

Kevin Harvick Ends Rough Night at Richmond With 20th-Place Finish

RICHMOND (September 10, 2011) – Kevin Harvick and the No. 33 Rheem team headed to the Commonwealth of Virginia for the NASCAR Nationwide Series second visit of the season at Richmond International Raceway. The Kevin Harvick Inc. (KHI) co-owner started from the 13th position and fought through early-race handling issues only to get involved in a late-race accident that left the team with a 20th-place finish.

From the drop of the green flag, Harvick reported that his Rheem Chevrolet was extremely tight. The driver slipped to 15th in the opening laps, but worked his way forward reaching the 11th position by lap 50.

The evening's first caution came on lap 67 for the No. 81 car spinning on the frontstretch. Running in 11th before the caution period, crew chief Chris Carrier called Harvick to pit road where the crew made significant chassis adjustments to the Rheem Chevrolet in addition to air-pressure adjustments, four tires and fuel. A solid stop by the KHI team enabled Harvick to pick up one spot on pit road, returning to green on lap 79 in the 10th position.

As the field wound back up to speed, Harvick moved into the ninth spot but before the cars could complete a lap, the No. 33 tangled with the No. 38 car bringing out the second caution of the race. Harvick made his way to pit road where the Rheem crew inspected the left-side of the Chevrolet. Fortunately, the damage was minimal and after the team bolted on four tires and added fuel, the driver lined up in the 21st position for the restart on lap 85.

Lap-by-lap Harvick made his way forward. When the field reached the lap 100 mark, the driver had the No. 33 machine in the 10th spot.

When the third caution flag waved on lap 139 for the No. 22 car which spun in turns three and four, Harvick was up to the ninth position. As the field slowed, he radioed to his team that the Rheem Chevrolet was handling much better than it had earlier in the race. The team used the caution to come to pit road for an air-pressure adjustment, four tires and fuel. Quick work on pit road gained Harvick four spots, putting the No. 33 in fifth for the restart on lap 146.

Just as quickly as the green flag waved, the yellow flag was brought back out on lap 146 for a two-car accident in turn three. The team opted to remain on the track during the caution and Harvick restarted where he had fallen to on the previous restart, in the sixth position.

The race resumed green-flag conditions on lap 153 but was slowed for a fifth time for the No. 14 car on lap 159. Harvick, holding the sixth position, did not pit and prepared to go green on lap 171.

Harvick maintained the sixth spot as the cars raced around the 0.75-mile track but trouble struck with 40 laps to go as the 33 and 16 cars made contact on the backstretch bringing out the sixth caution of the night. Harvick maneuvered the car to pit road for the KHI crew to assess the damage. The team changed right-side tires and thoroughly checked the right side of the Rheem Chevrolet for damage and made the call to send their driver back on track to avoid going a lap down. Harvick made a second trip down pit road where the crew changed left-side tires, added a splash of fuel and made sure the damage to the nose of the car was adequately repaired. Despite the damage and two pit stops, the No. 33 remained on the lead lap and restarted from the 16th position on lap 221.

Back under green-flag conditions, Harvick fought to stay ahead of the leaders and on the lead lap. With less than 15 laps to go, the No. 33 went a lap down and fell back to the 20th position where Harvick remained to the end of the 250-lap contest.

Paul Menard and the No. 33 Rheem/Menards team will head to Chicagoland Speedway for the Nationwide Series race next Saturday, September 17. Tune in to ESPN2 at 3:30 p.m. ET and listen to MRN beginning at 3:00 p.m. ET.

RACE RECAP:

September 9, 2011

Richmond International Raceway

Race: 27 of 34

Started: 13th

Finished: 20th

Owner's Point Standings: 4th (-108)

Up Next on the Nationwide Series Schedule:

Date: September 17, 2011

Track: Chicagoland Speedway

Driver: Paul Menard

Event Name: Dollar General 300

Broadcast: ESPN2 3:30 p.m. ET

MRN 3:00 p.m. ET

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