

Mopar Proving Dominant as Capps Wins NHRA Summernationals, Nabs Points Lead in Fourth Consecutive All-Dodge Final

- Back-to-back wins, two consecutive poles elevate Mopar Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car driver Ron Capps to No. 1 in series standings
- Englishtown, New Jersey trophy marks Capps' 48th victory in 94th final round
- Final is fourth consecutive all-Mopar Dodge Charger R/T standoff
- Don Schumacher Racing Mopar Dodge Charger R/T campaigner Jack Beckman reaches third final of season, moves up to No. 2 in Funny Car points
- Mopar Dodge Funny Cars reach six of 10 finals, win five as season nears halfway point
- Matt Hagan holding at No. 6 in Funny Car standings in Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T
- "Magneti Marelli Offered by Mopar" JEGS.com Dodge Dart driver Jeg Coughlin Jr. moves up to No. 8 in Pro Stock points following first-round standoff with teammate Erica Enders in Mopar Performance Dodge Dart
- Enders maintains position in Pro Stock's elite Top 10
- Father/son Mopar campaigners win trophies in respective Sportsman categories

June 12, 2016, Englishtown, New Jersey - The 47th Annual NHRA Summernationals marked a victorious weekend for Mopar-powered racers highlighted by a big win for Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car pilot Ron Capps. The veteran driver and Summernationals pole sitter raced to the 48th victory of his career in Englishtown, New Jersey, to move into the points lead.

It was the third victory of the season for Capps and his second-consecutive win following his monster move last week at the New England Nationals. Remarkably, the Englishtown trophy came in the fourth consecutive all-Mopar final round, and so far this season, Mopar Funny Car drivers have claimed five of the 10 pieces of shiny hardware up for grabs.

"Congratulations to Ron Capps on driving his Mopar Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car to the winner's circle for the third time this season," said Pietro Gorlier, Head of Parts and Service (Mopar), FCA – Global. "We were all very pleased to see this team start the year with a win for Mopar, and we couldn't be happier that they have been able to repeat the accomplishment in back-to-back races."

Capps began his charge to the winner's circle with a first-round defeat of fellow Mopar-campaigner John Hale. Capps was first off the starting line and carried the advantage to a 4.057-second win at 307.93 mph over Hale's tire-smoking 8.734 pass. The round-win was bittersweet for Capps, however, as it was the first time that he slowed to the 4-second zone since Topeka. His impressive string of 3-second passes in the Rahn Tobler-tuned Dodge Charger was halted at 12 in a row.

Capps moved into the points lead with the first-round win light and was back to business in the quarterfinals despite the warming conditions and increasingly tricky racetrack. John Force had lane choice in their head-to-head meeting and selected the preferred right lane, officially christened for this event as the "Mopar Lane." Capps, though, pulled off what had before seemed impossible for the Funny Car drivers under the hot sun on Sunday and made a full, clean pass down the racetrack in the left lane that culminated in a 3.996/310.55 to his opponent's troubled 4.474/204.98.

On the same side of the ladder, DSR's Make-A-Wish Dodge Charger pilot Tommy Johnson Jr. had a quick .057-second reaction time and paired it with a 4.033/313.73 to send Cruz Pedregon home on a 4.117/293.41 in the first

round, and the victory handed Johnson Jr. lane choice over Del Worsham in the quarterfinals. He was off to a strong start, but too much power applied to a temperamental racing surface put an abrupt end to Johnson Jr.'s day and set up a semifinals meeting for Capps and Worsham. Capps was on a tear, racing ahead of a traction-troubled Worsham for a blistering 3.960/314.68 win over a slowing 8.890 pass.

DSR Infinite Hero Dodge Charger driver Beckman's quest for the trophy began with a defeat of Alexis DeJoria with a very strong 3.972/315.71 to 3.998/309.91, and his progress continued with a second-round match with another DSR driver and the pilot of the Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T, Matt Hagan. Odds were in Hagan's favor as he was the No. 2 qualifier at the event in his powerful hot rod and clocked low elapsed time of race day with a 3.950 pass and a big exertion of Mopar muscle displayed by a speed of 316.75 in the first round. The party was over for two-time Funny Car champion Hagan, though, when he struck the tires soon after launching his nitro-fueled beast. Beckman had a cylinder out at the hit of the throttle, but the handicap became irrelevant as Hagan ran into misfortune, allowing Beckman to surge ahead for an easy 4.105/305.98 win over a 4.842/82.21.

"Obviously it was a hot racetrack, 130 degrees out there," said Hagan. "Those were conditions that we haven't seen all year. It was a greasy pedal-fest, no one got down in Top Fuel and only one guy got down in Funny Car – and that was our teammate (Ron Capps). When you're put it into that situation, it's a crapshoot. You never know what you're going to get, and you have to be mentally prepared as a driver to pedal the car, you have to be ready to leave on time; you're thinking about all this stuff. Crew chiefs are dialing everything back and sometimes you get it and sometimes it's just not enough."

First-time semifinalist Jeff Diehl was the last man in the way for Beckman before he climbed into his 47th Funny Car final. Beckman launched first and it was all over from there as Diehl rattled the tires and watched as Beckman took the win, 4.062/289.51 to 6.137/113.21.

In the 94th final round of Capps' career and Beckman's 47th, the teammates were identical at the starting line, both recording .063-second reaction times. Beckman's efforts, however, were nullified by a hearty blast of tire smoke and Capps soared ahead with the second-quickest pass of the day, a 3.954-second pass at 316.90 mph, to seal the deal and put Mopar in the winner's circle yet again.

"It's something you hope will happen at the end of the day, but with the competition, you just can't imagine it's going to go as planned," said Capps. "Rahn Tobler's given me such a fun car to race. We had some big matchups, and we knew we couldn't count (Beckman's Crew Chief) Jimmy Prock out in the final, no matter how good our car was running. But winning this race here in Englishtown – this is one of the biggest. Back in the day this was (part of) the big three, and we still consider it historic. This was a big win."

Beckman was able to move up to No. 2 in the Funny Car points with his final-round appearance and only trails Capps by 27 marks.

"Going to the final round and losing is frustrating," said Beckman. "You feel like you just didn't capitalize on the day. (But) that final round was for the points lead. It's nice to know that we're the second best Funny Car so far – the wins will start coming pretty soon."

Taking over the points lead at this stage of the season is not a fact that Capps wishes to dwell upon, and the team's game plan is simple.

"I don't even want to hear championship talk. It's so far off, and the competition is so tough," said the driver who has come in second-place at season's end a pain-staking four times. "We're just taking it a little bit at a time. I almost felt embarrassed driving this car today because it's so good. You just don't want to mess up when it's that good. It's yours to lose. It wasn't that we didn't struggle today. We did. But we just worked so well together. There was a lot of good communication. You know, it's a pretty big dream to think about being a racecar driver when you grow up – but to have a racecar like this is something you really dream about. I'm just trying to ride the wave and enjoy it. It won't last forever, but we're having fun right now."

Team Mopar in Pro Stock

The first round featured a marquee matchup that pitted reigning world champion Erica Enders and her Mopar Performance Dodge Dart against teammate and five-time Pro Stock champion Jeg Coughlin Jr. in his HEMI-powered "Magneti Marelli Offered by Mopar" Dart. Enders launched first, .038 to .046, but it was Coughlin Jr. who advanced as he took his Dodge Dart to a 6.708/207.56 win over a 6.812/206.70.

"I'm pumped for Bristol because we've won that race the last two years," said Enders, already looking forward to the next event on tour. "To do that again in Bristol on Father's Day would be perfect. Having a trophy to give my dad (Gregg Enders) the last two years was really special, and continuing that streak would be super rewarding."

In the quarterfinals, Coughlin Jr. got the head-start as he left the starting line .029-second ahead of Jason Line, but he lost his edge down-track in the tricky, hot and humid conditions and forfeited the win, 6.972/162.86 to 6.617/210.54.

V. Gaines and the Kendall Oil Dodge Dart were unable to get down the racetrack in the first round, and the Colorado-native was sent home when Vincent Nobile's 6.46 overpowered his 9.916. A finalist last season in Englishtown, Allen Johnson and his Mopar-powered Marathon Petroleum J&J Racing Dodge Dart advanced from the opening act at this year's edition of the event with the fourth-quickest pass of the round, a 6.688/208.88 that bested Alex Laughlin's 6.698/209.33. Nobile, though, was waiting for him in the second round and put an end to Johnson's day, 6.639/210.37 to a 7.003/161.00.

Johnson will stay No. 4 in the Mello Yello Series Pro Stock standings as the tour leaves Old Bridge Township Raceway Park. With the first-round victory, Coughlin Jr. moved up from 11th – his position when Englishtown qualifying points were in the books – to No. 8. Enders leaves the event holding down the No. 10 spot, and Gaines remains just outside of the top 10 in twelfth place.

Sportsman Racing Report

The Mopar entries were strong in Sportsman competition at the NHRA Summernationals. In the Super Stock category, Jonathan Allegrucci advanced to the final round in his 2011 Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Pak, although he was unable to compete for the trophy after smoke from beneath the hood signaled trouble in the semifinals. The Mayfield, Pennsylvania-based driver was also racing his 2015 super-charged Drag Pak in the Stock Eliminator category at the event.

It was an all-Mopar family affair in the winner's circle when David Harvey Jr. raced to the 11.50 Index victory in his 1968 Valiant, sending his own father, David Harvey Sr., home empty-handed. The Berlin, New Jersey resident's son, David Harvey III, scored a trophy of his own in the Street Legal category, powering his classic 1970 Duster to triumph over Pequea, Pennsylvania's John Shaeffer.

NHRA's Mello Yello Drag Racing Series Continues

Mopar teams will continue their pursuit of race-wins and valuable points in just one week with the 11th race of 24 in the Mello Yello Drag Racing Series, the Thunder Valley Nationals at Bristol Dragway in Bristol, Tennessee, June 17-19.

2016 NHRA Championship Points Standings

(Following the NHRA Englishtown Event)

PRO STOCK (season wins in parentheses)

1. Jason Line (5) – 1,133
2. Greg Anderson (5) – 1,065
3. Bo Butner – 719
4. **Allen Johnson (Dodge Dart) – 614**
5. Drew Skillman – 550
6. Chris McGaha – 491
7. Vincent Nobile – 480
8. **Jeg Coughlin Jr. (Dodge Dart) – 424**
9. Alex Laughlin – 413
10. **Erica Enders (Dodge Dart) – 406**

11. Shane Gray – 405
12. **V. Gaines (Dodge Dart) – 311**

FUNNY CAR (season wins in parentheses)

1. **Ron Capps (Dodge Charger R/T) (3) – 758**
2. **Jack Beckman (Dodge Charger R/T) – 731**
3. Courtney Force (1) – 687
4. Tim Wilkerson (2) – 660
5. Del Worsham – 639
6. **Matt Hagan (Dodge Charger R/T) (2) – 615**
7. Robert Hight (1) – 586
8. John Force – 581
9. **Tommy Johnson Jr. (Dodge Charger R/T) – 558**
10. Alexis DeJoria (1) – 516

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, 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

Mopar is the global name for Stellantis genuine parts and authentic accessories.

A simple combination of the words MOrtor 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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