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Track Record by Beckman Takes Mopar-powered Dodge Charger R/T NHRA Funny Car to No. 1 Spot at Atlanta

- Jack Beckman earns fourth pole of season with track record 3.939-second run at 326.32 mph in his Mopar Dodge Funny Car at 36th annual NHRA Southern Nationals
- Rocky Boots/Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T driver Matt Hagan puts Mopar 1-2 on charts, earns second spot in Funny Car qualifying at Atlanta Dragway
- All four Mopar-powered Don Schumacher Racing Funny Car drivers qualify in top half of field at Atlanta
- Mopar-powered veteran Allen Johnson to start No. 6, lead Mopar Dodge Dart NHRA Pro Stock contingent into race day
- Jeg Coughlin Jr. qualifies "Magneti Marelli Offered by Mopar" Jegs.com Dodge Dart in top half of Pro Stock field at No. 8
- Erica Enders No. 10 in Mopar Performance Dodge Dart Pro Stock car

May 14, 2016, Auburn Hills, Mich. - Jack Beckman used Mopar power to earn the No. 1 qualifying spot at the 36th annual National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Southern Nationals, held at Atlanta Dragway. Beckman's track record 3.939-second run at 326.32 mph on Friday in his Infinite Hero Foundation Dodge Charger R/T NHRA Funny Car held firm to earn the Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) driver his fourth No. 1 spot of the season and 19th of his career. Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T pilot Matt Hagan also qualified strong, securing the No. 2 position for elimination rounds on Sunday.

"I'm happy where we are, qualifying No. 1," said Beckman, the 2012 Funny Car world champion, who draws Jim Campbell as his first-round foe on Sunday. "It's nice for a little bit of prestige, you get some bonus points that go with it, and it's maybe even nicer because you get a more favorable matchup first round. The whole idea behind that is to play it smart and strategic and win four rounds on Sunday. I think I'll sleep well tonight and come in tomorrow embracing the fact that we'll be the favorite."

Two-time NHRA Funny Car champion Hagan also posted his quickest time during Friday qualifying, a 3.943-second run that put his Rocky Boots/Mopar Express Lane Dodge second on the final qualifying charts. The DSR driver will have to get past Chad Head in the opening round on Sunday.

"We are very, very confident with this new Rocky Boots Venator Camo Funny Car," Hagan said. "The car is running good and it has turned the corner. Everything is jiving, working and we are really just running strong. You have to push that edge and find that line that you can't cross and we found it today and we learned from it. All in all, I'm very confident for tomorrow."

Two additional Mopar DSR Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car drivers joined Beckman and Hagan in the top half of the field. Tommy Johnson Jr., qualified fifth with a 3.973/317.94 effort in his final attempt on Saturday and will lineup his Make-A-Wish Dodge Charger R/T against another Dodge, No. 12 qualifier John Hale (4.093). Ron Capps grabbed the eighth position in his Dodge (4.003) and will start Sunday against the always formidable John Force.

Allen Johnson led the way in his Mopar-powered Marathon Petroleum Dodge Dart in Pro Stock qualifying. The 2012 Pro Stock world champion will start sixth (6.649/208.46) and battle Vincent Nobile in the first round. Just two positions back at No. 8, five-time Pro Stock world champ Jeg Coughlin Jr. (6.686/206.86) will stage his "Magneti Marelli Offered by Mopar" Jegs.com Dodge Dart against Drew Skillman. It's the fourth time in seven races that Coughlin

qualified eighth or better in the eliminations field.

"The team tested again in Oklahoma before heading this way as we continue to try and clean up some of the things that have been nagging on us, and I think we've see a little tick of improvement here," said Coughlin.

Coughlin's Elite Motorsports teammate, two-time and defending world champion Erica Enders, posted her best qualifying effort in Saturday's final session, a 6.701 pass to earn the No. 10 position in her Mopar Performance Dodge Dart. Enders will race Chris McGaha in the first round on Sunday.

"It's nice that we made our best run in the last session of qualifying," Enders said. "The conditions during that session are going to be very similar to what they are tomorrow. I'll go into race day tomorrow with the mindset that I've always had in the past. We'll be confident in what we have."

V. Gaines (7.424) qualified 14th in his Dodge Dart and will challenge No. 1 qualifier Greg Anderson.

Eliminations for the 36th annual NHRA Southern Nationals will begin at 11 a.m. ET at Atlanta Dragway. Television coverage of elimination rounds will air on FOX Sports 1 from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. ET.

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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, Mopar will look to once again vie for a NHRA World Championship title in both Pro Stock and Funny Car categories. While Mopar remains involved in a various professional motorsports series, it continues to honor its roots by being a proud supporter of Sportsman racing within the NHRA with its sponsorship of the HEMI Challenge and Mopar's Tom Hoover Sportsman Challenge.

Mopar

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