

Clint Bowyer Leaves Daytona With 34th-Place Finish After Late-Race Accident

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (July 2, 2011) —Clint Bowyer overcame an early-race setback at Daytona (Fla.) International Speedway and raced among the top 10 only to have his night end before the checkered flag flew following an accident on lap 80.

Kevin Harvick Inc. (KHI) headed to Daytona with four entries and made a bold statement by securing the top-four starting positions for the Friday night 100-lap race, a NASCAR Nationwide Series first. Clint Bowyer in the No. 33 Menards Chevrolet Impala started from the fourth position, with teammates Elliott Sadler in third, Tony Stewart second and KHI co-owner Kevin Harvick on the pole.

Rain caused the Nationwide Series schedule to shift on Thursday, leaving the teams with one 45-minute practice session. Bowyer and the No. 33 team made four laps at the beginning of the session, running in a two-car draft with KHI teammate Elliott Sadler in the No. 2 OneMain Financial Chevrolet Impala. Trouble found the duo, however, as a car made contact with the No. 33 car, sending it sliding down the track and into the grassy area in turns three and four. The incident forced the team to utilize the backup Menards Chevrolet for the race.

Despite Thursday's practice hurdle, Bowyer and the Menards team put the No. 33 Chevrolet in the fourth starting position, behind his three KHI teammates. With the drop of the green flag, the Emporia, Kan., native paired with Tony Stewart in the No. 9 TapouT Chevrolet Impala and kept to the front of the field in a four-car pack with Harvick and Sadler as they sailed around the superspeedway in the opening laps.

On lap four, Bowyer reported that he was feeling a bad vibration as he came down the backstretch. Not leaving anything to chance, crew chief David Hyder brought the Menards Chevrolet to pit road for four tires. On the stop, the team discovered that there was an issue with the left-rear wheel. Bowyer returned to the track outside of the top 30, one lap down to the leaders.

As the race continued towards the halfway point, Bowyer fought to be in position to receive the Lucky Dog award. With the night's third caution period on lap 44, he was able to regain lead-lap status. On the caution, Bowyer made the trip to pit road for four tires and fuel. In need of a drafting partner, teammate Harvick and the No. 4 OneMain Financial team coordinated their pit strategy with the No. 33 team so that the two could pair up on the restart.

The field returned to green-flag racing with less than 50 laps to go. Just as quickly as the race resumed full speed, the four KHI cars were back to running four in-a-row. With the help of Harvick, Bowyer shot his way to the lead on lap 73. The two continued to stay together and hold position in the top five when trouble struck the Menards team as they hit the backstretch on lap 80. Slight contact from Harvick's Chevrolet caused Bowyer to get loose and hit the outside wall. The driver wheeled the damaged vehicle to the garage, but the Menards team determined the damage sustained was significant enough it would be an early end for the KHI team.

The 100-lap event ended with a multi-car accident that exploded on the frontstretch as the leaders approached the checkered flag, involving both Stewart and Sadler. Harvick came home in the 18th place while Bowyer and the No. 33 Menards team were credited with a 34th-place finish.

The NASCAR Nationwide Series heads to Kentucky Speedway next week for the inaugural tripleheader weekend at the track with the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series and NASCAR Sprint Cup Series. KHI co-owner Kevin Harvick will pilot the No. 33 Rheem Chevrolet Impala. Tune in to ESPN at 7:30 p.m. ET to watch the action live.

RACE RECAP:

July 1, 2011

Daytona International Speedway

Race: 17 of 34

Started: 4th

Finished: 34th

Owner's Point Standings: 8th (-73)

Up Next on the Nationwide Series Schedule:

Date: July 8, 2011

Track: Kentucky Speedway

Driver: Kevin Harvick

Event Name: Feed the Children 300

Broadcast: ESPN 7:30 p.m. ET,
PRN 7:00 p.m. ET

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