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Hagan Drives Dodge Power Brokers Charger SRT Hellcat from No. 1 Qualifier to First Final Round Appearance in NHRA 'Countdown to the Championship' at Texas Fall Nationals

- No. 1 Qualifier Matt Hagan of Tony Stewart Racing (TSR) wheeled his Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car to the team's first final round appearance in the National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) "Countdown to the Championship" at the 37th annual Texas Fall Nationals near Dallas, the fourth of six playoff series events
- Hagan's runner-up finish aboard the Dodge Power Brokers Funny Car at the Fall Nationals keeps him third in the world championship hunt and within 78 points of category leader Robert Hight with two playoff events remaining
- TSR Top Fuel pilot Leah Pruett qualified No. 8 and took her Dodge//SRT dragster to the quarterfinals at the Texas Motorplex dragstrip
- Funny Car driver Cruz Pedregon was seeded 11th aboard his Snap-on Tools Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat but had an early exit despite a strong opening round battle

October 16, 2022, Ennis, Texas - Tony Stewart Racing (TSR) Funny Car driver Matt Hagan qualified his Dodge Power Brokers Charger SRT Hellcat No. 1 then drove it to an important first final round appearance in the National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) "Countdown to the Championship" at the 37th annual Texas Fall Nationals at Texas Motorplex, the fourth of six playoff series events.

Hagan earned the top spot on the eliminations ladder and his sixth top qualifier honor of the season with an impressive second pass on Friday under the lights to set the Texas track record with a 3.825-second lap at 334.85 mph, the second-quickest Funny Car run of the 2022 season. The three-time Funny Car world champion entered the weekend 103 markers behind the category leader Robert Hight, but added nine valuable bonus points by registering all four of his runs among the top-three quickest of each session.

Hagan and his Dodge Power Brokers Charger SRT Hellcat headed into eliminations having cut the deficit to 98 points and disposed of No. 16 seed Terry Haddock and No. 8 Tim Wilkerson to advance to a fourth consecutive semifinal appearance in the Countdown and face-off against No. 4 seed Bob Tasca III.

Hagan had the advantage on the launch with a quick 0.015-second reaction time over Tasca's 0.051-second start, and while both ran identical 3.891-second laps, the Dodge Power Brokers Charger SRT Hellcat recorded a speed of 338.02 mph, the tenth fastest run in class history and the fastest in three years, to turn on the win lights with a 0.04-second margin of victory to advance to final round of the Fall Nationals.

For his 78th career final round appearance and the first of this year's Countdown, Hagan lined up next to No. 3 qualifier Ron Capps and set his sights on heading to the winner's circle for the first time since his win at the New England Nationals in June. Both had a chance to make some solid gains and close the points gap with Hight who had a semifinal exit.

After three passes at 3.87, 3.88. and 3.89 seconds, the Dodge Power Brokers Funny Car launched first and recorded a 3.923 sec./331.32 mph run in a good side-by-side battle that saw Capps edge him at the line with a 3.911 sec./327.18 mph lap to take the win by one-thousandths of a second and put the victor within ten points of the championship leader. With the runner-up finish, Hagan remained third in the battle for the Funny Car championship crown, but closed the gap to 78 points between himself and the leader with two playoff events left including the points-and-a-half format finale.

TSR Top Fuel pilot Leah Pruett came into the Fall Nationals representing Rush Truck Centers on her Dodge/SRT dragster and looking to put three consecutive playoff early round exits in the rear view mirror. Friday night qualifying at the Dallas-area dragstrip provided a bit of drama for Pruett who had a good run going when her ride turned into a fireball at the end of her second pass of the weekend. Despite the setback, she came back strong and qualified in the top half of the eliminations ladder with a solid 3.731-second run at 304.18 mph to put herself eighth and set up a first round pairing with No. 9 seed Josh Hart.

Pruett had a stout launch with a 0.047-second reaction time, clocked a 3.888-sec./229.84 mph first round pass, and was awarded the immediate round win when Hart fouled out on the start. That sent Pruett to her first quarterfinal appearance of the playoffs where she met up with No. 1 qualifier Austin Prock. The Dodge//SRT dragster ran a solid 3.764 sec./275.72 mph lap but it wasn't quite enough to beat Prock's 3.737 sec./324.18 mph pass. With the results, Pruett sits 39 points outside of the top-ten in the Top Fuel playoff standings and now looks to focus on solid outings in the final two events of the season to finish her team's inaugural season on a good note.

Sitting ninth in the Funny Car championship standings to start the weekend, Cruz Pedregon Racing owner and driver Cruz Pedregon gave his Snap-on Tools Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat an 11th place starting position for Sunday's contest with a best qualifying effort of 3.965 seconds at 324.84 mph to set up a first round match-up with No. 6 seed John Force.

Notorious for his deep staging tactics, Force had the quicker start while Pedregon stayed close with a 3.902 sec./327.70 mph pass to challenge his opponent's winning 3.925 sec./331.66 mph lap. Despite the first round exit, Pedregon remains optimistic and happy with the gains his team has made throughout the season and looks to finish the season strong and improve on his current ninth place position in the Funny Car championship rankings.

The NHRA Nevada Nationals, the penultimate event of the NHRA "Countdown to the Championship" is set to take place Oct. 27-30 at The Strip at Las Vegas Motor Speedway. FS1 will present two qualifying highlights shows on Sunday, Oct. 30, at 9:30 a.m. ET (Q1) and 12:30 pm (Q2 and Q3) with race day coverage beginning at 5 p.m. ET.

ADDITIONAL NOTES and QUOTES:

Leah Pruett, Tony Stewart Racing Rush Truck Centers Dodge//SRT Top Fuel Dragster

(No. 8 Qualifier – 3.731 seconds at 304.18 mph)

Round 1: (0.047-second reaction time, 3.888 seconds at 229.84 mph) defeats No. 9 Josh Hart (-0.035/3.707/330.03)

Round 2: (0.066/3.764/275.72) loss to No. 1 Austin Prock (0.026/3.737/324.18)

“It was great to debut our Rush Truck Centers scheme at Dallas. Their slogan is to expect more when you go to their service centers and we expected to have more this weekend. We have delivered to ourselves because we have been trying very hard to run 2.10 to the 1/8 mile and we were able to do it a couple times. We've been trying to improve our incremental times. The better incremental times you have, overall you'll have a quicker ET. We had a setback Friday night when a valve train part malfunctioned and caused colossal damage. It was not an over-tuning situation or over-driving, so we had to be a bit more conservative on Saturday to make sure all our system checks were right. There is nothing like being the first pair out on Sunday with the National Anthem in the great state of Texas. You can feel all that goes into this race. You can either feel it and be afraid of it or feel it and encompass that, which I feel I did and we all did. I'm very impressed with shallow staging and cutting one of my best lights in eliminations. I was so focused on going straight down the track because the left lane is tricky and it wants to pull you to the left towards the wall. I saw my blue win light and knew we were on a good run. Talk about processing a lot of information at a high rate of speed. All of a sudden, it was over. We had an electronic issue that made the burst panel electric communication deploy the chutes and shut off the car. We got lucky on Sunday and got to the second round. We tuned the car up a bit more and had a solid race. We went up against Austin Prock, who also did a great job on the tree. We blew a blower belt that broke and we're still dissecting the cause of that. It aborted our run sooner and would have been an even closer race than it was. I definitely don't feel defeated because we have made extreme improvements. We finally feel like we have a race car and are racing and competing. We're a force to be reckoned with. We're focused on Vegas and testing after Vegas and keeping forward momentum.”

Matt Hagan, Tony Stewart Racing Dodge Power Brokers Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car

(No. 1 Qualifier – 3.825 seconds at 334.85 mph)

Round 1: (0.077-second reaction time, 3.875 seconds at 326.56 mph) defeats No. 16 Terry Haddock (0.143/4.051/305.98)

Round 2: (0.052/3.883/335.12) defeats No. 8 Tim Wilkerson (0.072/3.938/329.26)

Round 3: (0.015/3.891/338.02) defeats No. 4 Bob Tasca (0.055/3.891/329.21)

Round 4: (0.033/3.923/331.32) loss to No. 3 Ron Capps (0.035/3.911/327.18)

“It was a very strong weekend. We ran a .82 out there on Friday and were No. 1 Qualifier. Dickie Venables, Mike Knudsen and Alex Conaway put a great car underneath me all weekend. We had everything it takes to win the race, we were just on the back side of it a little bit. It’s so competitive out there right now and it’s kind of like splitting frog hairs. It was a great job and my crew did a phenomenal job. They serviced the car in 30 minutes to get ready for the final, which was exceptional. We were pressed with rain all day and we knew the turnarounds would be quick. The guys didn’t let that phase them and we had a great car. This Dodge Power Brokers Funny Car is still in the hunt and I know we have the capability and means to do it. We just have to have a little luck fall our way.”

Cruz Pedregon, Cruz Pedregon Racing Snap-on® Tools Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat

(No. 11 Qualifier – 3.965 seconds at 324.84 mph)

Round 1: (0.086-second reaction time, 3.902 second elapsed time run at 327.70 mph) loss to No. 6 John Force (0.050/3.925/331.66)

“We had a great race with John Force in the first round. Anytime you can go up against a 16-time champ and have a wheel-to-wheel battle all the way down the track is a really good event for us. We came up a little short with a 3.90 to a 3.92 and with John staging a little deeper than I did, he got the win but if you play the numbers out, it was pretty close to a dead heat. I think it was just a few thousandths difference really. I never did see him go down the track. I just saw his win light at the finish line. We changed the setup by putting in a six disc instead of a five, and with our new consultant, Lee Beard, guiding us to try to get some more speed out of the car, it bodes well for our chances in Vegas and Pomona, and get a jump on next year. That’s really the goal for us now. Overall, it was a good weekend for the Snap-on Dodge. We want to win these races really badly, but I think the big thing is that we showed that we’re right in the hunt there. I think we were the fourth or fifth quickest run of that first round and that’s all we can ask for at this point. We’re gonna keep building on that, try to get faster and go to Vegas.”

NHRA CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS STANDINGS:

Following the Texas NHRA Fall Nationals at Texas Motorplex

FUNNY CAR (season wins in parentheses)

1. Robert Hight 2486 (8)
2. Ron Capps: 2476 (5)
3. **Matt Hagan (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat): 2408 (3)**
4. John Force: 2349 (1)
5. Bob Tasca III: 2312 (3)
6. Tim Wilkerson: 2228
7. Alexis DeJoria: 2219 (1)
8. J.R. Todd: 2218
9. **Cruz Pedregon (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat): 2191**
10. Blake Alexander: 2118
11. Jim Campbell: 2116

TOP FUEL (season wins in parentheses)

1. Justin Ashley: 2422 (3)
2. Brittany Force: 2340 (4)
3. Antron Brown 2338 (3)
4. Steve Torrence: 2326 (2)
5. Mike Salinas: 2304 (4)
6. Josh Hart: 2275 (1)
7. Austin Prock: 2262 (1)
8. Doug Kalitta: 2251

9. Shawn Langdon: 2194

10. Clay Millican: 2218

11. Leah Pruett (Dodge Power Brokers): 2179 (1)

12. Tony Schumacher: 2149 (1)

@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 Mission 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.

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 a lineup that delivers unrivaled performance in each of the segments in which the brand competes while moving forward to a future that includes electrified muscle in the form of the next-generation, all-new Dodge Charger.

The next-generation Dodge Charger electrifies a legend, with the Charger retaining its title as the world's quickest and most powerful muscle car led by the all-new, all-electric 2024 Dodge Charger Daytona Scat Pack. The all-new Dodge Charger will also offer performance choices via multi-energy powertrain options, including the 550-horsepower Dodge Charger SIXPACK H.O., powered by the 3.0L Twin Turbo Hurricane High Output engine.

Dodge also keeps its foot on the gas as a pure performance brand with the 710-horsepower Dodge Durango SRT Hellcat, the most powerful SUV ever, and best-in-class standard performance in the compact utility vehicle segment with the Dodge Hornet.

Fans can follow all the NHRA action this season at [DodgeGarage](#), the one-stop portal for Dodge//SRT and Mopar drag-racing news, including daily updates and access to an online racing HQ, news, events, galleries, available downloads and merchandise.

Dodge is part of the portfolio of brands offered by leading global automaker and mobility provider [Stellantis](#) (NYSE: STLA).

Mopar

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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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