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Matt Hagan Takes Runner-up Finish at Menards NHRA Nationals, TSR Dodge//SRT Hellcat Driver Extends Funny Car Points Lead

- Matt Hagan, seeking his fourth NHRA Camping World Drag Racing Series Funny Car title, recorded a runner-up finish at Sunday's Menards NHRA Nationals at Topeka, Kansas
- Hagan captured three rounds in the rain-delayed Heartland Motorsports Park event before losing in the final round
- Hagan, in his TSR American Rebel Dodge//SRT Hellcat, defeated Alex Laughlin, Jason Rupert, Tim Wilkerson and J.R. Todd in the earlier rounds before dropping the race to Tasca with a 3.965 to Tasca's 3.885 in the final
- Hagan currently holds a 61-point lead in the NHRA Funny Car standings entering next week's NHRA tour event, the Lucas Oil NHRA Nationals in Brainerd, Minnesota
- In addition to his Topeka runner-up, Hagan scored his second Mission 2Fast2Tasty Challenge on Saturday at Topeka and picked up three additional points
- Hagan's TSR teammate Leah Pruett advanced to the second round Sunday in her Rayce Rudeen Foundation Dodge//SRT Top Fuel dragster when she was defeated by eventual race winner Justin Ashley in a close 3.756 to Pruett's 3.794
- Pruett currently ranks fifth in the NHRA Camping World Top Fuel points with two races remaining before the Championship Countdown, which features the top 10 drivers in points
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August 14, 2023, Topeka, Kan. - Matt Hagan and his Tony Stewart Racing (TSR) Funny Car team continued their consistent performances in the 2023 NHRA Camping World Drag Racing Series after scoring a runner-up finish in his TSR American Rebel Dodge//SRT Hellcat at the Menards NHRA Nationals at Heartland Motorsports Park.

Hagan, entering his sixth final round of this year's NHRA campaign, cut an incredible starting light of 0.024 seconds in the final round in the rain-delayed Heartland Motorsports Park event and only low elapsed time of the entire race by rival Bob Tasca III kept him for his fifth NHRA national event win of the season.

Tasca's 3.885 bested Hagan's 3.965 for the Topeka win in the event's final NHRA national race, as the 2024 NHRA schedule welcomes Flying H Dragstrip in Odessa, Mo., to replace the Topeka event. The victory margin was just 0.0496 seconds.

Led by crew chief Dickie Venables and his stellar TSR crew, Hagan drove through the 16-car Funny Car field with round wins over Alex Laughlin, Tim Wilkerson and J.R. Todd before facing Bob Tasca III in the Funny Car final.

With the runner-up finish, Hagan extended his NHRA Funny Car points lead to 61 points in his quest for a coveted fourth NHRA World crown.

In addition, the Dodge//SRT Hellcat racer captured his second Mission 2Fast2Tasty Challenge event Saturday with a win over Chad Green with a 3.960 to Green's 4.039. With his Mission Challenge win, Hagan now has eight points, which will be added to his overall total when the Countdown begins.

"It was great to have American Rebel as a new sponsor this weekend," Hagan said. "I hate that we didn't get it done in the finals. (Bob) Tasca III really stepped up against us and did well. It was a good points weekend for us,

being able to put a 61-point lead on (Ron) Capps. You have to take away the positives each weekend. I can't wait to get to Brainerd and keep the momentum going. We've been very consistent all year long, and I think we're going to continue that trend the rest of the year. My crew did an amazing job this weekend with the tricky track conditions. We had one extreme to another with hot conditions to cool air in the final. Dickie (Venables – crew chief), Mike (Knudsen – co-crew chief) and Alex (Conaway – car chief) adapt to changing conditions. Congratulations to Tasca. They did a great job and we just got outran out here. We're hopefully going to chase down this championship and win number four."

Leah Pruett, Hagan's TSR teammate, drove the TSR Rayce Rudeen Foundation Dodge//SRT dragster to a tough second round loss with a close finish to eventual race winner and current NHRA Top Fuel points leader Justin Ashley with a 3.755 to Pruett's 3.794.

Despite the second-round loss, Pruett continues to hold down a top-five position in the current NHRA Camping World Top Fuel points standings with just two events remaining before the Championship Countdown starts on Sept. 14-17 in the Pep Boys NHRA Nationals.

"Going into Topeka, we were fifth in points and we're leaving fifth in points," said Pruett. "It just shows how strong this entire field is. Most importantly for us coming off of the (western) swing, we wanted to regroup and get our performance package together. Qualifying number two was very strong and what we were aiming for. To turn around and run Justin Ashley in round two always brings out the best in me. Our best wasn't quite enough to get around him, but it all comes back to qualifying and where you start and the momentum you have. Momentum is not something magical. It takes a lot of work and persistence. We have a very strong race car and an even stronger team coming out of this weekend."

The Lucas Oil NHRA Nationals at Brainerd International Raceway will have two nitro qualifying sessions on Friday, Aug. 18 at 3:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. CDT, followed by two qualifying rounds on Saturday, Aug. 19 at 1:30 p.m. and 4:15 p.m. CDT. Sunday's final eliminations start at 11 a.m. CDT.

The Lucas Oil NHRA Nationals will be televised on Fox Sports 1 with qualifying round 1 on Friday, Aug. 18 at 8 p.m. EDT and qualifying round 2 on Sunday, Aug. 19 at 1 p.m. EDT. The final eliminations will be shown Sunday, Aug. 20 at 4 p.m. EDT on FOX Network.

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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.

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.

In 2022, the Dodge brand ranked No. 1 in the [J.D. Power APEAL Study](#) (mass market), making it the only domestic brand ever to do so three years in a row. 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).

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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A simple combination of the words MOtor and PARts, Mopar offers exceptional service, parts and customer-care. Born in 1937 as the name of a line of antifreeze products, Mopar has evolved over more than 85 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, 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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