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Hagan Drives Dodge Power Brokers Funny Car Into Three-Way Battle for Championship at NHRA Finals

- Tony Stewart Racing driver Matt Hagan qualified his Dodge Power Brokers Funny Car No. 3 on the eliminations ladder at the 57th annual Auto Club National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Finals and remains in the hunt for the championship for a fourth straight year heading into the last race day of the season
- While Hagan has a 62-point deficit to Funny Car championship leader Robert Hight and is five behind No. 1 Qualifier Ron Capps, both of his opponents are on the opposite side of the eliminations ladder to the Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat which sets up the possibility of TSR earning their first NHRA world title by advancing to the final or winning the Wally trophy
- No. 2 seed Cruz Pedregon had the best qualifying performance of his Funny Car career aboard the Snap-on Tools Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat with four of the quickest passes he has ever run, all of which were in the 3.84-second range
- TSR Top Fuel pilot Leah Pruett took her Dodge Power Brokers dragster for their best elapsed-time run of the season to earn the No. 4 position for eliminations at NHRA Finals

November 12, 2022, Pomona, California - Race day at the 57th annual Auto Club National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Finals may offer up a very exciting end to Tony Stewart Racing's (TSR) first season in drag racing competition as Matt Hagan qualified his Dodge Power Brokers Funny Car No. 3 for eliminations and, with three win lights and a little luck, could end up battling for a Wally trophy and the 2022 NHRA World Championship in the final round of the season.

There are certainly plenty of scenarios that could play out on race day for the points-and-a-half finale at the legendary Auto Club Raceway at Pomona but should current class leader Robert Hight falter in the first two rounds while the Dodge Power Brokers Funny Car drives to a final elimination appearance, the world championship title for Hagan and TSR remains a possibility.

The three-time Funny Car World Champion's best run of the weekend came in Friday's second session with a 3.844-second elapsed time run at 323.58 mph to put him third on the elimination ladder and earn four of his five total qualifying bonus points. While he wasn't able to amass enough extra points to put him within two rounds (or less than 60 points) of Hight as No. 1 Qualifier Capps (57 points behind) had done, the good news is that both of Hagan's opponents are on the opposite side of the eliminations ladder, giving the Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat driver a chance to contend for the crown by advancing to the final round.

This is the fourth consecutive year that Hagan heads into the last race of the season as a title contender. He'll begin his drive against No. 14 seed Steven Densham.

Two-time Funny Car world champion Cruz Pedregon earned the No. 2 Qualifier position for the last race of the 2022 season aboard his Snap-on Tools Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat after putting together the best qualifying performance of his career with four of the quickest passes he has ever run, all of which were in the 3.84-second range. Pedregon ran a career-best 3.840-second run at 322.58 mph with his first lap of the weekend to put himself in the provisional No. 1 Qualifier position on Friday, and had three more great consistent runs that put him first or second in each of the remaining sessions to collect a total of 14 bonus points.

Unfortunately, Pedregon was dislodged from to the top spot by Capps in their final qualifying run. Pedregon will have No. 15 seed Jason Rupert as his opening round opponent.

TSR Top Fuel pilot Leah Pruett will go into the last race day of the year as No. 4 qualifier after wheeling her Dodge Power Brokers dragster to their best elapsed time run of the season with a 3.669 second/329.67 mph effort in Friday's second session. That run put her provisionally third heading into Saturday qualifying where she added two more solid passes but was unable to improve her starting position in a tight Top Fuel field. Pruett will line up next to No. 12 seed Alex Laughlin in the opening round as she works towards earning her second Wally trophy of the year.

The NHRA Finals, the last of six NHRA "Countdown to the Championship" playoff events, will air on FS1 with a recap of qualifying on Sunday, Nov. 13, at 2 p.m. ET and race coverage beginning at 4 p.m. ET to conclude with the crowning of 2022 NHRA World Champions.

ADDITIONAL NOTES and QUOTES:

Leah Pruett, Tony Stewart Racing Dodge Power Brokers Top Fuel Dragster
(No. 4 Qualifier – 3.669 seconds at 329.67 mph)
Qualifying 1: 9.948 seconds at 69.35 mph
Qualifying 2: 3.669 sec./329.67 mph (2 bonus points for 3rd quickest of session)
Qualifying 3: 3.739 sec./323.12 mph
Qualifying 4: 3.692 sec./324.59 mph

"Friday was a phenomenal day. Even though we smoked the tires on the first run, it really wasn't due to tune-up. It was just an internal error that we identified immediately just like we had in Denver at the Dodge Power Brokers Mile-HIgh Nationals where we rebounded and put down a killer time and went on to win the race. It felt so good to go fast and it's a complete tribute to the dedication that this team has had through our last couple races. We haven't had the results that we wanted, but the team kept digging and applied all of those performance enhancing ideologies into this. Our goal is to finish out stronger than we've raced all year. We're very happy with our Dodge Power Brokers dragster and we're excited because we are going in the direction that we've been trying for so long. The car is reacting and it's exciting to be able to continue pushing and not trying to fix problems.

"To be able to execute like we did in qualifying was awesome. Qualifying fourth in what I would consider to be the toughest and tightest Top Fuel competition season that I've ever been a part of feels good. We're just really focused on making sure that we keep this momentum and that fierce fighting attitude to make sure that we have a very long Sunday drive."

Matt Hagan, Tony Stewart Racing Dodge Power Brokers Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car
(No. 3 Qualifier – 3.844 seconds at 323.58 mph)
Qualifying 1: 4.199 seconds at 220.66 mph
Qualifying 2: 3.844 sec./ 323.58 mph (4 points for quickest run of session)
Qualifying 3: 3.867 sec./326.56 mph (1 point for 4th quickest run of session)
Qualifying 4: 4.057 sec./245.32 mph

"It kind of comes down to if (Bob) Tasca can take Hight out in the second round, we still have a real shot at it. Then it could be a battle between me and (Ron) Capps to see who goes the farthest there at the end of the day. We've still got a shot at it. It's always great to be in the hunt and I've got nothing but confidence in my team and Dickie Venables, Mike Knutson and Alex Conway. Those guys always put an amazing race car underneath me and I'm just excited to get to go tomorrow.
"Obviously there's always pressure at every race but this is just amplified a little bit more because it's an opportunity for a championship. It always seems to come down to the last race and the last run and the semi-finals or finals so there's nothing new there. It's just knowing that we have to go every round and make every round count. Dickie's a great racer on Sunday. He races the racetrack. He's good with making the calls up there and the gut decisions that he has to make up there to make the car go down the racetrack. I think that we just gotta go race the track tomorrow, race our race and let the cards fall where they fall."

Cruz Pedregon, Cruz Pedregon Racing Snap-on® Tools Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat
(No. 2 Qualifier – 3.840 seconds at 322.58 mph)
Qualifying 1: 3.840 seconds at 322.58 mph (4 points for quickest run of session)
Qualifying 2: 3.849 sec./327.03 mph (3 points for second quickest run of session)

Qualifying 3: 3.847 sec./323.43 mph (4 points for quickest run of session)
Qualifying 4: 3.841 sec./ 330.31 (3 points for second quickest run of session)

"To say I'm happy and excited and relieved all in one would be an understatement. I've been surprised before at the finish line. but not like that. [The first pass] was such a great run and honestly, the car had a cylinder out about three-quarter track on that first (run) so had we been able to put the back half of this second run with the first one I would have been a little bit better."

“To have four great consistent runs like that makes us very excited about our next season because we now know we have a car that can win races. We're still trying to get faster speeds, That's something that we know we need to work on but hats off to the team. They did the job and it's exciting. That's what you want and that's what we work for. Tomorrow we're just gonna go out there and do all we can to outlast everybody.”

NHRA CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS STANDINGS:
Following qualifying at the NHRA Finals at Auto Club Raceway at Pomona

FUNNY CAR (season wins in parentheses)
1. Robert Hight 2649 (8)
2. Ron Capps: 2592 (5)
3. ***Matt Hagan (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat): 2587(4)***
4. John Force: 2460 (1)
5. Bob Tasca III: 2444 (3)
6. J.R. Todd: 2344
7. Tim Wilkerson: 2313
8. Alexis DeJoria: 2312 (1)
9. ***Cruz Pedregon (Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat): 2290***
10. Blake Alexander: 2199
11. Jim Campbell: 2198

TOP FUEL (season wins in parentheses)
1. Brittany Force: 2536 (5)
2. Justin Ashley: 2510 (3)
3. Mike Salinas: 2461 (4)
4. Antron Brown 2444 (3)
5. Steve Torrence: 2443 (2)
6. Austin Prock: 2394 (1)
7. Josh Hart: 2359 (1)
8. Shawn Langdon: 2339
9. Doug Kalitta: 2335
10. Clay Millican: 2318
11. Tony Schumacher: 2277(1)
12. ***Leah Pruett (Dodge Power Brokers): 2265 (1)***

@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.

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 a lineup that delivers unrivaled performance in each of the segments in which the brand competes while moving forward to a future that includes electrified muscle in the form of the next-generation, all-new Dodge Charger.

The next-generation Dodge Charger electrifies a legend, with the Charger retaining its title as the world’s quickest and most powerful muscle car led by the all-new, all-electric 2024 Dodge Charger Daytona Scat Pack. The all-new

Dodge Charger will also offer performance choices via multi-energy powertrain options, including the 550-horsepower Dodge Charger SIXPACK H.O., powered by the 3.0L Twin Turbo Hurricane High Output engine.

Dodge also keeps its foot on the gas as a pure performance brand with the 710-horsepower Dodge Durango SRT Hellcat, the most powerful SUV ever, and best-in-class standard performance in the compact utility vehicle segment with the Dodge Hornet.

In 2022, the Dodge brand ranked No. 1 in the J.D. Power APEAL Study (mass market), making it the only domestic brand ever to do so three years in a row. 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).

Fans can follow all the NHRA action this season at DodgeGarage,the one-stop portal for Dodge//SRT and Mopar drag-racing news, including daily updates and access to an online racing HQ, news, events, galleries, available downloads and merchandise. Dodge is part of the portfolio of brands offered by leading global automaker and mobility provider Stellantis (NYSE: STLA).

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

A simple combination of the words MOtor 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 newly redesigned Mopar blog at www.blog.mopar.com.

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