

Hagan Drives Mopar Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat to Semifinals at NHRA Southern Nationals

- Reigning Funny Car world champion Matt Hagan drives No. 3 qualified blue and white Mopar Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat to semifinals at National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Southern Nationals at Atlanta Dragway
- Defending (2019) Atlanta event winner Ron Capps qualifies No. 5 and advances to quarterfinals aboard Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat
- Third Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car entry driven by Cruz Pedregon qualifies fourth but misses chance to advance past the first round of eliminations
- DSR's Leah Pruett qualifies her Dodge// SRT Hellcat Redeye Top Fuel dragster sixth and incurs loss in opening round for the first time since 2019

May 2, 2021, Atlanta, Georgia - Coming off a runner-up finish at the previous National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Camping World Drag Racing Series event, Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) pilot Matt Hagan was once again the top finishing Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car with a semifinal appearance at the 40th annual Southern Nationals at Atlanta Dragway.

Hagan, the reigning NHRA Funny Car world champion, was back to the familiar Mopar blue and white livery on his Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car this weekend and looking to chase down his first victory of the 2021 season for the final NHRA event at the historic track (due to local area development.)

After trouble negotiating tricky track conditions on his first qualifying pass, Hagan came back with a stout 4.001-second run at 314.02 mph, the second-quickest run in the final session to earn a third place starting position and two bonus points.

For his first round battle, Hagan's faced-off against No. 12 seed Robert Hight, driving his HEMI-powered Mopar machine to a 3.991 sec./ 307.65 mph pass to defeat his opponent (5.341/135.18), and move on to the quarterfinals to face No. 6 seed Tim Wilkerson.

A quicker reaction time by Hagan (0.055-seconds to 0.078-seconds) helped propel the Mopar driver to a 3.947 sec./ 324.75 mph low elapsed time run and win over Wilkerson's 3.985 sec./ 319.22 mph pass, providing him with a berth to the semifinal round to battle No. 2 qualifier Bob Tasca III for a rematch of their final round at Las Vegas.

While Hagan powered his Dodge Charger to another stout (0.084-second reaction time) 3.974 sec./ 326.40 mph drive, he incurred a rare holeshot loss to the eventual event winner's (0.057-second reaction time) slower 3.981 sec./ 327.82 mph pass. With the result, Matt Hagan is the top Dodge SRT Charger in the Funny Car category and moves into third place and after three of 22 events in the NHRA Camping World Drag Racing Series.

Hagan's DSR teammate Ron Capps returned to Atlanta Dragway as the defending 2019 Funny Car winner (as there was no event at the venue in 2020) and was also looking to build on strong performances he's had to start the season; A No. 1 qualifier in the season-opener at the Gatornationals and a final round (quad) appearance in four-wide racing at Las Vegas.

Capps took his Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat for a solid 4.006 second qualifying run at 313.73 mph, to earn two bonus points for the second-quickest run of the first session. That time slip provided him with a sixth-seed starting position and lane choice over No. 10 qualifier Jim Campbell for Sunday's opening round. Capps started strong and despite a loss of traction towards the end of his run, his 4.316 second/ 214.86 mph pass put him far enough ahead of Campbell whose ride lost power early and coasted across the finish with a 6.027 sec./113.14 mph elapsed time.

That set up Capps' quarterfinal battle against No. 11 seed, John Force. After near identical reaction times, (0.062 vs. 0.061-seconds) the rivals fought just as closely the whole length of the track with the Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat crossing the finish line with a 4.042 sec. at 313.44 mph elapsed time run that was just fifteen-thousandths of a second behind Force's 4.028 sec./ 315.19 mph winning pass. Capps' quarterfinal result puts him fifth in the Funny Car point standings.

A third Mopar/Dodge SRT-supported Funny Car driven by Cruz Pedregon, qualified fourth between Hagan and Capps. The Snap-on Tools Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat ran a solid 4.005-second pass at 319.60 mph for Cruz Pedregon Racing's best starting position of the year thus far. While Pedregon looked promising on the start against his first round opponent John Force, a dropped cylinder hampered his progress and his 4.126 second run at 306.53 mph wasn't enough to overcome a 4.049/319.14 and advance further. He sits ninth in the Funny Car points standings.

In Top Fuel action this weekend, Mopar Dodge//SRT pilot Leah Pruett was working on trying to repeat her 2018 winning performance at Atlanta Dragway. In her final qualifying run, she powered her DSR Whisps Cheese Crisps dragster to a 3.957-second pass at 304.94 mph, putting her sixth on the qualifying sheets to pair her with No. 11 seed Shawn Langdon for the first round of eliminations. This is Pruett's sixth consecutive event starting from the top half of the eliminations ladder.

Unfortunately, Pruett had an unusual opening round launch against Langdon and was hampered immediately by dropped cylinders, shortening her race day and bring to an end her consecutive streak of first round wins that had begun at the Mopar Express Lane Nationals presented by Pennzoil at Reading, Pennsylvania, in 2019.

The Mopar Dodge//SRT contingent will be back in action on May 14-16 near Charlotte, North Carolina, for the NGK NTK NHRA Four-Wide Nationals at zMAX Dragway, the fourth of 22 events on the 2021 NHRA Camping World Drag Racing Series schedule.

ADDITIONAL NOTES and QUOTES

FUNNY CAR:

Matt Hagan, DSR Mopar Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Redeye

(No. 3 Qualifier – 4.001 seconds at 314.02 mph)

Round 1: (0.083-second reaction time, 3.991 seconds at 307.65 mph) defeats No. 12 Robert Hight (0.071/5.341/135.18)

Round 2: (0.055/3.947/324.75) defeats No. 6 Tim Wilkerson (0.078/3.985/319.22)

Round 3: (0.084/3.974/326.40) loss to No. 2 Bob Tasca III (0.057/3.981/327.82)

"Coming off of another tough race with Bob Tasca in the semifinals; He just seems to have our number right now but we've got a good car, we're qualifying well and we have a lot of good racing ahead of us. I'm really proud of our team, everyone works well together. We're running well, just losing really close races. It's just one of those things where those close ones like that, yea they're tough to swallow, but they make you dig deeper, make you work harder, and push yourself to get to the next level. Charlotte is our next event. I'm excited about that because it's close to home. It's another four-wide but we went to the final at the Vegas Four-Wide, so hopefully, we'll take it one step further there. Looking forward to having some fun and keep pushing this Dodge Hellcat and put on a great show for everyone."

Ron Capps, DSR NAPA Auto Parts Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat

(No. 5 Qualifier – 4.006 seconds at 313.73 mph)

Round 1: (0.095-second reaction time, 4.316 seconds at 214.86 mph) defeats No. 10 Jim Campbell (0.108/6.027/113.14)

Round 2: (0.062/4.042/313.44) loss to No. 11 John Force (0.061/4.028/315.19)

"A great job by this NAPA AutoCare team to put the car together to go down both runs in a tricky track during qualifying which is no easy task. It was a very difficult track to get down there being that it was so hot. A not so great race day today. We tried not to beat ourselves first round and the second round is always a huge match-up with John Force, especially with this track and this being the last time in 40 years that we'll race here. Force and I have had a lot of matchups at this track. I didn't see his car, I didn't even hear him, honestly. Our car moved out to the right and

it might have had a cylinder out, but what a great race. I honestly thought the win light was burned out on our guardrail when it didn't come on, that's how close it was. Overall, another solid weekend. We had a lot of fun, and were able to entertain some first time guests from NAPA headquarters in their own backyard. Off to the Four-Wides next."

Cruz Pedregon, Pedregon Racing Snap-On Tools Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat

(No. 4 Qualifier –4.005 seconds at 319.60 mph)

Round 1: (0.065-second reaction time, 4.126 seconds at 306.53 mph) loss to No.11 John Force (0.056/4.049/319.14)

"Look at the crowd out here this weekend. It was probably the most I've seen or at least what it was like in the nineties. Good weekend but overall not the result we wanted. The car is consistent going down the track. The four flat in Q2 was clutch and I think we are right there. For eliminations, we felt we had the car that could have ran with everybody, so we felt like in some ways we let one get away. In the first round, we dropped a cylinder right at the step, but we have identified the problem and now we'll just replace all the wires and get it back to where that doesn't happen again. I think we're right in the mix. We just need to get rid of some of these little issues and performance-wise we're right there. We'll focus on preparing for Charlotte."

TOP FUEL:

Leah Pruett, DSR Whisps Cheese Crisps Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Redeye Dragster

(No. 6 Qualifier – 3.957 seconds at 304.94 mph)

Round 1: (0.172-second reaction time, 4.071 seconds at 237.00 mph) loss to No. 11 Shawn Langdon (0.025/4.048/294.43)

"We did not have the final farewell to Atlanta Dragway that we would have liked in the Whisps dragster this weekend. Our first round win streak since Seattle 2019 has finally ended and that's a great accomplishment for this team. We're looking forward to Charlotte and the Four-Wides and then Houston to start a new streak and build some momentum.

NHRA Championship Points Standings:

Following the Lucas Oil NHRA Southern Nationals at Atlanta Dragway

FUNNY CAR (season wins in parentheses)

1. Bob Tasca III – 307 (2)
2. J.R. Todd – 247 (1)
- 3. Matt Hagan (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 207**
4. John Force – 205
- 5. Ron Capps (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 195**
6. Robert Hight – 184
7. Tim Wilkerson – 183
8. Alexis DeJoria – 117
9. Cruz Pedregon (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 106
10. Blake Alexander – 118

TOP FUEL (season wins in parentheses)

1. Steve Torrance – 286 (1)
2. Antron Brown – 258 (1)
3. Shawn Langdon – 221
4. Billy Torrence – 179
5. Brittany Force – 173
6. Josh Hart – 168 (1)
7. Doug Kalitta – 160
8. Justin Ashley – 158
- 9. Leah Pruett (Mopar Dodge//SRT) – 139**
10. Clay Millican – 137

Mopar

Mopar (a simple contraction of the words MOTO and PARTS) offers exceptional service, parts and customer-care. 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 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, the brand expanded to include technical service and customer support. Today, 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 leading global automaker and mobility provider Stellantis. For more information regarding Stellantis (NYSE: STLA), please visit www.stellantis.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-plus-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 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). The Dodge brand also ranked No. 1 in the J.D. Power APEAL Study (mass market). These results are historic because it marks the first time a domestic brand has earned top spots in both J.D. Power studies in the same year.

Dodge is part of the portfolio of brands offered by leading global automaker and mobility provider Stellantis. For more information regarding Stellantis (NYSE: STLA), please visit www.stellantis.com.

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 Instagram channel continues to share content capturing Dodge//SRT Mopar drivers on the track. Fans can see action from the NHRA Camping World 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.

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