible. The team faced a lot of challenges today mechanically, mentally and time-wise and we are going to take this as a building block for Gainesville."

The third DSR contender for a win was in the Factory Stock Showdown (FSS) category, as No. 2 qualifier Mark Pawuk strung together a solid series of sub-eight-second passes aboard his Empaco Equipment Mopar Drag Pak through each round of eliminations, including his final round battle against Aaron Stanfield.

While Pawuk had the starting-line advantage and posted a 7.979-sec./172.83-mph pass, it wasn't enough to beat the winning 7.918/172.98-run by Stanfield. This was Pawuk's third FSS runner-up performance at the U.S. Nationals with a previous one coming against his Mopar Drag Pak teammate Pruett, who went home with that 2018 FSS national title win.

Pruett, for her part, was seeded sixth for this year's opening round of FSS eliminations, but after winning that first outing, she was on the losing end of the sprint to the finish against Jesse Alexandra in her second-round matchup.

The rest of the DSR Funny Car lineup found themselves looking forward to the next stop on the NHRA circuit after seeing their day prematurely shortened. Matt Hagan moved past Paul Lee to take a holeshot victory over Bob Tasca III by posting a 3.939 ET behind the wheel of his red-hot Hellcat Redeye versus his adversary's 3.940. His side-by-side semifinal battle with J.R. Todd ended with a loss of grip late in his run to allow Todd to move on. The result, however, moved Hagan into second place in the points behind his DSR teammate and event winner Beckman.

Still riding the momentum of his win at the Dodge NHRA Indy Nationals at the previous event, Ron Capps drove his Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat to a provisional No.1 qualifier-run on Friday and into race day as the No. 2 seed. With a record of 38-4 in an opening round when qualified second, Capps came out firing on all cylinders and advanced easily with a 3.924 ET at 328.06 mph to defeat Jim Campbell and move on to face Beckman in the quarterfinals. Following identical reaction times of 0.067, Capps took the lead early, but lost traction at the 300-foot mark and eventually ceded the run to his DSR teammate.

The Funny Car points leader heading into race day and No.1 qualifier for a third time this season, Tommy Johnson Jr. took the early lead with the Riley Kids Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat in the first round against No. 16 qualifier Dale Creasy, but when his DSR machine suddenly quit on the final approach to the finish, the result was an upset. Johnson crossed the stripe to register a 0.065-second reaction time, and 4.011-sec./276.58-mph just behind Creasy's 0.062-second reaction time / 4.009-second / 315.64-mph winning effort, and now sits third in the points standings behind his DSR teammates, Beckman and Hagan.

Five national events now remain on the revamped 2020 NHRA schedule with the next stop set for Gainesville, Fla., from Sept. 25-27 for the Amalie Motor Oil NHRA Gatornationals.

ADDITIONAL NOTES and QUOTES:

Jack Beckman, Infinite Hero Foundation Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car

(No. 7 Qualifier – 3.940 seconds at 325.53 mph)

Round 1: (0.067-second reaction time, 3.909 seconds at 327.74 mph) defeats No. 10 Cruz Pedregon (0.039/7.734/87.81)

Round 2: (0.067/4.003 /316.01) defeats No. 2 Ron Capps (0.067/5.454/137.79)

Round 3: (0.075/3.915/329.10) defeats No. 3 Tim Wilkerson (0.083/3.914/324.59)

Round 4: (0.069/3.908/327.35) defeats No. 8 J.R. Todd (0.054/3.960/324.28)

“This may be the last time I race at Indy, and that Infinite Hero Dodge Charger team left nothing on the race track. This is what drag racing is all about. A huge thank you to Terry Chandler for starting this program, and Doug Chandler for keeping it going. We had six wonderful years, a whole lot of Wally trophies, and a whole lot of amazing fans. I also want to give a special shout-out to Judy Pittman. It’s her birthday today. She’s the Chandler family representative and is by our side at every race, and we were glad to be able to get this done on her birthday. I hope I can keep racing next year but I’m going to revel in this. Our team was awesome today.”

Matt Hagan, Mopar Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Redeye Funny Car

(No. 5 Qualifier – 3.919 seconds at 328.54 mph)

Round 1: (0.081 second reaction, 3.942 seconds at 326.63 mph) defeats No.12 Paul Lee (0.082/4.737/169.13)

Round 2: (0.061/3.939/327.03) defeats No. 4 Bob Tasca III (0.099/3.940/328.46)

Round 3: (0.057/4.132/273.05) loss to No. 8 J.R. Todd (0.076/3.946/327.03)

“We had a really great weekend. It was a great points weekend for this Mopar Dodge SRT Hellcat team by winning that race on Saturday night. We covered a lot of ground. We brought home another trophy for DSR. A milestone trophy, win No. 350. This Hellcat race car is running great. I’m hating to leave Indy, we did so well here. We’ve got great data, it’s hard to want to leave. We’re going rounds and turning on win lights. Our team and Beckman are throwing down and battling it out, and it’s going to be a fight all the way to the end and that’s what I love. I love being a part of that. I’m really excited to try and bring it home for Mopar. Let’s keep winning races.”

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

(No. 1 Qualifier – 3.878 seconds at 326.40 mph)

Round 1: (0.065-second reaction time, 4.011 seconds at 276.58 mph) lost to No. 16 Dale Creasy (0.062/4.009/315.64)

“That was a heartbreaking loss for this team and Riley (Hospital for Children). We’ve had such a great weekend in qualifying and a great performing car. You can’t predict parts failure and some event happened late in the run. It was on a really good run. It was going to be a nice, solid run in the first round to take the win and move on. Something happened on the top end of the track and we’re still trying to figure out what it was. It was so late in the run I was ready to reach over for the parachute levers and it breaks loose. It’s heartbreaking. The year’s not over yet. We just have to move on to the next one in Florida in three weeks. We have a solid race car. If we can get some luck to go our way, we’ll be good.”

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

(No. 2 Qualifier – 3.881 seconds at 327.19 mph)

Round 1: (0.085 reaction time, 3.924 seconds at 328.06 mph) to defeat No. 15 Jim Campbell (0.109/4.902/166.25)

Round 2: (0.067/5.454/328.06) lost to No. 7 Jack Beckman (0.067/4.003/316.01)

“Another U.S. Nationals in the books and you come into race day with such confidence. Our NAPA guys did such a great job qualifying. Came off the trailer No. 1 on Friday and went down the track in all conditions. It was sunny out on Saturday and we went down again. It gives you great confidence. We made a great run first round. Our DSR teammates are so good, you don’t want to run into them until the final round. The way the ladder lined up, we had to run the Infinite Hero car and we both went up there to go low ET and that’s the way it works. Especially with the weather that came in, the track cooled off and we felt we needed to repeat what we did in qualifying. Unfortunately, the car shook and pulled the tires loose. It’s rare for this car to do that. Tobler is looking at the data now and we’ll figure out what happened and get after it at the next race in Gainesville. We have five races to run for a championship. It’s exciting. Vegas has points-and-a-half, but we want to get a run on it these next races. It sort of

feels like a Countdown and we'll fight back to the top."

Leah Pruett, Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Redeye Top Fuel Dragster

(No. 6 Qualifier – 3.742 seconds at 326.24 mph)

Round 1: (0.060-second reaction time, 3.703 seconds at 325.61 mph) defeats No. 11 Terry McMillan (0.067/3.726/320.13)

Round 2: (0.092/4.312/211.89) defeats No. 14 Tony Schumacher (0.057/9.048/79.71)

Round 3: (0.053/3.743/322.34) defeats No. 2 Steve Torrance (0.093/3.724/325.14)

Round 4: (0.091/5.141/145.75) loss to No. 1 Shawn Langdon (0.015/3.705/326.32)

"This Big Go did not disappoint on the intensity meter from needing to make a good lap in Q3 just to make the show to throwing down a .70 in the first round against Terry (McMillan) to run a 3.72. Those are the conditions we love to flourish in. After the second round they moved up the session 35 minutes and in one of the most impressive moments was the preparation for the semifinal round. To see this Dodge SRT team stay cool and calm and deliver what we did in the semis makes me very proud. We fed off of that and tried to duplicate that for the final and had clutch wear issues. We leave here second in points and that is incredible. The team faced a lot of challenges today mechanically, mentally and time-wise and we are going to take this as a building block for Gainesville."

Mark Pawuk, Empaco Equipment Mopar Drag Pak– Factory Stock Shootout

(No. 2 Qualifier – 7.903 seconds at 174.41 mph)

Round 1: (0.108-second reaction time, 7.965 seconds at 173.49 mph) defeated No. 23 Kim Shirley (0.423/8.795/154.90)

Round 2: (0.019/7.957/173.99) defeats No. 14 John Cerbone (0.003/8.107/169.32)

Round 3: (0.076/7.967/173.56) defeats No. 17 Richard Bierie (0.173/8.160/168.05)

Round 4: (0.063/7.966/172.96) defeats No. 9 Dave Condon (0.027/8.057/169.49)

Round 5: (0.027/ 7.979/172.83) loss to No. 1 Aaron Stanfield (0.047/7.918/172.98)

"It was a great weekend for the DSR Drak Pak Challengers. We came up just a little short in the final. It was my third Indy final and I was hoping this would be the charm, but we gave it our all. We're definitely back on track to go rounds. Kevin (Helms) and Terry (Snyder), Kyle (Pawuk) all worked very hard. Our teammate, Leah (Pruett), also ran great. We're looking forward to going to Gainesville and keeping the momentum going."

Leah Pruett, Mopar Dodge Challenger Mopar Drag Pak– Factory Stock Shootout

(No. 6 Qualifier – 7.958 seconds at 172.08 mph)

Round 1: (0.067-second reaction time, 7.969 at 171.64 mph) defeated No. 19 James Jeschke Jr. (0.012/8.207/161.98)

Round 2: (0.076/8.031/170.95) loss to No. 7 Jesse Alexandra (0.040/7.988/172.70)

"It was like a Barnum & Bailey Circus. Running, not running. Changing firesuits. We thought we'd run back-to-back after Top Fuel. Our competition knows they need to play some games on the line. They know we have good Drag Paks that can run solid numbers now. We ran great this weekend and just got flat beat in the second round. It was great to see Mark (Pawuk) go to the final round. With no testing, to come to the U.S. Nationals and go rounds and qualify well and prepare for the Gatornationals is great. We need to find a little more in the tune-up and we can do that in the next few weeks."

NHRA Championship Points Standings

Following the 2020 DENSO Spark Plugs NHRA U.S. Nationals

FUNNY CAR (season wins in parentheses)

- 1. Jack Beckman (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 517 (2)**
- 2. Matt Hagan (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 482 (2)**

3. **Tommy Johnson Jr. (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 460 (1)**
4. J.R. Todd – 387
5. **Ron Capps (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 376 (1)**
6. Bob Tasca III – 355
7. Tim Wilkerson – 348
8. Alexis DeJoria – 241
9. Cruz Pedregon – 234
10. Paul Lee – 225

TOP FUEL (season wins in parentheses)

1. Doug Kalitta – 492 (1)
2. **Leah Pruett (Mopar Dodge//SRT) – 442**
3. Steve Torrance – 432 (2)
4. Justin Ashley – 370 (1)
5. Billy Torrance – 331 (1)
6. Shawn Langdon – 330 (1)
7. Antron Brown – 316
8. Terry McMillen – 305
9. Clay Millican – 279
10. TJ Zizzo – 179

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.

@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.

Mopar

Mopar (a simple contraction of the words MObor 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. 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.

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.

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