

Don Shumacher Racing Bristol Post-Race Recap

NHRA Thunder Valley Nationals
Bristol Dragway
Bristol, Tenn. - June 14-16, 2019

ANTRON BROWN

Matco Tools Top Fuel Dragster

Qualified: No. 4 (3.768 E.T. at 325.14 MPH)

Results:

E1: 3.863 E.T. at 318.24 MPH defeated Audrey

Worm 4.082 E.T. at 279.21 MPH

E2: 6.602 E.T. at 110.14 MPH defeated by Mike

Salinas 3.908 E.T. at 316.97 MPH

Race Recap:

Aside from the recently reinstated Richmond, Va. event, the Thunder Valley Nationals is the only other race on the current NHRA schedule where Antron Brown hasn't been able to seal the deal and leave with the Wally trophy. He qualified fourth for the 19th running of the Bristol Dragway race and drew Audrey Worm in the first round. Brown had the starting line advantage and navigated his Matco Tools Toyota straight down the groove for the win. Against Mike Salinas in the second round, Brown was once again first on the tree, but his machine lost traction right at the hit of the throttle, and his opponent was able to drive to the clean round win.

LEAH PRITCHETT

MOPAR Dodge Top Fuel Dragster

Qualified: No. 2 (3.757 E.T. at 323.04 MPH)

Results:

E1: 4.972 E.T. at 162.39 MPH defeated by Lex

Joon 4.536 E.T. at 205.41 MPH

Race Recap:

Leah Pritchett entered race day in Thunder Valley seeking her first Bristol Dragway victory and first win of the year. A solid qualifying performance yielded five bonus points for the MOPAR-powered Top Fuel pilot and earned Pritchett her best starting position of the season. From the No. 2 spot, she faced Lex Joon in the opening session. Pritchett was first to stand on the throttle, but her machine went up in smoke almost immediately. She pedaled it but was unable to regain traction in a notoriously tricky right lane, and her opponent was able to claim the upset win.

JACK BECKMAN

Infinite Hero Foundation Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat

Qualified: No. 4 (3.976 E.T. at 319.90 MPH)

Results:

E1: 4.031 E.T. at 318.47 MPH defeated Tim

Wilkerson 4.063 E.T. at 310.48 MPH

E2: 4.076 E.T. at 315.64 MPH defeated J.R.

Todd 4.397 E.T. at 284.81 MPH

E3: 7.532 E.T. at 97.47 MPH defeated by John

Force 4.125 E.T. at 316.38 MPH

Race Recap:

"Fast Jack" Beckman and his Infinite Hero Foundation team followed last week's run to the final at the NHRA Heartland Nationals with another consistent weekend in Thunder Valley. Beckman piloted the MOPAR-powered Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Funny Car to the fourth

position in qualifying and envisioned capturing his first Bristol triumph following his strong run of 3.912 seconds in the opening round to defeat Tim Wilkerson.

In round two, Beckman posted another stout run, a triumphant 4.076 E.T. over reigning Funny Car champion J.R. Todd. His third consecutive semifinal appearance pitted him against John Force. Beckman's run for his first Wally of 2019 ended approximately 60 feet after his launch when he lost traction. The 2012 Funny Car world champion tried to recover, but Force was too far ahead and was able to claim the round win.

RON CAPPS

NAPA AUTO PARTS Dodge Charger SRT

Hellcat

Qualified: No. 7 (4.002 E.T. at 317.79 MPH)

Results:

E1: 4.005 E.T. at 314.53 MPH defeated Blake

Alexander 4.383 E.T. at 212.16 MPH

E2: 4.039 E.T. at 312.28 MPH defeated Shawn

Langdon 4.080 E.T. at 309.27 MPH

E3: 4.216 E.T. at 258.86 MPH defeated by Bob

Tasca III 4.048 E.T. at 317.87 MPH

Race Recap:

As the two-time defending event champion and winningest Funny Car driver in Bristol Dragway history, Ron Capps was looking to make it three-in-a-row on Father's Day in Thunder Valley. A strong performance on Saturday pitted the No. 7 qualified NAPA AUTO PARTS Funny Car team against No. 10 qualifier Blake Alexander during round one on race day. Capps powered to a clean 4.005-second pass to easily defeat Alexander's tire-smoking effort and earn lane choice against Shawn Langdon in the second round.

Against Langdon, Capps piloted the NAPA Dodge to the quickest pass of the round (4.039 seconds) to claim the win and earn a bid to the semifinals where he faced eventual race winner Bob Tasca III. In the semis, Capps was nearly even with Tasca leaving the starting line, but his car dropped a cylinder near half-track, and he was forced to give up on the run after drifting near the centerline.

MATT HAGAN

MOPAR Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat

Qualified: No. 9 (4.012 E.T. at 317.27 MPH)

Results:

E1: 4.376 E.T. at 223.50 MPH defeated by

Tommy Johnson Jr. 3.964 E.T. at 311.92 MPH

Race Recap:

Two-time world champion Matt Hagan continued his recent trend of running into fellow DSR Hellcat Funny Car racers during the early rounds of eliminations. After qualifying the MOPAR Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat ninth with his second round qualifying run of 4.012 seconds, Hagan was paired against Tommy Johnson Jr. to open eliminations. Both left the starting line with identical .080-reaction times, but Hagan dropped a cylinder early into the run and had to click it off when his machine made a hard move toward the centerline.

TOMMY JOHNSON JR.

Make-A-Wish Foundation Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat



RON CAPPS

Driver of the NAPA AUTO PARTS Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat

Qualified: No. 8 (4.003 E.T. at 318.24 MPH)

Results:

E1: 3.964 E.T. at 311.92 MPH defeated Matt

Hagan 4.376 E.T. at 223.50 MPH

E2: 8.529 E.T. at 88.42 MPH defeated by John

Force 4.044 E.T. at 318.32 MPH

Race Recap:

Tommy Johnson Jr. earned his position in the top half of Sunday's field by closing qualifying with an impressive run of 4.003 seconds to grab the eighth position. It marked the second time in the last five events where Johnson and Matt Hagan squared off in round one. Johnson was on the money in this race posting his best run of the weekend, a 3.964 E.T., to capture his third consecutive win over a slowing Hagan. The momentum from his first-round victory was short-lived as Johnson went up in smoke at the hit against John Force to end his chances of a second victory in three races.

NHRA Mello Yello Countdown to the Championship Standings:

Top Fuel

1. Steve Torrence - 1048
2. Doug Kalitta - 709
3. Mike Salinas - 691
4. Antron Brown - 676
5. Brittany Force - 663
6. Clay Millican - 611
7. Leah Pritchett - 571
8. Richie Crampton - 499
9. Austin Prock - 486
10. Terry McMillen - 470

Funny Car

1. Robert Hight - 990
2. John Force - 786
3. Tommy Johnson Jr - 783
4. Ron Capps - 741
5. Jack Beckman - 720
6. J.R. Todd - 711
7. Matt Hagan - 624
8. Tim Wilkerson - 587
9. Bob Tasca III - 574
10. Shawn Langdon - 528

Story & Photos courtesy of DSR

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