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## Beckman Continues Mopar Funny Car Hot Streak with Win in Dodge Charger R/T at NHRA Summernationals

- Jack Beckman wins 48th annual NHRA Summernationals at Old Bridge Township Raceway Park in Englishtown, New Jersey
- Victory is first of the season for Beckman and 25th Funny Car win of his career
- Don Schumacher Racing teammates Beckman and Ron Capps advance Mopar Dodge Charger R/T Funny Cars to final round
- A Mopar Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car has won nine of 10 final rounds in 2017; Mopar holds top three Funny Car points positions
- Mopar HEMI® power has won at least one Nitro category in 11 straight events dating back to 2016
- Tony Schumacher takes Mopar-powered U.S. Army dragster to second round in Top Fuel
- Steve Comella goes to Super Stock semifinal in 1968 Dodge Dart
- Comella wins Dodge Top Finisher award in Super Stock, Stephen Smyth claims honor in Stock Eliminator

June 11, 2017 , Englishtown, N.J. - Jack Beckman got on the board in 2017 during the NHRA Summernationals at historic Old Bridge Township Raceway Park, becoming the sixth Mopar HEMI®-powered Nitro driver from Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) to win an event this year. The 2012 NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series Funny Car champion put his Infinite Hero Dodge Charger R/T in the winner's circle for the first time this season and the 25th time in his Funny Car career.

The win also extended a winning streak for Nitro cars featuring Mopar HEMI power to a staggering 11 in a row, stretching back to the season-ending NHRA Finals at Pomona more than six months ago. With Beckman's win, Mopar DSR teams now claim the top three spots in the Funny Car point standings, and at least one Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car has appeared in every final round but one to date in 2017.

"Fast" Jack Beckman defeated his teammate Ron Capps' Dodge Charger R/T with a pass of 4.100 seconds at 312.42 mph from the left lane in the final round to just better Capps' lap of 4.143 at 299.66. Beckman's reaction time was .081 to Capps' .088 off the line.

Beckman, whose team underwent a number of personnel changes in the offseason, used a little bit of luck and a whole lot of HEMI power on a very hot day on the way to his first prestigious NHRA Summernationals win. He first took down fellow Dodge competitor Jim Campbell in round one as Campbell struggled to get down track. Beckman then beat Cruz Pedregon by .001 as both cars labored and lost cylinders on their way to the finish line in the second round. Beckman next caught a lucky break in the semifinals as his car went up in smoke and he was forced to coast to the line, but his opponent Courtney Force turned on the red light, giving the win and a place in the final round to Beckman, albeit without lane choice.

Capps' day meanwhile kicked off with both he and opponent Del Worsham smoking the tires and shaking at half-track, but Capps masterfully pedaled his Dodge Charger R/T to turn on the win light. He again struggled in round two, but Alexis Dejouria was disqualified for crossing the center line, allowing Capps to advance to the semifinals. There he lost a cylinder, but opponent Robert Hight had mechanical issues and smoked, giving Capps yet another win and a final-round appearance for the sixth time this season.

Also in Funny Car, Matt Hagan drove his Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T past Jonnie Lindberg in round one to set up a pairing with Courtney Force in a re-match of last week's final round at New England Dragway. Force got

the best of Hagan this time though as he lost a cylinder and the car got loose, ending the Mopar Express Lane team's day.

Finally, Tommy Johnson Jr. won round one in his Make-A-Wish Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car by beating Bob Tasca, despite being significantly late off the line. He caught up when Tasca smoked the tires to get a lucky win light, but Johnson bowed out to Hight in round two.

In the Top Fuel category, Mopar drivers Tony Schumacher and Leah Pritchett found themselves matched up in round one. Although Schumacher had qualified sixth and Pritchett ninth, a 14-car field meant the two DSR teammates would battle early in the day. Pritchett got a slight jump in her Dodge Challenger SRT Demon dragster, but had a cylinder out at the step, allowing Schumacher and the U.S. Army team to narrowly defeat the points leader entering the day. The first-round defeat was the first of the year for Pritchett, while Schumacher was defeated by Doug Kalitta in the second round.

The NHRA Summernationals lived up to the event name, with temperatures in the 90s and an extremely hot racetrack during race day playing havoc with drivers and teams alike. The race was the second of a grueling four-race stretch throughout the month of June.

### **Mopar/Dodge Notes & Quotes**

#### **Pietro Gorlier, Head of Parts and Service (Mopar) FCA – Global**

"Congratulations to Jack Beckman on the NHRA Summernationals victory in his Infinite Hero Dodge Charger R/T. Mopar power has now captured at least one NHRA Nitro class win at 11 consecutive events, which is a testament to the performance of all associated with the Mopar motorsports program."

#### **Jack Beckman, Infinite Hero Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car**

**(No. 4 Qualifier – 3.907 seconds at 328.30 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.107-second reaction time, 4.082 seconds at 306.60 mph) defeated No. 13 Jim Campbell (.121/23.920/130.73)

Rd. 2: (.094/4.285/290.94) defeated No. 5 Cruz Pedregon (.103/4.286/291.76)

Semis: (.076/9.145/72.26) defeated No. 1 Courtney Force (no show – red light)

Final: (.081/4.100/312.42) defeated No. 3 Ron Capps (.088/4.143/312.42)

"It was an odd race weekend. It was a very, very hot racetrack. It became a crapshoot in a lot of races down there in a pedal fest. We dodged a huge bullet when Courtney redlit against us in the semis, but we're the ones holding the trophy. When I go down there and stand next to that Infinite Hero Charger with our seven crew guys and three crew chiefs, they're going to realize they were the best today. We needed to get that one so they know that we can do this. The first one is always the toughest one. It's 25 Funny Car wins for me, plus two more in Super Comp, but it's one for this iteration of the Infinite Hero team.

"Not only did we win our first race as this team, not only did I just get another trophy, we won Englishtown. That's a big one. This is the Summernationals and a Summernationals win in a Funny Car is about as cool as they get."

#### **Matt Hagan, Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car**

**(No. 9 Qualifier – 3.952 seconds at 317.72 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.083-second reaction time, 4.013 seconds at 317.94 mph) defeated No. 8 Jonnie Lindberg (.075/4.044/314.39)

Rd. 2: (.077/4.374/268.60) lost to No. 1 Courtney Force (.094/4.094/312.28)

"We know how to run really good in the cool. We're just learning still a little bit how to play with this super-hot condition, but we haven't seen conditions like this since Denver of last year. It's just hard to take anything from Denver and apply it anywhere. But all in all, we went down the racetrack a few times out here and I feel like we're building some confidence in these hot weather conditions.

"It's just brutal out there. You're sitting in the race car and you can't keep the sweat out of your eyes and you're trying to focus, and (crew chief) Dickie (Venables)'s up there trying to make the right calls on the racetrack. You're

trying to apply as much power to the racetrack as you can and it's just hard to do, especially with a fast race car. I think we have one of the fastest race cars out here. We'll roll into Bristol, it will probably be similar conditions, Bristol is usually hot and muggy. Hopefully we can just keep on rolling."

**Leah Pritchett, Dodge Challenger SRT Demon Top Fuel Dragster**

**(No. 9 Qualifier – 3.788 seconds at 321.42 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.046-second reaction time, 3.928 seconds at 300.26 mph) lost to No. 6 Tony Schumacher (.084/3.839/318.69)

"We thought the track would be pretty suspect, but it's suspect for everybody. We tuned her (the car) down a little bit to make sure we would get through on the hottest surface that we have been on all year, so it calls for a different tune-up. But a hole (cylinder) dropped right at the hit. For us this is a learning curve. We know what went wrong, we know what the fix is, and all we can do is we look forward to Bristol.

"We're keeping it interesting. Antron (Brown) has climbed to number one above us and we're pretty good at underdog status. You look around here, there's nothing at all to be disappointed about. We're making a little too much power for the track and it comes down to a fuel issue. We've got to get our fuel right, we know our power is right, and this is just a small bump."

**Ron Capps, NAPA Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car**

**(No. 3 Qualifier – 3.883 seconds at 329.67 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.089-second reaction time, 4.664 seconds at 260.36 mph) defeated No. 14 Del Worsham (.113/4.689/254.95)

Rd. 2: (.079/4.231/271.19) defeated No. 11 Alexis Dejouria (DQ – crossed center line)

Semis: (.096/4.195/260.31) defeated No. 2 Robert Hight (.082/6.302/107.84)

Final: (.088/4.143/299.66) lost to No. 4 Jack Beckman (.081/4.143/299.66)

"We needed some luck. Most of my career I haven't had a whole lot of times where we've had great luck, and I always wondered how it must be nice to have those lucky breaks once in a while. You put enough credit into the luck bank and it's nice to take some out.

"It's got to be exciting for the fans because this is something that shows you hard this is."

**Tommy Johnson Jr., Make-A-Wish Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car**

**(No. 7 Qualifier – 3.945 seconds at 326.71 mph)**

Rd.1: (200.-second reaction time, 4.010 seconds at 319.67 mph) defeated No. 10 Bob Tasca III (.067/4.949/182.85)

Rd. 2: (.101/4.515/195.05) lost to No. 2 Robert Hight (.097/4.048/314.75)

"I'm happy we ran so well, disappointed in a second-round loss but (there were) just really tough conditions and a really tough track. We had low E.T. of the round in the first round and came back and felt confident going into the second round but missed it just a little bit. The good news is it's going to be summer for a while, my car is running well in the heat and we're learning more each run with this combination. I think that's going to pay off as the summer goes on."

**Tony Schumacher, U.S. Army Top Fuel Dragster**

**(No. 6 Qualifier – 3.763 seconds at 323.19 mph)**

Rd. 1: (.084-second reaction time, 3.839 seconds at 318.69 mph) defeated No. 9 Leah Pritchett (.046/3.928/300.26)

Rd. 2: (.096/3.900/299.00) lost to No. 3 Doug Kalitta (.087/3.805/325.37)

We've got a raceable U.S. Army car, now, after what we've been able to accomplish here this weekend. Now, we've got to nudge what the car is doing closer and closer to the starting line, to get the car to move a little quicker, sooner, where we're a lot quicker early in the run. For two races, we didn't have a raceable car. It typically happens a couple of times a year when you make the kind of changes we've been making to the car since the beginning of the season. The last few races, we had a strange deal going on – not exactly sure what it was – but they made changes to fix it, and this weekend it was fixed."

### **Mopar/Dodge NHRA Sportsman Spotlight**

More than 75 Stock Eliminator and 60 Super Stock cars competed for supremacy in the Sportsman ranks at the prestigious Englishtown event.

Stephen Smyth of Uxbridge, Massachusetts, turned in the best performance in Stock, taking his FS/D 2009 Dodge Challenger to the quarterfinal round where he ran heads up against Victor Cagnazzi and his 2015 Camaro. Smyth turned in pass of 9.553 seconds at 137.23 mph, making him the quicker of the two cars. However, he was just bested at the finish line after his opponent got the jump on the start. The Smyth family still had a weekend to remember though. During his march through the field, 26-year-old Stephen defeated his older sister Allison's '98 Firebird in round three.

In Super Stock, Webster, New York's Steve Comella drove his SS/AH '68 Dodge Dart all the way to Sunday's semifinals. There he made a pass of 9.231 seconds at 147.70 mph on an 8.67 dial-in after a .030-second reaction time. He just missed out on advancing to the final round after spinning the tires at the launch.

For their efforts, Smyth and Comella each won the Dodge Top Finisher award at the Summernationals. The award provides \$500 to the Dodge or Plymouth driver advancing the farthest in Stock and Super Stock at all 24 NHRA national events.

Stock Eliminator competitors also took part in class eliminations at the venerable Englishtown track, with several Mopar drivers taking home Wally trophies from the event. Smith claimed the FS/D win in his '09 Challenger, Todd Hoven of Milltown, New Jersey, won AA/SA in his '65 Dodge Coronet, Jonathan Allegrucci of Scott Township, Pennsylvania, claimed the FS/B win in his '15 Dodge Challenger Drag Pak, and Lubec, Maine's Jerry Hatch took home the Combo-Auto victory in a '71 Plymouth Duster.

### **Next Event**

The NHRA national event calendar heads south next weekend for the 17th annual NHRA Thunder Valley Nationals at Bristol Dragway in Bristol, Tennessee.

Mopar driver Tommy Johnson Jr. defeated teammate Matt Hagan in the 2016 Funny Car final, while another Mopar driver, Ron Capps, set the track elapsed-time record last June with a pass of 3.884 seconds. Current Mopar Top Fuel driver Tony Schumacher holds the E.T. record in that category, making a lap at 3.754 seconds in 2015. The track, located in the motorsports hotbed near the Tennessee/Virginia border, has played host to five Top Fuel wins by Schumacher, while Capps has won at the track three times in Funny Car. Hagan also has one Funny Car victory there.

The NHRA Thunder Valley Nationals are scheduled for June 16 – 18. FOX Sports 1 will broadcast the weekend's events, with elimination coverage airing at 6:30 p.m, ET on Sunday, June 18.

For more information on Mopar and Dodge in NHRA, check out the Mopar brand's official blog, <http://blog.mopar.com>.

### **2017 NHRA Championship — Point Standings After Round 10 of 24**

(Season Wins in Parentheses)

#### **NHRA Funny Car**

- 1. Ron Capps, Dodge Charger R/T (4) – 931**
- 2. Matt Hagan, Dodge Charger R/T (3) – 802**
- 3. Jack Beckman, Dodge Charger R/T (1) – 652**
- Courtney Force – 648
- Robert Hight – 645
- 6t. Tommy Johnson Jr., Dodge Charger R/T (1) – 587**
- John Force (1) – 587
- J.R. Todd – 444
- Tim Wilkerson – 427
- Del Worsham – 372

### **NHRA Top Fuel**

1. Antron Brown (2) – 878
2. Steve Torrence (3) – 871
- 3. Leah Pritchett, Mopar HEMI (3) – 842**
- 4. Tony Schumacher, Mopar HEMI (1) – 766**
5. Doug Kalitta – 648
6. Brittany Force (1) – 609
7. Clay Millican – 520
8. Troy Coughlin Jr. – 412
9. Terry McMillen – 392
10. Scott Palmer – 380

### **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, thanks to Don Schumacher Racing driver Ron Capps, Mopar captured its fourth NHRA Funny Car World Championship in the last six years. As Mopar celebrates 80 years as a brand in 2017, it will focus its NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series efforts on NHRA Funny Car and, with rising star Leah Pritchett, NHRA Top Fuel Dragster. Mopar will also bolster its commitment to NHRA Sportsman racing with new contingency rewards, factory support and at-track technical advice and guidance.

### **Mopar-First Features**

During the brand's 80 years, Mopar has introduced numerous industry-first features including:

- Vehicle-information apps: first to introduce smartphone vehicle-information applications, a new channel of communication with consumers
- wiADVISOR: first to incorporate a tablet-based service lane tool
- Electronic Vehicle Tracking System (EVTS): first to market with a new interactive vehicle tracking device that sends owner a text when vehicle is driven too fast or too far based on pre-set parameters
- Wi-Fi: first to offer customers the ability to make their vehicle a wireless hot spot
- Electronic owner manuals: first to introduce traditional owner manuals on a smartphone app

### **80 Years of Mopar**

Mopar (a simple contraction of the words MOtor and PARTs) was born on August 1, 1937, as the name of a line of antifreeze products. Mopar has since evolved over 80 years to serve as the total service, parts and customer-care brand of all FCA vehicles around the globe.

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 over 150 markets around the world. 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.

Mopar is the source for genuine parts and accessories for all FCA US LLC vehicle brands. Mopar parts are engineered together with the same teams that create factory-authorized specifications for FCA vehicles, offering a direct connection that no other aftermarket parts company can provide. Complete information on the Mopar brand is available at [www.mopar.com](http://www.mopar.com).

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