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## **Pruett Takes Direct Connection Top Fueler to Semi Finals at Phoenix, Now Moves to Home Track in Pomona**

- Leah Pruett records a second consecutive semi-final finish of the season in the Dodge SRT Mopar Direct Connection Top Fuel dragster Sunday in the NHRA Arizona Nationals
- In front of a sellout crowd at Wild Horse Pass Motorsports Park south of Phoenix, Pruett and her Tony Stewart Racing (TSR) crew fight tough track conditions to clock consistent 3.72-second runs in qualifying and eliminations before losing to Shawn Langdon
- Matt Hagan, the recent NHRA Gatornationals Funny Car champion, pilots his TSR Direct Connection Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car to a quarter-final finish Sunday after qualifying fourth in the 15-car field
- Hagan, the three-time NHRA Camping World Champion, fought traction troubles in the second round against Chad Green after a first-round win over Cruz Pedregon
- TSR Direct Connection drag-racing team now travels to Pomona, California, for next week's Lucas Oil NHRA Winternationals at the In-N-Out Burger Pomona Dragstrip
- Pomona track is the home dragstrip for Pruett, who grew up in nearby Redlands, California

March 27, 2023, Auburn Hills, Mich. - Coming off an outstanding performance at the season-opening [NHRA Gatornationals](#) two weeks ago, Tony Stewart Racing (TSR) Direct Connection drivers Leah Pruett and Matt Hagan battled a tricky track this weekend in the Arizona Nationals at Wild Horse Pass Motorsports Park.

The Arizona Nationals welcomed a sellout crowd and sunny skies in the final NHRA national event at the popular racing facility.

On track, Pruett, who won her first NHRA Top Fuel national event back in 2016 at the Arizona dragstrip, recorded her second consecutive semi-final finish Sunday after impressive 3.72-second runs in defeating Buddy Hull (round one) and reigning Top Fuel World Champion Brittany Force (round two) in the TSR Direct Connection Top Fuel dragster. Leah lost to former World Champion Shawn Langdon in the semi-finals with a 3.761 to Langdon's 3.719.

The back-to-back semi-final finishes for Pruett moved her into the top three in the current NHRA Camping World Top Fuel point standings, heading to the third event this weekend at Pomona, California, in the Lucas Oil NHRA Winternationals.

"When you look at the results sheet from the weekend, we did not come home with the Wally win, but there are many wins that we experienced throughout the whole weekend," said Pruett. "We were the lowest qualifier in the third session of qualifying, which allowed us to gather points. It shows our momentum is continuing. It is a product of having both magnitude and direction. All last year, we were finding our direction and now we are moving that forward."

"Another semifinal finish gives us four round wins in two races. You feel like you are racing more than you are qualifying and that's what we love to do. We're testing on Monday and that circles me back to that consistency. We're happy with the weekend. It's unfortunate we couldn't get that last win at the last pass for Arizona. For right now, we are gaining a ton of ground and look forward to Pomona."

Hagan, coming off his season-opening Funny Car victory two weeks ago at the Gatornationals, qualified fourth in the TSR Direct Connection Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car and won the first round against fellow Dodge Charger racer Cruz Pedregon with a 4.178 run. However, Hagan's car lost traction in round two against Chad Green at only 4.962.

Despite the quarter-final loss, Hagan currently ranks second in the NHRA Camping World Funny Car points, only four points out of the lead, as the Dickie Venables-led TSR crew heads this week to the Lucas Oil NHRA Winternationals.

"Pretty tricky weekend out there," said Hagan. "Track conditions were throwing everybody for a loop. We really struggled to try to get our car tuned in and get down this racetrack. And get the car's power pulled back enough to do it, but it struck the tires both rounds today. So, we've got some learning to do with a hot, greasy racetrack. And that's challenging for everyone, you know. But like I said it's one of those things where we just came off a win at Gainesville, and we went a couple of rounds today. We'll keep the momentum moving forward and we'll go to Pomona next weekend and get down the racetrack."

In addition to Pruett and Hagan's results at the Arizona Nationals, Dodge SRT Funny Cars drivers Pedregon and Alex Laughlin lost in the first round of eliminations Sunday.

The Dodge//SRT Mopar Direct Connection racers will now compete this weekend (March 31-April 2) at the In-N-Out Burger Pomona Dragstrip, Pruett's home track, in the Lucas Oil NHRA Winternationals. The event will be televised on Fox Sports 1 with qualifying 1 on Saturday, April 1 at 7 p.m. EDT/4 p.m. PDT, followed by qualifying 2 on Sunday, April 2 at 12:30 p.m. EDT/9:30 a.m. PDT, and final eliminations on Sunday, April 2 at 7 p.m. EDT/4 p.m. PDT.

#### **@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 Mission 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 110 years, the Dodge brand has carried on the spirit of brothers John and Horace Dodge. Their influence continues today as Dodge, America's performance brand, 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.

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).

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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.

Complete information on Mopar is available at [www.mopar.com](http://www.mopar.com) and the newly redesigned Mopar blog at [www.blog.mopar.com](http://www.blog.mopar.com).

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