

Wolkwitz Takes Second Consecutive NHRA Dodge HEMI® Challenge Pole at U.S. Nationals

- Gary Wolkwitz drives 1968 Dodge Dart to No. 1 qualifier position in 18th consecutive running of fan-favorite event
- Two-time and defending race champion Jimmy Daniels qualifies No. 2
- NHRA Dodge HEMI Challenge parade and elimination rounds set for Friday, August 31 at Lucas Oil Raceway at Indianapolis
- Drivers to compete for \$15,000 winner's purse and iconic HEMI Challenge Trophy
- Dodge brand's first year as title sponsor also marks 50th anniversary of Mopar-powered 1968 Dodge Dart and Plymouth Barracuda Super Stock cars
- Dodge Garage (<http://www.dodgegarage.com/>), a digital content hub for muscle car and race enthusiasts, features highlights from NHRA season

August 30, 2018, Brownsburg, Indiana - Gary Wolkwitz raced his Super Stock 1968 Dodge Dart to the top spot during qualifying for the NHRA Dodge HEMI® Challenge, the popular race-within-a-race held during the NHRA U.S. Nationals, August 29 – September 3. Wolkwitz will start from the pole for the second consecutive year as he seeks his first career win at the Lucas Oil Raceway at Indianapolis facility.

The event, now in its 18th season, comes during the 50th anniversary celebration of the Mopar-powered 1968 Dodge Dart and Plymouth Barracuda Super Stock cars that compete in the fan-favorite event. The iconic 42.6-lb NHRA Dodge HEMI Challenge trophy and \$15,000 winner's purse will be on the line tomorrow during eliminations. All drivers finishing in the top 16 will receive cash rewards.

"It didn't do me much good last year," said New Jersey native Wolkwitz of his No. 1 position, which he nailed down with a 8.524-second elapsed time (ET) in the final qualifying session. "Let's hope this year is a little bit different. It would be terrific (to claim the win). I turn 73 in October, and this might be my swan song."

Jimmy Daniels, the two-time and defending event champion, nabbed the No. 2 slot with a strong 8.538 run, earning his same starting position as last year. The 22-year-old dental student from Pennsylvania is hoping to put his imprint in the NHRA Dodge HEMI Challenge record books by becoming the first driver to claim victory in the event at Indy three years in a row.

"We're trying hard (for the win)," said Daniels, whose father and namesake is also a past HEMI Challenge winner. "We've still got some work ahead of us. This is my first pass since the NHRA Dutch Classic last October, so it's been awhile. But we're working on it. The car likes being in the No. 2 spot, and Gary's No. 1. It's good to have the Barton (Racing) cars in the one and two spots. We're feeling good for tomorrow."

Stephen Comella held the No. 1 spot before ultimately qualifying third with a 8.556 pass in his 1968 Plymouth Barracuda. The New York-based racer posted the fastest speed (156.79 mph) of qualifying. HEMI Challenge veteran and Dodge Dart pilot Jim Pancake (fourth) and inaugural 2001 HEMI Challenge race winner and 1968 Plymouth Barracuda driver Bucky Hess completed the top five.

Rounding out spots 6-10, in order, are last year's runner-up Gus Mantas, Tony DePillo, Wendell Howes, Rich Locker and 2016 runner-up Stephen Herbert.

A parade of HEMI Challenge cars will take place Friday, August 31, before eliminations commence, with the final

round to crown the 2018 champion scheduled for prime time on Friday night, just prior to NHRA Nitro qualifying.

The NHRA Dodge HEMI Challenge showcases Super Stock/A-HEMI (SS/AH) NHRA Sportsman class competitors battling on the quarter-mile in 1968 Mopar “package” cars, powered by the legendary 426 HEMI engine, nicknamed the “Elephant” engine for its size and power. The Dodge Dart and Plymouth Barracuda Super Stockers are one of the earliest and most iconic iterations of the purpose-built vehicles created at the factory. The cars feature distinct race “packages” and are for use solely on the drag strip. The Dodge Dart and Plymouth Barracudas are precursors to the modern-day package car — the Mopar Dodge Challenger Drag Pak.

Dodge Garage: Digital Hub for Drag Racing News

Fans can catch NHRA Dodge HEMI Challenge and NHRA U.S. Nationals coverage at [Dodge Garage](#), the one-stop destination for Mopar and Dodge//SRT drag racing news.

The site includes daily updates and access to an online racing HQ, news, events, galleries, available downloads and merchandise. Dodge Garage features include exclusive content, such as the “Chasing the Title” video series, which offers fans a unique, behind-the-scenes glimpse at DSR drivers and teams in action on and off the track.

For information on Mopar on and off the track, check out the Mopar brand's official blog, <http://blog.mopar.com>.

About Dodge//SRT

Dodge//SRT offers a complete lineup of performance vehicles that stand out in their own segments. Dodge is America’s mainstream performance brand and SRT is positioned as the ultimate performance halo of the Dodge brand, together creating a complete and balanced performance brand with one vision and one voice.

For more than 100 years, the Dodge brand has carried on the spirit of brothers John and Horace Dodge, who founded the brand in 1914. Their influence continues today. New for 2019, the Dodge Challenger SRT Hellcat Redeye is possessed by the Demon. Its 797-horsepower supercharged HEMI® high-output engine makes it the most powerful, quickest and fastest muscle car reaching 0-60 miles per hour (mph) in 3.4 seconds and the fastest GT production car with a ¼-mile elapsed time (ET) of 10.8 seconds at 131 mph. It also reaches a new top speed of 203 mph. Joining the Challenger SRT Hellcat Redeye is the 2019 Dodge Challenger SRT Hellcat with its more powerful 717-horsepower engine, the Challenger R/T Scat Pack Widebody, which features fender flares from the SRT Hellcat Widebody and adds 3.5 inches of width to Scat Pack’s footprint, as well as and the new Challenger R/T Scat Pack 1320. Infused with exclusive drag strip technology from the iconic Dodge Challenger SRT Demon, the Challenger R/T Scat Pack 1320 is a drag-oriented, street-legal muscle car and a blank canvas for the serious grassroots drag racer. The 2019 Dodge Durango SRT, America’s fastest, most powerful and most capable three-row SUV with a best-in-class tow rating of 8,700 lbs. fills out the brands’ performance lineup. These visceral performance models join a 2019 brand lineup that includes the Durango, Grand Caravan, Journey, Charger and Challenger — a showroom that offers performance at every price point.

Mopar

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

A simple combination of the words MOTOtor 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 and the Mopar blog at www.blog.mopar.com. For more information regarding Stellantis (NYSE: STLA), please visit www.stellantis.com.

Follow Mopar and company news and video on:

Company blog: blog.stellantisnorthamerica.com

Media website: media.stellantisnorthamerica.com

Mopar brand: www.mopar.com/

Mopar blog: blog.mopar.com/

Facebook: www.facebook.com/mopar

Instagram: www.instagram.com/officialmopar

Twitter: twitter.com/OfficialMOPAR

YouTube: www.youtube.com/c/mopar or www.youtube.com/StellantisNA

-###-

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