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Hagan and His Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car Conquer the Mountain at the Dodge//SRT Mile-High NHRA Nationals Presented by Pennzoil

- No. 1 qualifier Matt Hagan powered his Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat to a coveted win at the Dodge//SRT Mile-High NHRA Nationals Presented by Pennzoil at Bandimere Speedway near Denver
- Hagan earned his first victory at the picturesque mountainside dragstrip, his first win of the 2021 National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) season and the 37th of his Funny Car career
- Funny Car semifinal match-up featured a Dodge versus Dodge showdown between DSR teammates Hagan and Ron Capps
- Leah Pruett drove her 2021 Dodge Challenger Mopar Drag Pak from the No. 4 qualifying position to her first runner-up finish of the season in Constant Aviation Factory Stock Showdown (FSS) competition

July 18, 2021, Morrison, Colorado - After more than a decade of attempts to conquer the mountain, Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) Funny Car pilot Matt Hagan finally hoisted the Wally trophy at his primary sponsor's longtime title event, the Dodge//SRT Mile-High NHRA Nationals Presented by Pennzoil, at Bandimere Speedway near Denver. The No. 1 qualifier powered his Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Redeye through eliminations to break through for his first coveted victory at the picturesque dragstrip nestled in the Rocky Mountains. The win was his first of the 2021 National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Camping World Drag Racing Series season and the 37th of his career.

"Congratulations to Matt Hagan for his first event title win at the Dodge//SRT Mile High Nationals presented by Pennzoil," said Tim Kuniskis, Dodge Brand Chief Executive Officer - Stellantis. "We're proud of the defending Funny Car world champion and his Don Schumacher Racing team for bringing home the Wally trophy at an event that has meant so much to us for more than three decades."

Hagan felt the importance and exhilaration of winning for Dodge//SRT and Mopar brands at the Bandimere Speedway event at which they have held title rights for more than 32 years, the longest consecutive and active sponsorship in all of motorsports.

"Man, I tell you, this mountain has chewed me up and spit me out several years in a row and I'm just so glad to pull that win down for Dodge and SRT, and to do it behind the wheel of the Dodge//SRT Hellcat Funny Car in front of so many passionate Dodge and Mopar fans is just something you definitely put extra pressure on yourself to do so when it happens it's just that much more satisfying," said Hagan, whose last win also came at another of his sponsor's title events, the 2020 Dodge NHRA Finals Presented by Pennzoil at The Strip at Las Vegas Motor Speedway, where he secured his third Funny Car NHRA world championship.

Hagan's triumph at "thunder mountain" was earned with an opening round win over Chris King, a second round Bye run and an exciting side-by-side semifinal battle won against his fellow DSR HEMI®-powered teammate Ron Capps to face No.2 qualifier Alexis DeJoria in the final showdown. Hagan's quick 0.046-second reaction time gave him the starting line advantage and he never looked back on his 4.105 sec./ 305.70 mph ride to victory.

"We finally got it done and I finally get to put this trophy up on the shelf," added Hagan. "I've got to call out my guys and give them so much love. To watch them up here in the altitude wrenching and sweating. Those guys love doing what they do and they bust their ass for me. My heart was beating out of my chest up there during the finals and it felt like I was running for a championship. I had to remind myself to calm down, take a deep breath and just do what I do. It's so cool when you do a burnout and see all of these fans in the stands; it genuinely gives me chill bumps. It feels amazing being back in the winner's circle like we're used to."

With this win, Hagan will have his first career opportunity to attempt to sweep the “western swing” and now focuses his efforts to turning win lights on at the next two events in consecutive weeks at Sonoma and Pomona dragstrips in California.

"I'm not even thinking about 'sweeping the Swing' at this point," said Hagan. "I just want to take it one race at a time, qualify well and take it round by round. Fuel Funny Cars are so unpredictable and that's why this sport is so humbling. Every win light and every race win, you're grateful for and we're just going to keep moving forward."

No. 4 qualifier Capps, who has personified consistency by qualifying his Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat in the top-five at every national event so far this season, began his day against Terry Haddock for a third consecutive event. Capps defeated Haddock in the opening round for a second time in as many races to advance to a quarterfinals meeting with No. 5 seed John Force. In that match-up, Capps turned on the win lights with a 4.039-second run at 312.42 mph over his opponent, who lost traction early.

That set up the mountainside showdown between the two DSR HEMI-powered teammates who had a stellar side-by-side run with the slight advantage going to Hagan, who had an early lead that he maintained to the finish to narrowly beat Capps' straight-down-the-groove pass.

The Cruz Pedregon Racing team came into the weekend with high hopes of following up their Norwalk win with a strong performance at the uniquely challenging mile-high venue. Cruz Pedregon's No. 9 qualifying position saw the Snap-on Tools Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car line up against No. 6 seed Paul Lee and his HEMI-powered machine. While Pedregon was quicker off the start, he felt an issue begin to hamper his run and opted to click it off early to save efforts and equipment for the next two back-to-back events.

In Top Fuel action at the mile-high dragstrip, Leah Pruett qualified her DSR Dodge//SRT Redeye dragster 11th quickest to face off in the opening round against No. 4 seed Doug Kalitta. Pruett took advantage of Kalitta's difficulties gaining traction off the start and, after wrangling her dragster slightly mid-track, crossed the finish with a 3.824-second pass at 316.45 mph to advance. As Pruett and her team prepared for their second round match up against No. 10 seed Joey Haas, a trail of oil following her burnout ended their hopes of going any further in Top Fuel eliminations. She did, however, have another opportunity to battle for a win as she pulled double duty by also getting behind the wheel of her 2021 Dodge Challenger Drag Pak this weekend.

The Constant Aviation Factory Stock Showdown (FSS) series raced for the first time at the high altitude Denver dragstrip with both Pruett and teammate Mark Pawuk qualifying in the top half of the field with their Mopar Drag Paks.

From her No. 4 starting position, Pruett made two clean passes to defeat Waldemar Rodriguez and John Cerbone and advance to the semifinals. She then faced off against and defeated reigning FSS champ and current point leader Aaron Stanfield with an 8.259-second elapsed time run to take her 2021 Dodge Challenger Mopar Drag Pak to the final round for the first time this season. In that final matchup, Pruett and Stephen Bell were even on the start and continued racing deadlocked to the stripe, with Bell claiming victory with a narrow eight-thousandth of a second margin of victory.

Pawuk and his 2015 Empaco Equipment Dodge Challenger Drag Pak started the day from the No. 8 spot against No. 9 seed Joseph Welch, also in a 2015 Drag Pak. Pawuk took his Mopar machine for an 8.345-second run to beat his opponent's 8.348-second pass. The quarterfinals found Pawuk lining up next to reigning series champion Stanfield. "The Cowboy" gave it a ride, keeping pace with his competitor until just ahead of the finish line when Stanfield pulled ahead for the narrow victory.

The NHRA's three-race western swing continues next weekend at Sonoma Raceway in Sonoma, California, on July 23-25 before capping off the consecutive weeks of racing with a return to the Pomona Fairplex in Pomona, California, on July 20-Aug 1.

ADDITIONAL NOTES and QUOTES

FUNNY CAR:

Matt Hagan, DSR Pennzoil Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Redeye

(No. 1 Qualifier – 3.966 seconds at 319.22 mph)

Round 1: (0.087-second reaction time, 4.045 seconds at 317.49 mph) defeats No. 14 Chris King (0.103 /6.222/100.34)

Round 2: (0.083/4.019/314.09) wins on a BYE run

Round 3: (0.071/4.022/314.53) defeats No. 4 Ron Capps (0.076/4.051/313.58)

Round 4: (0.046/4.105/305.70) defeats No. 2 Alexis DeJoria (0.089/4.227/297.68)

“Man, I tell you, this mountain has chewed me up and spit me out several years in a row, and I’m just so glad to pull that win down for Dodge SRT, and to do it behind the wheel of the Dodge//SRT Hellcat Funny Car in front of so many passionate Dodge and Mopar fans is just something you definitely put extra pressure on yourself to do, so when it happens it’s just that much more satisfying. We finally got it done, and I finally get to put this trophy up on the shelf.

“I’ve got to call out my guys, and give them so much love. To watch them up here in the altitude wrenching and sweating. Those guys love doing what they do, and they bust their ass for me. My heart was beating out of my chest up there during the finals and it felt like I was running for a championship. I had to remind myself to calm down, take a deep breath, and just do what I do. It’s so cool when you do a burnout and see all of these fans in the stands; it genuinely gives me chill bumps. It feels amazing being back in the winner’s circle like we’re used to.”

“Dickie Venables is the man. I’ve won so many races and two championships with him, and I just can’t say enough about him. He’s a good racer, and I’m so lucky to have him in my corner. We’re back, baby, definitely going to be doing more of this! The mountain is tough, you only get one shot a year in these types of conditions. We drag all of these different parts and pieces up here specifically for this race. Dickie works so hard, and he’s so good at his craft.”

Ron Capps, DSR NAPA Auto Parts Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat

(No. 4 Qualifier – 3.986 seconds at 318.09 mph)

Round 1: (0.076-second reaction time, 4.083 seconds at 317.12 mph) defeats No. 11 Terry Haddock (0.121/4.413/214.52)

Round 2: (0.060/4.039/312.42) defeats No. 5 John Force (0.053/4.376/226.47)

Round 3: (0.076/4.051/313.58) loss to No. 1 Matt Hagan (0.071/4.022/314.53)

“Just a great job by Guido (Dean Antonelli), (John) Medlen, and this whole NAPA AutoCare team. We always get pumped to run the blue chrome Pennzoil car. When you run these special schemes you surely want to do well and try to give your partners a Wally, and we came close today. Another fantastic qualifying job by this NAPA team; top five. That’s a heck of a streak to qualify in the top five at each race so far this year. This is a very grueling race track that will test and strain all of the parts, components, and lubricants through the most extreme conditions we will see all season. For us, it’s always fun to leave here with everything in one piece and running great. We have great oil from Pennzoil, and fantastic parts from NAPA and DSM, and I can’t say enough about the DSR shop guys who build this car. To come out with a new car and qualify well, and make it to the semis and nearly a final round is a good start to ‘the Swing.’ We’re headed to my two home tracks in the next two weeks at Sonoma and Pomona, and that excites me. I’m pumped to have the family come out and hang out with this new NAPA team I have.”

Cruz Pedregon, Pedregon Racing Snap-on® Tools Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat

(No. 9 Qualifier – 4.074 seconds at 313.29 mph)

Round 1: (0.080-second reaction time, 4.843 seconds at 170.82 mph) loss to No. 6 Paul Lee (0.086/4.058/319.52)

“Obviously a little bit of a letdown. I felt like we had a really good shot at winning that first round but I got off the throttle because I felt the motor lean out and I didn’t want to do any more damage with two more back-to-back events. I’m just going to chalk this up as one of those Denver things. This place can be good to you or it can be really difficult. I feel proud of the work these guys have done and the positive progression we have made. I felt good all weekend. (Crew Chief) John Collins made some good calls but unfortunately, we just didn’t have enough runs.”

TOP FUEL:

Leah Pruett, DSR Pennzoil Mopar Dodge//SRT Dragster

(No. 11 Qualifier – 4.056 seconds at 249.49 mph)

Round 1: (0.121-second reaction time, 3.824 seconds at 316.45 mph) defeats No. 4 Doug Kalitta (0.064/7.384/108.12)

Round 2: (Did not start) loss to No. 10 Joey Haas (0.666/14.877/78.09)

“What a complex day of emotions, to say the least. Usually I like to reflect on my day thinking of Top Fuel and Factory Stock separately, but this weekend, it all runs together. I was going back-and-forth between the pits all weekend, up the stairs, down the stairs, warming up, just shifting gears all weekend long.

Winning first round of Top Fuel was great, and what this team needed. We put down a really solid .82 run and we would've even had top speed if we had made it all the way down to the finish line. Our Dodge//SRT Top Fuel dragster was exactly on the path that we wanted. Unfortunately, second round, we had a valve cover leak and it spilled some of that good Pennzoil on the track during the burnout. Just very unfortunate, and not how we wanted to show out at our sponsor's event. We could easily be discouraged, but we've done our due diligence and we'll keep our heads up, and keep dotting our I's and crossing our T's. We are resilient and we will get out of this hole, and that starts in Sonoma.”

FACTORY STOCK SHOOTOUT:

Leah Pruett, 2021 Dodge Challenger Mopar Drag Pak

(No. 4 Qualifier – 8.261 seconds at 167.24 mph)

Round 1: (0.070-second reaction time, 8.344 seconds at 166.25 mph) defeats No. 13 Waldemar Rodriguez (0.116/8.502/162.61)

Round 2: (0.29/8.290/166.05) defeats No. 5 John Cerbone (-0.006/8.385/160.88)

Round 3: (0.036/8.259/166.54) defeats No. 1 Aaron Stanfield (0.048/13.604/63.74)

Round 4: (0.053/8.265/166.48) loss to No. 3 Stephen Bell (0.051/8.259/164.79)

“Man, what a triumphant feeling to make it to the finals in Factory Stock. It's been a small while since we visited the final round, and being competitive with the other manufacturers in our class, and the consistency that we had in eliminations today was so impressive. Testing last week was very important. We'll continue to pick away at our sea-level tune-up, but to me, the most impressive thing is getting this new Drag Pak dialed-in and working very well. The car is responding, and it's consistent. I haven't been this excited about our program since we were so dominant in 2018. I had a ton of fun driving this Drag Pak this weekend. To go from such a disappointing second round exit in Top Fuel, to finding that inner strength, to wanting to chop the tree down, and the only thing I wanted to do was put on a win light, and I was able to do that with Factory Stock. I'm very blessed to be able to run in both categories and compete with two different teams. The power is in the numbers so, we're going to keep putting in the hours and chasing those win lights, and they will come.”

Mark Pawuk, Empaco Equipment Mopar Drag Pak

(No. 8 Qualifier – 8.330 seconds at 164.73 mph)

Round 1: (0.058-second reaction time, 8.345 seconds at 164.81 mph) defeats No. 9 Joseph Welch (0.038/8.384/162.55)

Round 2: (0.058/8.286/165.50) loss to No. Aaron Stanfield (0.042/8.284/164.37)

“Definitely a better weekend for our Empaco Equipment/Ohio CAT/Ohio Peterbilt/Mr. Heater Dodge Drag Pak. We qualified eighth and made it to the second round. It was a great race, and we were close on the reaction times. We lost on the E.T. by only two-thousandths of a second. We feel that we made huge progress this weekend and we're very excited about the new members on our team. We're looking forward to getting back down to sea level and continuing to make progress, and moving the program forward in Topeka. I want to congratulate my teammate Leah Pruett for going to the final. What a great race, and great weekend for Dodge and Don Schumacher Racing.”

NHRA Championship Points Standings:

Following the Dodge//SRT Mile-High Nationals at Bandimere Speedway

FUNNY CAR (season wins in parentheses)

1. Bob Tasca III – 643 (2)

2. John Force – 593 (2)
- 3. Matt Hagan (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 558 (1)**
4. J.R. Todd – 532 (1)
- 5. Ron Capps (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 529**
6. Robert Hight – 517 (1)
7. Alexis DeJoria – 498
8. Tim Wilkerson– 477
- 9. Cruz Pedregon (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat) – 450 (1)**
10. Terry Haddock – 264

TOP FUEL (season wins in parentheses)

1. Steve Torrance – 858 (5)
2. Antron Brown – 551(1)
3. Brittany Force – 505
4. Billy Torrence – 448 (1)
5. Shawn Langdon – 408
6. Mike Salinas – 395
7. Doug Kalitta – 367
- 8. Leah Pruett (Mopar Dodge//SRT) – 362**
9. Justin Ashley – 337
10. Clay Millican – 328

DodgeGarage: Digital Hub for Drag Racing News

Fans can follow all the NHRA action this season at DodgeGarage, the one-stop portal for Dodge//SRT and Mopar drag-racing news. The site includes daily updates and access to an online racing HQ, news, events, galleries, available downloads and merchandise. For more information, visit www.dodgegarage.com.

@DodgeMoparMotorsports on Instagram

The @DodgeMoparMotorsports Instagram channel continues to share content capturing Dodge//SRT Mopar drivers on the track. Fans can see action from the NHRA Camping World Drag Racing Series and NHRA Sportsman grassroots racers, competing in classes such as Factory Stock Showdown, Stock and Super Stock, as well as additional motorsports series.

Mopar

Mopar (a simple contraction of the words MOtor and PARts) offers exceptional service, parts and customer care. Born in 1937 as the name of a line of antifreeze products, the Mopar brand has evolved over more than 80 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, the brand expanded to include technical service and customer support. Today, Mopar integrates service, parts and customer-care operations in order to enhance customer and dealer support worldwide.

Mopar is part of the portfolio of brands offered by leading global automaker and mobility provider Stellantis. For more information regarding Stellantis (NYSE: STLA), please visit www.stellantis.com.

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Dodge//SRT

For more than 100 years, the Dodge brand has carried on the spirit of brothers John and Horace Dodge. Their influence continues today as Dodge shifts into high gear with muscle cars and SUVs that deliver unrivaled performance in each of the segments where they compete.

2021 marks the year that Dodge is distilled into a pure performance brand, offering Hellcat-powered, 700-plus-horsepower SRT versions of every model across the lineup. For the 2021 model year, Dodge delivers the drag-strip dominating 807-horsepower Dodge Challenger SRT Super Stock, the new 797-horsepower Dodge Charger SRT Redeye, the most powerful and fastest mass-produced sedan in the world, and the new 710-horsepower Dodge Durango SRT Hellcat, the most powerful SUV ever. Combined, these three muscle cars make Dodge the industry's most powerful brand, offering more horsepower than any other American brand across its entire lineup.

In 2020, Dodge was named the "[#1 Brand in Initial Quality](#)," making it the first domestic brand ever to rank No. 1 in the J.D. Power Initial Quality Study (IQS). The Dodge brand also [ranked No. 1](#) in the J.D. Power APEAL Study (mass market). These results are historic because it marks the first time a domestic brand has earned top spots in both J.D. Power studies in the same year.

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