

Contact: Amy Knight

## **Beckman, Pritchett Give Mopar and Dodge Dual No. 2 Efforts During NHRA Route 66 Nationals Qualifying**

- Jack Beckman qualifies Mopar HEMI®-powered Funny Car from Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) No. 2 at Route 66 Raceway to lead all Dodges
- Beckman and teammate Tommy Johnson Jr. are competing with especially heavy hearts after sponsor Terry Chandler's passing
- Six Mopar Dodge Funny Cars qualify for 16-car field
- Leah Pritchett qualifies Mopar-powered dragster second in Top Fuel, Tony Schumacher will start from fifth position
- Pritchett defeats Papa John's founder and CEO, John Schnatter, in third Charity Challenge match race of 2017

July 8, 2017, Joliet, Ill. - Jack Beckman is off to a solid start as the second half of the 2017 NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series schedule kicks off this weekend with the Route 66 Nationals, qualifying his Infinite Hero Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car featuring Mopar HEMI® power No. 2 for Sunday eliminations.

The effort leads his Mopar-backed Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) teammates in the category as Beckman looks for back-to-back wins on the season, his third in the last four events and his second in a row at Route 66 Raceway near Chicago.

Meanwhile, Leah Pritchett drove her Papa John's Pizza/Mopar Pennzoil dragster from DSR to the No. 2 qualifying position in the Top Fuel category, putting her in a prime spot to claim her fourth win of the year.

In Funny Car, Beckman turned in his best lap of 3.856 seconds at 330.23 mph to claim the No. 2 position during the second session of qualifying under the lights at Route 66 Raceway on Friday night. The track is known for its night qualifying sessions in favorable conditions.

Beckman and his Mopar teammate at DSR, Tommy Johnson Jr., are racing with especially heavy hearts this weekend as their beloved benefactor, Terry Chandler, passed away earlier this week after a courageous battle with brain cancer. Chandler funded Beckman's Infinite Hero car and Johnson's Make-A-Wish Dodge Charger R/T as a way to give back to the community after having had a great deal of personal success in her life. Johnson qualified in the sixth spot.

Matt Hagan and the Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T team came up short of setting a track record for the second event in a row and qualified in the fourth position. 2016 Funny Car champion and current points leader, Ron Capps, will begin his quest for a sixth Wally trophy in 2017 from the ninth spot on the elimination ladder in his Dodge Charger R/T.

A total of six Mopar Dodge Funny Cars will compete on Sunday in what are expected to be hot conditions.

In the Top Fuel category, Leah Pritchett qualified No. 2 after posting a best lap of 3.723 seconds at 326.56 mph on Saturday evening in the fourth and final qualifying session.

Her Mopar DSR teammate, Chicago-area native Tony Schumacher, will begin from fifth.

**Leah Pritchett Defeats Papa John's Pizza Founder and CEO John Schnatter in the Charity Challenge**

Pritchett has already had a busy weekend in Chicago. In addition to her responsibilities with her Top Fuel team, on Saturday she also participated in the third "Charity Challenge" match race of 2017, competing against Papa John's Pizza founder and CEO, John Schnatter. Pritchett drove a Dodge Challenger configured for drag racing and featuring a supercharged Mopar Gen III HEMI engine to the victory over Schnatter's 1971 Chevy Camaro despite smoking the tires after Schnatter turned on the red light at the starting line. Pritchett made a lap of 10.041 seconds at 154.28 mph. She has now defeated Papa John three times in a row in 2017, with her other wins coming during the Gainesville and Charlotte events.

Each Charity Challenge event benefits the Infinite Hero Foundation, with the next showdown scheduled for the prestigious U.S. Nationals taking place over Labor Day Weekend at Lucas Oil Raceway near Indianapolis.

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

(best elapsed time in bold)

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

**Qualified No. 2 , will face No. 15 Bob Bode**

*Friday:* (3.966 seconds at 324.36 mph – Q1); **(3.856/330.23 – Q2)**

*Saturday:* (6.872/100.56 – Q3); (3.723/326.56 – Q4)

"Today was a tough day for everybody at DSR, and maybe more specifically the Make-A-Wish and Infinite Hero teams. Terry was laid to rest today and I'm thankful (team owner) Don (Schumacher) and (his daughter) Megan got to fly out there and represent the entire Schumacher organization. It's sad and the silver lining is we know we get to continue on with what she wanted for her legacy and that's to help people and she didn't want to take any credit for it.

"We're qualified second; we have a great race car. It's Chicago and it's going to be throwdown tomorrow. We're the defending champs and I'd like to leave here as the two-time defending champ for Terry."

#### **Leah Pritchett, Papa John's Pizza/Mopar Pennzoil Top Fuel Dragster**

**Qualified No. 2, will face No. 15 Troy Coughlin Jr.**

*Friday:* (3.763 seconds at 326.48 mph – Q1); (8.665/82.92 – Q2)

*Saturday:* (3.817/325.30 – Q3) **(3.723/326.56 – Q4)**

"We had an incredible day, it was very busy. It's always an honor to race against (John Schnatter). John had the car and the setup to beat us and had some malfunctions on the line.

"Going into tomorrow, Troy Coughlin is a tough matchup. We're going to refer back to our Q3 setup, that's the most in-line with what we have. Tomorrow's a much different set of circumstances but we feel good. We feel like we are finally back at the performance level where we'd like to be."

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

**Qualified No. 4, will face No. 13 Del Worsham**

*Friday:* (3.946 seconds at 326.40 mph – Q1); **(3.895/332.10 – Q2)**

*Saturday:* (4.970/158.20 – Q3); (10.009/74.92 – Q4)

"We've just got to race smart tomorrow. It's been a while since we've turned on four win lights with this Mopar Express Lane Funny Car so tomorrow would be a good day to do it. We have good history here at this racetrack. I'd like to roll into the Western Swing with some momentum.

"Everybody's swinging for it tomorrow. Any one out of 16 cars can win it so we'll do the best job we can and see what happens."

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

**Qualified No. 6 will face No. 11 John Force**

*Friday:* (4.274 seconds at 216.69 mph – Q1); **(3.913/326.00 – Q2)**

*Saturday:* (4.214/226.16 – Q3); (4.083/248.43 – Q4)

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

### **Qualified No. 9, will face No. 8 Jonnie Lindberg**

*Friday:* (3.984 seconds at 321.27 mph – Q1); (**3.942**/292.08 – Q2)

*Saturday:* (4.948/154.97 – Q3); (4.074/253.80 – Q4)

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

### **Qualified No. 5, will face No. 12 Blake Alexander**

*Friday:* (3.827 seconds at 314.24 mph – Q1); (**3.758**/325.37 – Q2)

*Saturday:* (3.842/319.98 – Q3); (3.821/321.50 – Q4)

### **Tune-in Info**

FOX Sports 1 will broadcast the elimination rounds from the 20th annual NHRA Route 66 Nationals at Route 66 Raceway LIVE at 3 p.m. ET on Sunday, July 9.

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

### **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

### **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.

Complete information on Mopar is available at [www.mopar.com](http://www.mopar.com) and the Mopar blog at [www.blog.mopar.com](http://www.blog.mopar.com). For more information regarding Stellantis (NYSE: STLA), please visit [www.stellantis.com](http://www.stellantis.com).

### **Follow Mopar and company news and video on:**

Company blog: [blog.stellantisnorthamerica.com](http://blog.stellantisnorthamerica.com)

Media website: [media.stellantisnorthamerica.com](http://media.stellantisnorthamerica.com)

Mopar brand: [www.mopar.com/](http://www.mopar.com/)

Mopar blog: [blog.mopar.com/](http://blog.mopar.com/)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/mopar](http://www.facebook.com/mopar)

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/officialmopar](http://www.instagram.com/officialmopar)

Twitter: [twitter.com/OfficialMOPAR](https://twitter.com/OfficialMOPAR)

YouTube: [www.youtube.com/c/mopar](http://www.youtube.com/c/mopar) or [www.youtube.com/StellantisNA](http://www.youtube.com/StellantisNA)

-###-

Additional information and news from Stellantis are available at: <https://media.stellantisnorthamerica.com>