

2023 NHRA CAMPING WORLD DRAG RACING SERIES CHAMPIONS CROWNED AT ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY

TEMECULA, Calif. (Nov. 13, 2023) – First-time world champions Doug Kalitta and Gaige Herrera were crowned Monday evening, along with multi-time world champs Matt Hagan and Erica Enders, during the 2023 NHRA Camping World Drag Racing Series awards ceremony at the Pechanga Resort Casino in scenic Southern California Wine Country.

The four superstar competitors were honored for their incredible achievements over the course of the 2023 NHRA Camping World Drag Racing Series season and given their trophies for their championship runs during one of the most thrilling Countdown to the Championship playoffs in NHRA history. The NHRA also handed out a new award for the first time, naming a Crew of the Year in each category.

Kalitta picked up his long-awaited first Top Fuel world championship after powering to the victory in an incredible winner-take-all final round on Sunday at In-N-Out Burger Pomona Dragster. It's the crowning achievement for the 26-year veteran who had finished second in points six times throughout his standout career. But the fan-favorite Kalitta and his team went on a remarkable run during the Countdown to the Championship, winning three times – the first that gave him his 50th career win in his 11,000-horsepower Mac Tools/Toyota dragster – to clinch his first world title.

Hagan won the Funny Car championship for the fourth time in his career on Sunday, prevailing over a loaded lineup of title contenders in Pomona in his 11,000-horsepower Dodge Direct Connection Charger SRT Hellcat. By earning a fourth title, he joins legendary drivers John Force, Don Prudhomme and Kenny Bernstein as the only drivers to win four or more Funny

Car world titles in NHRA history. To get there, Hagan was impressively consistent throughout the year, winning six times and advancing to eight final rounds, handing Tony Stewart Racing its first NHRA world championship.

Enders added another Pro Stock championship to her growing legacy and was recognized on Monday after earning her sixth world title on Sunday in her Johnson's Horsepowered Garage/Melling Performance Chevrolet Camaro. She clinched the title with a victory in the opening round at the In-N-Out Burger NHRA Finals, which also handed Enders her fourth championship in the past five years. She's now tied with Warren Johnson for the second-most world titles in Pro Stock history, bouncing back from early-season adversity to take control in the playoffs. Along the way, Enders also became the winningest female in motorsports and now has 48 national event victories in her record-breaking career.

In Pro Stock Motorcycle, Gaige Herrera's dominant season was recognized on Monday, capping off one of the most amazing years in category history. From start-to-finish, Herrera controlled the season on his Mission Foods/Vance & Hines Suzuki, winning the first three races of the year. He then won the last five races of the year, finishing with 11 victories and 14 No. 1 qualifiers. Both are new single-season records in the category, as Herrera clinched the championship on Friday in Pomona in his first full season of racing in the class.

The new Crew of the Year awarded was given to a team in each professional category and was based on a number of statistical categories, including average qualifying position, average eliminations E.T., speed index, average points



per race and oildowns. In Top Fuel, the Capco Contractors racing team of Steve Torrence earned the award, while Hagan's TSR team was named the top crew in Funny Car.

The RAD Torque Systems team of standout Dallas Glenn earned the award in Pro Stock, while the Vance & Hines team for Herrera took home the honors in Pro Stock Motorcycle.

Pro Stock Motorcycle's Chase Van Sant was also named NHRA Rookie of the Year after a strong first season. He advanced to the semifinals four times, advancing to the Countdown to the Championship and finishing ninth in points. Top Fuel's Dan Mercier and Pro Stock's Jerry Tucker, Eric Latino and David Cuadra were also nominated.

For the seventh straight season and an NHRA-record 28th time, Chevrolet won the NHRA's Manufacturers Cup. The award is given to the automaker whose current model year vehicles

accumulate the most points during the NHRA season. Among those who enjoyed banner seasons for Chevrolet were Hight, Funny Car legend John Force, Enders, Aaron Stanfield, Greg Anderson and Matt Hartford.

Drivers in the NHRA Lucas Oil Drag Racing Series were also recognized as 2023 world champions, including Vince Musolini (Top Dragster), Brandon Miller (Top Sportsman), Trevor Larson (Super Gas), John Labbous Jr. (Super Comp), Kyle Rizzoli (Stock), Wyatt Wagner (Super Stock), Bruno Massel (Comp), Doug Gordon (Top Alcohol Funny Car) and Julie Nataas (Top Alcohol Dragster).

The 2024 NHRA Mission Foods Drag Racing Series begins March 7-10 with the 55th annual NHRA Gatornationals at Gainesville Raceway.

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