

AMALIE MOTOR OIL NHRA GATORNATIONALS TO FEATURE SPECIAL SWAMP RAT ALLEY WITH 5 HISTORIC DON GARLITS CARS

GAINESVILLE, Fla. (Feb. 3, 2023) – Along with the incredible on-track action to kick off the 2023 NHRA Camping World Drag Racing Series season, the hallowed grounds of famed Gainesville Raceway will feature five of the most historic cars from legendary driver “Big Daddy” Don Garlits in a special “Swamp Rat Alley” section at the 54th annual Amalie Motor Oil NHRA Gatornationals.

NHRA and Garlits, one of the most iconic drivers in drag racing history, have teamed up for the “Swamp Rat Alley” inside the Hot Rod Junction featuring six famous Garlits cars. The cars will be on display throughout the weekend at Gainesville Raceway, giving fans the unique chance to check out some of the most historic cars driven by one of the legends in the sport. Garlits will also be on hand throughout the weekend at Gainesville Raceway to meet with and sign autographs for fans.

Included in the Swamp Rat Alley will be the following:

- Garlits’ Flathead Dragster: This dragster was the car Garlits drove en route to victory at the Southeastern Championship, an event held in Lake City, Fla.

- Swamp Rat 1: The famed Swamp Rat 1 is in its original form and will be on display at Gainesville Raceway during the weekend.

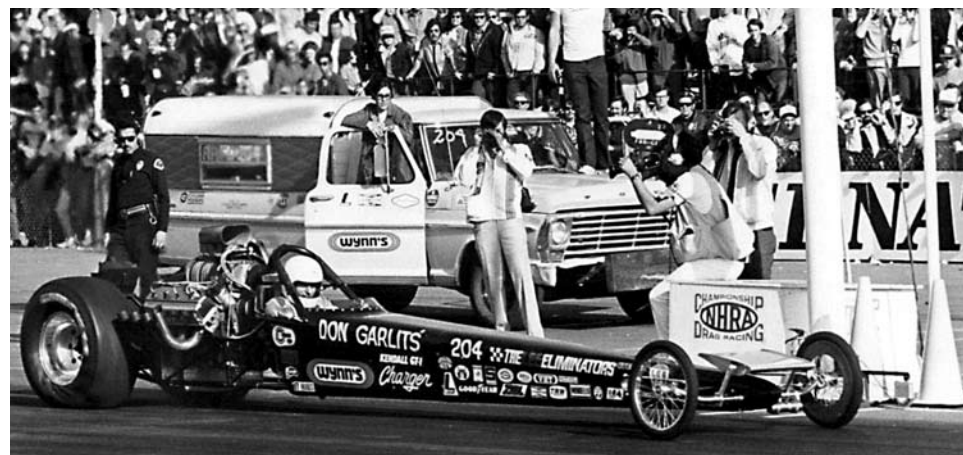
- Swamp Rat 6B: This dragster was one of Garlits most successful entries, making plenty of history. It made the first 200-mph pass in 1964, won the ‘64 NHRA Nationals and then set the sweep record the next year.

- Swamp Rat 13: The infamous Swamp Rat dragster that exploded on the starting line in 1970, leading Garlits to make the revolutionary change of designing a rear-engine Top Fuel dragster.

- Swamp Rat 14: Considered the first successful rear-engine dragster ever built, this Swamp Rat had a huge impact in Top Fuel. Garlits won the Winternationals in 1971 in the car and later the championship.

- Swamp Rat 22: This Swamp Rat went into the record books in a major way, as Garlits ran a monstrous 5.63 at the World Finals in 1975, making the first official 250-mph run in the sport.

“We’re absolutely thrilled to have Don, who was voted No. 1 in NHRA’s 50 greatest drivers list, as part of our 2023 kick-off event in Gainesville. He’s one of the greatest innovators



the sport has ever seen and to have his masterpieces on display will be a huge moment for everyone,” said Evan Jonat, NHRA Vice President of Live Events. “It’s a great opportunity for our fans to get a taste of history in this way and presented in a unique setting at the Gatornationals. It certainly adds to the great racing on the track, and we’re excited for it to be a can’t-miss part of our weekend to open the 2023 season.”

Normally displayed at Don Garlits Museum of Drag Racing in nearby Ocala, the legendary three-time Top Fuel world champ is taking the incredible selection of cars out of his museum and bringing them to Gainesville to help kick off the 2023 NHRA season.

Race fans can learn about the historic dragsters and get a close look at each of them at the Gatornationals, making it a surefire attraction to go along with the exciting action taking place on the track in Gainesville. Garlits will also be getting on the track, as the NHRA legend will also be making a pass in the 800-horsepower Dodge Challenger as part of the Hellcat Dream Giveaway during the weekend.

It adds another exciting incentive to what’s shaping up to be a marquee opener for the 2023 NHRA season. Before the race weekend gets going, Garlits and the International Drag Racing Hall of Fame will induct its 2023 class

on Thursday, March 9, one that features the legendary 16-time world champion John Force. Preceding the Hall of Fame ceremony at the Hilton University of Florida will be a NHRA press conference to help start the 2023 campaign, featuring several of the top NHRA stars.

The race will be one for the ages, as it includes the Pep Boys NHRA Top Fuel All-Star Callout, pitting eight standouts against each other in a unique specialty race that takes place on Saturday, March 11.

NHRA Camping World Drag Racing Series qualifying will feature two rounds at 1:30 and 4:00 p.m. ET on Friday, March 10 and the final two rounds of qualifying on Saturday, March 11 at 12:00 and 3:00 p.m. Final eliminations are scheduled for 10 a.m. ET on Sunday, March 12.

The first round of the Pep Boys NHRA Top Fuel All-Star Callout will take place at 1:20 p.m. on Saturday, March 11 with the semifinals set to follow at 2:45 p.m. The final round is slated for 4:25 p.m.

To purchase tickets to the 2023 Amalie Motor Oil NHRA Gatornationals, fans can visit www.NHRA.com/tickets. Children 12 and under are free in general admission areas with the purchase of an adult ticket. For more information about NHRA, visit www.NHRA.com.

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