

Team Mopar® Takes Aim at Four Titles as Season Nears End

- NHRA POWERade Drag Racing
- USAC/World of Outlaws
- Drifting
- NASCAR

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Team Mopar® is looking to cap another successful season of motor sports competition by possibly popping the cork on national championships in four different racing series, following the brand's three championships in 2005. With the 2006 Formula D Drifting championship already claimed by Mopar®'s Samuel Hubinette, Team Mopar remains in the hunt for championships in the NHRA POWERade Funny Car, USAC National Sprint Car, and USAC National Midget Car series.

NHRA POWERade Drag Racing

The success of Team Mopar's NHRA POWERade Drag Racing efforts in 2006 can be traced back to 2005, when Mopar's Gary Scelzi captured the 2005 NHRA Funny Car championship, winning a tight title battle against racing legend John Force and Scelzi's Team Mopar and Don Schumacher Racing teammate, Ron Capps, who finished second in '05. Mopar's Funny Car drivers have been among the elite in the series for the last two years, with Capps still fighting to give Mopar back-to-back Funny Car titles. His championship hopes were still alive, as he trailed Funny Car points leader Force by only 46 markers on Oct. 18.

Capps, driving his Mopar HEMI®-powered Brut Revolution Dodge Charger R/T, led the points race for most of the season and has scored the most victories of any Funny Car driver this year, with five wins in eight finals appearances. The rest of the Team Mopar Funny Car stable combined for two more wins, including Gary Scelzi's July win at Mopar's showcase race, the Mopar Mile-High Nationals at Bandimere Speedway in Colorado.

The winnings ways of Mopar's Funny Car stable rubbed off on its NHRA Pro Stock contingent, as the team has grabbed three wins thus far in the 2006 season. Allen Johnson, Richie Stevens Jr., and Tom Martino have added their names to the win column with the help of Hemi power, with Stevens Jr., and Johnson also combining to take three top-qualifier honors under the Mopar banner. Johnson, along with Mopar Pro Stockers Larry Morgan and V. Gaines, held three of the top ten spots in the NHRA Pro Stock points battle.

USAC/World of Outlaws

Tony Stewart Racing Enterprises' Josh Wise is looking to notch his second championship for Mopar in 2006. Last year Wise captured his first championship with a title in the USAC National Midget Car Series; this year Wise leads the points chase in the USAC National Sprint Car Series, with Mopar teammate Levi Jones hot on his heels in second.

The duo has combined for three wins, six poles, 19 top-fives and 44 top-tens in USAC National Sprint Car competition thus far. Team Mopar drivers Jerry Coons Jr., Tracy Hines and Bryan Clauson have also scored six wins for the brand, including Clauson's victory in the Mopar All-Star Showdown at Concord (N.C.) Motorsport Park.

As in NHRA Funny Car, Mopar will look to notch back-to-back titles in USAC National Midget Car competition. Wilke-PAK Motorsports' Coons Jr., has earned three 2006 victories in his Mopar-powered No. 11 car and currently leads the championship chase. Wise, the 2005 title holder, was second in points, with an outside chance to seize the championship entering the final event in November. Wise has two wins on the year, having swept both events of the Mopar Belleville Midget Nationals in July. Drivers Kevin Swindell, Ryan Durst and Tracy Hines have also added wins,

with Hines taking the checkered flag first in the Mopar Thunder @ the USAC 4-Crown Nationals event, held at Ohio's historic Eldora Speedway in September.

In the World of Outlaws Late Model Series, Steve Francis took sixth in the final points standings, with two series wins, following a runner-up finish in the 2005 championship battle. Francis finished only 48 points behind the series champion in one of the closest title battles in World of Outlaws Late Model Series history. Francis' Mopar counterpart in the World of Outlaws Sprint Series, Kasey Kahne Racing's Joey Saldana, has driven his Mopar-powered No. 9 car to seven wins this year, the second most of any driver, and is currently third in points. On the National Sprint Tour, Paul McMahan drove his Mopar-powered No. 20 Tony Stewart Motorsports car to the sixth spot in the final title standings, posting 11 top-five and 25 top-ten finishes.

Drifting

In the sideways battles of the Formula D Drift Series, Mopar's Samuel Hubinette brought home the second championship for the brand in three years. The "Crazy Swede," the inaugural Formula D champ in 2004 and the runner-up in 2005, racked up three wins in 2006, the most on the series, and scored five podium finishes in seven events en route to reclaiming his title. He has won eight of 17 events since the series was formed in 2004.

In another high-profile event featuring Mopar and drifting, Hubinette teamed up with Dodge Motorsports' Kasey Kahne on Aug. 31, to take part in the "Mopar D1 All-Star presented by ShiftIntoGear," a drifting exhibition held to benefit the Kasey Kahne Foundation. The event featured NASCAR stars such as Kahne, Bill Elliott and Matt Kenseth competing against professional drifters in front of a jam-packed audience of NASCAR and drifting fans at California's Irwindale Speedway.

The 2006 season also saw Hubinette begin testing the Mopar Dodge Charger SRT8, which he will campaign in the 2007 Formula D series. Initial test sessions were extremely positive, as was crowd reaction when the car was displayed at Formula D events. Look for Hubinette to continue his winnings ways next year in the 392 HEMI®-powered Charger.

NASCAR

NASCAR Nextel Cup star Kasey Kahne continued his close relationship with Team Mopar in 2006, and the partnership reaped successful rewards. Kahne drove his No. 9 Mopar Dodge Dealers/UAW Dodge Charger to victory in the Nextel Cup Bank of America 500 at Lowe's Motor Speedway in Charlotte, N.C., on Oct. 14. The victory was the first NASCAR Nextel Cup win for a car carrying Mopar's colors as the primary paint scheme.

"This has been another banner year for Mopar's motor sports programs," said Kevin Miller, Senior Manager, Mopar Brand, Performance & Motorsports. "The brand has brought home numerous wins this year, and if all goes well, it will bring home a few championships. Mopar power has proved that it is a force to be reckoned with.

About DaimlerChrysler's Mopar® Brand

When Chrysler bought Dodge in 1928, the need for a dedicated parts supplier led to the formation of the Chrysler Motor Parts Division. In 1937, Mopar® (a simple contraction of the words MOrtor and PARts) was created for the business of distributing parts through a depot system and car divisional wholesalers.

Mopar made its mark in the 1960s — the muscle car era. Beginning in 1962, Mopar carried a line of "Special Parts" for super stock drag racers and developed its racing parts division, called Mopar Performance Parts, to enhance speed and handling for both road and racing use.

Today Chrysler Group's Global Service & Parts division is responsible for the manufacturing and distribution of nearly 250,000 authentic Mopar replacement parts, components and accessories for Chrysler, Jeep® and Dodge vehicles sold around the world. To assure quality, reliability and durability, all Mopar parts and accessories are designed in strict adherence to DaimlerChrysler engineering standards.

For information on Mopar, including updates on Team Mopar's championship efforts, log on to www.mopar.com or www.moparspeed.com.

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