

Johnson, Schumacher Take Runner-up Spots at Season-ending NHRA Finals

- Tommy Johnson Jr. races Make-A-Wish Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car to third final round of season
- Johnson leads all Mopar Dodge//SRT Funny Car racers with third-place finish in final standings, Ron Capps finishes fourth
- Tony Schumacher advances to final round in Mopar-powered U.S. Army Top Fuel dragster at Auto Club Raceway at Pomona, California, finishes second in Top Fuel standings
- Mopar Dodge//SRT drivers end season with 11 combined wins in NHRA Top Fuel and NHRA Funny Car Nitro classes
- Mopar Dodge dragster driver Leah Pritchett wraps up season fourth in Top Fuel points
- Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat pilot Matt Hagan earns eighth-place finish in final Funny Car standings
- Infinite Hero Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car racer Jack Beckman seventh in Funny Car standings
- Steve Wann steers 1962 SS/DA Plymouth Sport Fury to event win in Super Stock at Pomona
- Wann, Jon Irving bank final 2018 Dodge Top Finisher Awards in Super Stock and Stock at NHRA Finals
- Dodge Garage (<http://www.dodgegarage.com/>), a digital content hub for muscle car and race enthusiasts, features highlights from NHRA season

November 11, 2018, Pomona, California - Tommy Johnson Jr. and Tony Schumacher raced Mopar Dodge//SRT to runner-up finishes in Funny Car and Top Fuel, respectively, at the season-ending 54th Annual NHRA Finals at Auto Club Raceway at Pomona, California, on November 11, 2018.

Mopar Dodge//SRT Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) drivers finished the 2018 NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series season with 11 total wins in the NHRA Nitro classes — eight in Funny Car and three in Top Fuel.

Johnson, coming off three consecutive No. 1 spots, started third after holding the provisional pole and earning 14 bonus points during qualifying. The two-time defending event champion at the season-ending Pomona race posted a 3.905-second elapsed time (ET) at 327.59 mph in his Make-A-Wish Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car, second quickest of the first round, to beat Cruz Pedregon. Johnson survived a scare in the second round against Courtney Force when his engine initially would not fire up, but once his Mopar HEMI® engine turned over, it lit up the board with a winning 3.913-second ET that was quickest of the round.

Next up was an all-DSR Mopar Dodge semifinals battle with Jack Beckman. Johnson matched his quarterfinals ET of 3.913, paired with a speed of 325.06 mph, to outrun his teammate and advance to his fourth straight final round at the NHRA Finals, third of the year and 48th of his career. Johnson left nothing on the table against newly-crowned Funny Car champion J.R. Todd, posting his quickest run of race day with a 3.889 ET at 327.51 mph, but it couldn't match Todd's winning 3.872/329.10 pass. With his runner-up finish, Johnson moved to third in the final standings to lead all Mopar Dodge//SRT Funny Car drivers.

Tony Schumacher made the most of his final race in the iconic U.S. Army livery, marching all the way to the final round. "The Sarge" surged to a red-hot start in his Mopar-powered Top Fuel machine, clocking a 3.694 ET that was quickest of the first round to defeat Scott Palmer and earn a spot in round three when his quarterfinal opponent Bill Litton had mechanical issues on the starting line.

In the semifinals against the higher-qualified Blake Alexander, Schumacher led from start to finish to set up a final-

round battle against 2018 Top Fuel champion Steve Torrence. Schumacher just missed out on stopping Torrence's sweep of all six Countdown races. His 3.700/331.61 run was quicker and faster than his opponent's numbers, but Torrence scored the holeshot win thanks to a .029 reaction time. Schumacher wrapped up the season with one win, six final-round appearances and took second in the Top Fuel final points.

Mopar-powered NAPA Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car driver Ron Capps earned the NHRA Finals pole and had the advantage of a bye when No. 16 qualifier Ray Martin encountered mechanical issues and was unable to make the run. In the quarterfinals, Capps powered his Dodge down the track in 3.921-seconds to take the win against Shawn Langdon's 3.967 E.T.

The 2016 Funny Car world champion faced Todd in the semifinals. Capps gave it a solid effort, maneuvering his 11,000-horsepower machine down the Pomona track in under four seconds for the sixth consecutive time, but was unable to defeat Todd's 3.889-second run. Capps closed out the 2018 season ranked fourth in the Funny Car standings, having collected three Wally trophies.

In his 300th professional race, Infinite Hero Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car driver Jack Beckman advanced to the semifinals. Beckman dodged a bullet in the first round, reeling in his car after it veered toward the center line shortly after launch and then eased it down the strip to defeat Jeff Arend, who also encountered on-track issues. Beckman entered the quarterfinals 30-15 in career matchups against opponent John Force, and added another mark in the win column against the 16-time champ. Force deep-staged for a sizeable lead off the start, but Beckman caught up quickly and pulled away for the round win with a 3.936/318.99 run.

Beckman squared off with DSR teammate Johnson in a match-up of the "giving" cars sponsored by the late Terry Chandler, but fell short in a tight race. The 2012 Funny Car champion racked up two event victories in 2018, good for seventh in the final Funny Car standings.

No. 1 qualifier and Mopar Dodge Top Fuel driver Leah Pritchett seemed primed for a deep run on Sunday after clocking the second-quickest pass in Top Fuel history en route to capturing her fourth pole of the season, but unfortunately the DSR racer's day ended much sooner than desired.

Pritchett left the starting line first against first-round opponent Bill Litton, but she smoked the tires near the 330-ft. mark and then pedaled her dragster several times in a fierce fight to right her Mopar Dodge and get it pointed down the track. Pritchett shut it down after crossing the center line, ending her day. She wrapped up the 2018 season with two event wins and the fourth spot in the Top Fuel standings, to go along with her three event Wally trophies and overall championship in the NHRA Factory Stock Showdown class.

After claiming the win at the 2018 season-opener, Matt Hagan was looking to bookend his season with another Auto Club Raceway at Pomona Wally trophy. Hagan launched his Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat off the starting line ahead of his first-round opponent Shawn Langdon and held on to the lead until the 330-foot mark, but began to slow near half-track as Langdon sped down track to claim the round win. Hagan finished his 2018 campaign with three event wins, earning the two-time NHRA Funny Car champ an eighth-place finish in the points.

Mopar Dodge//SRT NHRA Sportsman Spotlight

Steve Wann from Modesto, California, drove his 1962 SS/DA Plymouth Sport Fury to the event win in Super Stock at the NHRA Finals at Auto Club Raceway in Pomona, California. Wann's Sport Fury, powered by the Mopar 413 cubic-inch Max Wedge V8 engine, ran consistent nine-second ETs all weekend on his path to the winner's circle. Wann, a past recipient, also earned the Dodge Top Finisher Award in Super Stock.

Jon Irving from Boulder City, Nevada, raced his 1971 D/SA Dodge Demon 340 to a semifinals finish in Stock Eliminator, collecting the Dodge Top Finisher award in the Stock class. Powered by a high-revving Mopar small-block under the factory dual-snorkel hood, Irving's Demon 340 was consistent throughout the race weekend running in the 10-second range.

The Dodge Top Finisher program completed its second year, awarding \$500 to Stock Eliminator and Super Stock drivers who advanced the furthest behind the wheel of a Mopar-powered Dodge, Chrysler, or Plymouth race car at all

24 NHRA national events during the 2018 season. More than 30 different NHRA Sportsman claimed Dodge Top Finisher honors during the year.

Mopar Dodge//SRT NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series: Notes & Quotes

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

(No. 3 Qualifier – 3.867 ET)

Rd.1: (.089-second reaction time, 3.905 seconds at 327.59 mph) beat No. 14 Cruz Pedregon (.104/4.034/281.36)

Rd.2: (.048/3.913/324.90) beat No. 6 Courtney Force (.075/3.942/321.50)

Rd.3: (.065/3.913/325.06) beat No. 2 Jack Beckman (.086/3.919/322.42)

Rd.4: (.055/3.889/327.51) lost to No. 4 J.R. Todd (.049/3.872/329.10)

“It was a great weekend, we just came up a little bit short. I’m proud of my guys; we have such a strong race car. To come out here and finish the season on a competitive note, finish third in points, it’s hard to be ashamed of finishing third so, I’m extremely happy. You always want a better year, unless you’re No. 1, but all in all, not a bad year. I thank Dodge and Mopar for putting the Hellcat on the line for the highest finishing driver. That certainly was in the back of our mind and we’ll put it to good use this year.”

Tony Schumacher, U.S. Army Top Fuel Dragster

(No. 8 Qualifier – 3.722 ET)

Rd.1: (.059-second reaction time, 3.694 seconds at 332.34 mph) beat No. 9 Scott Palmer (.066/3.736/327.27)

Rd.2: (.086/4.667/156.10) beat No. 16 Bill Litton (NO TIME)

Rd.3: (.065/3.705/332.26) beat No. 5 Blake Alexander (.080/3.764/322.88)

Rd.4: (.053/3.700/331.61) lost to No. 2 Steve Torrence (.029/3.702/330.07)

“It was a fantastic race. Honestly, a .053 (of a second) light, a 70 (3.70-second) run wins holeshot races. For someone who had a .029, he either rolled it in or took a solid guess. He did a great job. Just such a big round for both of us, it was miraculous. We both ran 330 (mph). The winner of that round was the fans. It was a close, just outstanding. I was on both sides of those many, many times, and I plan on being on both sides of them many, many more. Obviously, we won the first race the Army was ever here with us. We won 80 along the way. We wanted to win this one today for them. We gave it everything we had and came up a few inches short. We’ve done a great job for each other. We did everything we set out to do together 19 years ago. It’s been a privilege and an honor to represent the greatest men and women in the world.”

Ron Capps, NAPA Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car

(No. 1 Qualifier – 3.848 ET)

Rd.1: (.100-second reaction time, 3.904 seconds at 325.61 mph) beat No. 16 Ray Martin (NO TIME)

Rd.2: (.061/3.921/323.04) beat No. 9 Shawn Langdon (.053/3.967/322.81)

Rd.3: (.060/3.932/316.97) lost to No. 4 J.R. Todd (.053/3.889/328.14)

“We really wanted to put our Funny Car into second place since we didn’t have a chance at the championship this year. That was (crew chief Rahn) Tobler and our whole team’s goal, but we’ll be back strong next season. We’re going to switch to the Hellcat Funny Car body next year, and it was nice to give this old Charger its last win at Charlotte and make that great qualifying run in Pomona and end the season on a good note.”

Jack Beckman, Infinite Hero Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car

(No. 2 Qualifier – 3.867 ET)

Rd.1: (.069-second reaction time, 4.912 seconds at 255.00 mph) beat No. 15 Jeff Arend (.072/8.366/61.13)

Rd.2: (.089/3.936/318.99) beat No. 10 John Force (.029/4.023/321.81)

Rd.3: (.086/3.919/322.42) lost to No. 3 Tommy Johnson Jr. (.065/3.913/325.06)

"It's like I said at the DSR meet-and-greet today, this isn't where we wanted to be this morning coming back to Pomona, sitting in eighth place and not in contention for the championship. We've had a good car, we've had our ups and downs, but so has everybody. But, we've changed lives. We've raised over \$400,000 in the coin program, we've raised more through the auctions, and we get to see the veterans' lives that we've changed. We're doing great things for a lot of people. I think the momentum is starting to shift back to DSR and you know this is going to give us the fuel in the off-season to work that much harder. We're going to get back to where we need next year."

Leah Pritchett, Mopar Dodge Top Fuel Dragster

(No. 1 Qualifier – 3.631 ET)

Rd.1: (.081-second reaction time, NO TIME) lost to No. 16 Bill Litton (.142/3.979/309.56)

"Our 2018 was something to be very proud of. We learned more this year than we did the previous year. Ultimately, we finished better than we did the previous year. We feel really good about the offseason even though we didn't go rounds here this weekend. We know why and it wasn't a tune-up failure or driver failure – it was a mechanical failure. That's not going to stop the momentum for 2019 and that's not just the words behind it. What we've proven to ourselves and the world in the last two-and-a-half races shows that the last four-and-a-half months are coming together. It took that long to get our last two races to be in the ZIP code that we want, which happens to be in a different ZIP code than everybody else when it comes to power. I think we've been able to return to what this team has stood for for a long time with big power and big numbers. Finally we have that back and we're just missing one small variable that we'll pick up during the offseason.

"When we take a step back after what happened today, yeah, we had a phenomenal season with nothing to hang our heads about at all. And what's exciting about it is what happens next. The attitude among everyone on this team is so positive and uplifting and progressive, you can't help but think we had a great season and we're going to have an even more incredible one next season because of that attitude."

Matt Hagan, Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car

(No. 8 Qualifier – 3.946 ET)

Rd.1: (.058-second reaction time, 4.115 seconds at 255.19 mph) lost to No. 9 Shawn Langdon (.064/3.918/326.71)

"Not the ending to the season that we wanted. We came into the Countdown in second. We made some changes and it didn't go our way. We kind of got stuck in a rut and it spun away from us, but at the end of the day, I'm really proud of my guys. They put together a great race car for me every lap. They've worked hard and did a phenomenal job of keeping me safe and keeping me moving forward. We've got a good group. It's one of those things where we have some work to do in the off-season, but I'm excited for what 2019 will hold. We'll continue to work hard and do a good job for our sponsors."

Up Next: NHRA Winternationals at Auto Club Raceway at Pomona

The 2019 NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series blasts off in a little under three months at Auto Club Raceway in Pomona, California, for the NHRA Winternationals, scheduled for February 7-10. Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat driver Matt Hagan is the defending event champion in Funny Car at the season-opening race.

2018 NHRA Championship — FINAL Point Standings After Round 24 of 24

(Season Wins in Parentheses)

NHRA Funny Car

1. J.R. Todd — 2726
2. Robert Hight — 2532
3. **Tommy Johnson Jr., Dodge Charger R/T — 2519**
4. **Ron Capps, Dodge Charger R/T (3) — 2510**
5. Tim Wilkerson — 2418
6. Courtney Force — 2409
7. **Jack Beckman, Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat (2) — 2405**

8. Matt Hagan, Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat (3) — 2371

9. John Force — 2356
10. Shawn Langdon — 2285

NHRA Top Fuel

1. Steve Torrence — 2900
- 2. Tony Schumacher, Mopar Dodge HEMI (1) — 2596**
3. Clay Millican — 2573
- 4. Leah Pritchett, Mopar Dodge HEMI (2) — 2461**
5. Brittany Force — 2417
6. Antron Brown — 2378
- 7t. Mike Salinas — 2308
- 7t. Doug Kalitta — 2308
9. Terry McMillen — 2301
10. Scott Palmer — 2231

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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 MOfor 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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