

Mopar-Powered Beckman and Gaines Grab Runner-Up Spots at Prestigious NHRA U.S. Nationals

- Mopar Dodge Funny Car racer Jack Beckman comes up just short in his bid to back up his \$100,000 Traxxas Shootout win with a U.S. Nationals Funny Car victory
- Defending NHRA Funny Car champ Beckman runs to his second final round of the season and 33rd of his career
- Despite a first-round exit, 'Magneti Marelli Offered by Mopar' Dodge Charger R/T driver Matt Hagan will lead the Funny Car field into the six-race NHRA Countdown to the Championship playoffs
- Mopar-powered Don Schumacher Racing drivers Beckman, Ron Capps and Johnny Gray follow close behind teammate Hagan in the playoff standings
- V. Gaines advances to his second consecutive Pro Stock final round of the season and second career final at Lucas Oil Raceway
- Mopar-powered NHRA Pro Stock drivers have advanced to the final round in eight consecutive events
- Mopar Express Lane driver Allen Johnson exits in the quarterfinals but will start the Pro Stock playoffs in second, just 30 points behind leader Mike Edwards
- Dodge Avenger pilots Jeg Coughlin Jr., Vincent Nobile and Gaines will join Johnson in the Pro Stock playoffs

September 1, 2013, Brownsburg, Ind. -

Mopar HEMI-power once again helped put two Dodge race machines into the final rounds, as Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car driver Jack Beckman and Dodge Avenger Pro Stock pilot V. Gaines scored runner-up finishes in their respective classes on Monday in the elimination rounds of the 59th annual NHRA U.S. Nationals at Lucas Oil Raceway at Indianapolis.

The final-round showing was the second of the season for Beckman and his second career runner-up spot at Indy, while Gaines also recorded his second final round at Lucas Oil Raceway as well as his third finals appearance in the last five events of the 2013 season.

It was a long Sunday night for Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) NHRA Funny Car driver Jack Beckman and his team following their \$100,000 win in the non-points Traxxas Shootout special event, but the bleary eyes weren't caused by a victory celebration — instead, the team worked late to repair Beckman's Mopar-powered Dodge Charger R/T, which shredded its body in a finish-line explosion during Beckman's winning Shootout run. The team shrugged off its lack of sleep on Monday, as Beckman threw down a 4.019/316.45 run, the quickest in the first round of eliminations, to defeat Chad Head.

After overcast skies and 86 degrees track temps to open the day, the sun peeked out and sent the track index soaring to 110 degrees before round two of Funny Car eliminations. Beckman easily advanced to the semis, going 4.219/285.71 in his Mopar after fellow Dodge driver Jeff Arend struck the tires in his own Dodge near the 330-ft mark. The defending Funny Car champ next took out Tim Wilkerson in the semifinals with a 4.110/309.42 to gain lane choice over Robert Hight in the final. In his attempt to double up on his Traxxas Shootout triumph, Beckman left first with a 0.048 second reaction time to Hight's 0.059, but his chances ended shortly thereafter when he spun the tires. Beckman slowed to the finish line with a 6.072/111.46.

"It's hard to complain but in drag racing there's one winner and there's one loser and we had a chance to leave here as a double winner and we're a loser in the final round," said Beckman, who advanced to the 33rd money-round overall of his career. "We won a race but we still have not won a Wally. We want it bad. We have six more chances and I think we have a good chance at getting a couple or three of them."

"I like our progress lately and I think we've positioned ourselves pretty well for a strong run in the Countdown. Let's face it when they reset the points we are all bunched up pretty good at the top so I'm confident. It's hard to ever leave a race being happy that you lost the race. I think to reflect on this it was a really solid weekend for us."

Two of Beckman's Mopar-fueled compatriots in the DSR camp scored first-round wins but were unable to make deeper runs in the Indy field. No. 2 Funny Car qualifier Johnny Gray used a 4.060/313.66 to send home Tony Pedregon, while Ron Capps edged out Alexis DeJoria on a holeshot win, leaving first with a .062 reaction time to DeJoria's .089 (Capps recorded a 4.062/315.05 to DeJoria's 4.036/312.35). The win was a major milestone for Capps, marking his 500th career round win. In the quarterfinals Gray and opponent Hight both shook the tires, but

Gray was unable to get back in gear, posting a 4.676/210.21 in defeat. Capps had the early lead against Wilkerson in the second round but spun the tires at about half track, seeing his day end with a losing 4.405/235.10.

DSR racer and No. 1 qualifier Matt Hagan will look to rebound after what looked like a promising weekend ended early in eliminations. Hagan set track records in both elapsed time and speed to claim the Funny Car Indy pole and was leading early in his "Magneti Marelli Offered by Mopar" Dodge Charger R/T with a .053 mark off the line against first-round foe Arend's slower .112, but Hagan experienced tire shake and was forced to pedal his machine to get it back in the groove. His 4.248/307.79 wasn't enough to catch the Mopar HEMI-powered Arend. Part-time Dodge Funny Car racer Paul Lee also fell in the opening stanza, losing to John Force.

In the NHRA Pro Stock ranks, No. 2 qualifier Gaines had the second quickest elapsed time of the first round in his Kendall Oil Dodge Avenger, a 6.617/208.65, to beat Warren Johnson. Gaines was quickest of the round in the quarterfinals, trailing Jason Line with a 6.625/208.65 to arrange an all-Mopar semifinals showdown with No. 3 qualifier Jeg Coughlin Jr., who defeated Rodger Brogdon in round one with a 6.638/206.86 and easily took down Shane Gray on the strength of a 6.657/206.80 quarterfinals run.

Gaines rose to the occasion in the semifinal battle of Mopars, scorching the starting tree with a perfect .000 reaction time paired with a 6.637/208.36 to defeat the four-time Pro Stock champ Coughlin and advance to the final round, with lane choice, against Edwards. In a repeat of the most recent Pro Stock final at Brainerd, Gaines unfortunately came out on the wrong side once again. His 6.620/208.78 run bettered Edwards' 6.637/208.39, but the edge off the starting line (Edwards was first with a .032 to Gaines .067) was enough to deny Gaines his first Indianapolis U.S. Nationals victory.

"I'm disappointed, but we went to the finals at Indy and there's nothing wrong with that," said Lakewood, Colo., native Gaines, who advanced to his 13th career Pro Stock final round. "After cutting a perfect light (against Jeg Coughlin Jr.), I slowed it up a bit too much against Mike (Edwards). We were pulling it hard but ran out of racetrack.

"We definitely have the best hot rod we've ever had, and it looks like it's the class of the field right now. Anytime you can out run Mike Edwards, have lane choice over Mike Edwards and everybody else, you can't be disappointed with that. We have a good thing going with a great crew and great support cast."

Allen Johnson posted a 6.646/207.66 pass in his Mopar Express Lane Dodge Avenger to defeat Mark Martino in the opening round. In a monster quarterfinals matchup with points leader Edwards, Johnson came up short in his bid for a first U.S. Nationals win, suffering a holeshot loss. Despite a quicker and faster 6.631/208.62 effort to his opponent's 6.640/208.17 mark, Edwards' .023 reaction time off the line to AJ's .050 proved the difference. Johnson's J&J Racing teammate Vincent Nobile was too quick on the trigger, suffering a first-round red-light loss after leaving too early against Shane Gray, while Chris McGaha fell to event winner Edwards in the opening round.

"On the bright side, we might have hit on something on that last run that we've been fighting for a few races now, that will hopefully give us some momentum going into the Countdown," commented Johnson on his weekend. "It's a whole new season now. We're thirty points behind instead of 150, so it will help me this year."

Mopar Dodge drivers are at, or very near, the top of the Funny Car and Pro Stock standings entering the six-race NHRA Countdown to the Championship playoffs, which begin at the 6th Annual Carolina Nationals, scheduled to take place Sept. 13-15 at zMAX Dragway in Concord, N.C. In Funny Car Hagan, Capps and Gray will begin the playoffs in the 1-3 spots, respectively, with defending world champ Beckman fifth, putting all four DSR Mopar-powered drivers in the top five. In Pro Stock, defending world champ Johnson is No. 2, followed by No. 3 Coughlin and No. 4 Nobile, with the red-hot Gaines at No. 8.

2013 NHRA Championship Points Standings (following the U.S. Nationals):

PRO STOCK (season wins in parentheses)

1. Mike Edwards (6) – 1667*
2. **Allen Johnson (4) - Dodge Avenger – 1446***
3. **Jeg Coughlin Jr. (2) - Dodge Avenger – 1352***
4. **Vincent Nobile (3) - Dodge Avenger – 1145***
5. Shane Gray – 1088*
6. Jason Line (1) – 1066*
7. Greg Anderson – 1053*
8. **V. Gaines - Dodge Avenger – 978***
9. Erica Enders-Stevens (1) – 779*
10. Rodger Brogdon (1) – 755*

FUNNY CAR (season wins in parentheses)

1. **Matt Hagan (4) - Dodge Charger R/T – 1297***
2. **Ron Capps (3) - Dodge Charger R/T – 1183***
3. **Johnny Gray (4) - Dodge Charger R/T – 1125***
4. John Force (1) – 1115*
5. **Jack Beckman - Dodge Charger R/T – 1110***
6. Cruz Pedregon (3) – 1099*
7. Courtney Force (2) – 1071*
8. Tim Wilkerson – 1023
9. Robert Hight (1) – 1015
10. Del Worsham – 948

About Mopar Motorsports

Mopar'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 2013, Mopar looks to defend its two NHRA 2012 World

Championship titles in Pro Stock and Funny Car categories, and celebrates 25 consecutive years as title sponsor of the Mopar Mile-High NHRA Nationals in Colorado. While Mopar remains involved in a various professional motorsports series, it continues to honor its roots by being a proud supporter of amateur racing within the NHRA with its sponsorship of the HEMI Challenge and Mopar Sportsman Cup.

Mopar Brand

Mopar is Chrysler Group LLC's service, parts and customer-care brand and distributes 280,000 parts and accessories. With the creation of the industrial alliance between Chrysler Group and Fiat S.p.A., Mopar is extending its global reach, integrating service, parts and customer-care operations in order to enhance dealer and customer support worldwide. Mopar's global portfolio includes more than 500,000 parts and accessories that are distributed in more than 130 markets. Mopar is the source for genuine parts and accessories for Chrysler Group brands as well as Fiat brands.

Mopar parts are unique in that they are engineered with the same teams that create factory-authorized vehicle specifications for Chrysler Group and Fiat vehicles – a direct connection that no other aftermarket parts company can provide. A complete list of Mopar accessories and performance parts is available at www.mopar.com.

Mopar-first Features

Mopar has introduced numerous industry-first features including:

- **Vehicle-information apps:** first to introduce smartphone vehicle-information applications, a new channel of communication with customers
- **Electronic owner manuals:** first to introduce traditional owner manuals in a DVD and brief user-guide format. First to offer complete vehicle-information kits in Spanish
- **Wi-Fi:** first to offer customers the ability to make their vehicle a wireless hot spot
- **Wireless charging:** first to introduce in-vehicle wireless charging for portable devices
- **Electronic Vehicle Tracking System (EVTS):** first to market with interactive vehicle tracking device that sends owner a text when vehicle is driven too fast or too far based on pre-set parameters
- **wiAdvisor:** first to provide factory-connected tablet technology in the service lane for instant vehicle diagnosis
- **wiTech:** first to support vehicle diagnosis and software updates leveraging off-the-shelf personal computers and a dedicated wireless tool network
- **2011 Mopar Challenger Drag Pak:** first to introduce a 500-plus cubic-inch V-10 drag-race package car

More than 75 Years of Mopar

Mopar (a simple contraction of the words Motor and PARTs) was trademarked for antifreeze product in 1937. The Mopar brand made its mark in the 1960s – the muscle-car era. The former Chrysler Corporation built race-ready Dodge and Plymouth "package cars" equipped with special high-performance parts. Mopar carried a line of "special parts" for super-stock drag racers and developed its racing parts division called Mopar Performance Parts to enhance speed and handling for both road and racing use. The brand has expanded to include technical service and customer support.

About Magneti Marelli

Based in Italy (Corbetta, Milan), Magneti Marelli was established in 1919. The company is a subsidiary of Fiat Group and has a presence and reputation in racing, including Formula 1 and World Rally Championship (WRC) and now the NHRA. With 2012 revenues of \$7.5 billion and approximately 36,900 employees, Magneti Marelli designs and produces advanced automotive systems and components. The company has 83 production facilities, 12 research and development centers and 26 application centers in 19 countries. The group supplies leading automakers in Europe, North America, South America and the Far East. Magneti Marelli USA coordinates the activities of all Magneti Marelli divisions in the NAFTA region from its North American headquarters, located in Auburn Hills, Michigan.

Magneti Marelli has established a significant presence in the world of aftermarket and service networks in the US, thanks to the partnership with MOPAR

Mopar Express Lane Service

Mopar Express Lane service, offered at participating Chrysler Group dealerships, provides a dedicated service lane for fast oil changes, and much more, in order to maximize customer convenience for all make and model vehicles. Available services include oil and filter changes, multi-point vehicle checkup, tire rotation with brake inspection, air and cabin filter replacement, wiper blade replacement, headlight and light bulb replacement and battery testing. Mopar Express Lane service is a consumer's best choice for vehicle maintenance, with highly-skilled Chrysler Group dealership technicians ready to get to work and get you back on the road in no time. No appointments. No waiting. No worries.

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