

## Paul Menard Finishes Eighth at Charlotte Motor Speedway

**CHARLOTTE (Oct. 15, 2011)** – Paul Menard joined the No. 33 Kevin Harvick Inc. (KHI) team for the final time this season for the NASCAR Nationwide Series race at Charlotte Motor Speedway. Menard put the Rheem/Menards Chevrolet Impala on the pole for the second time in seven starts with the team and drove to an eighth-place finish.

Menard led the 43-car field to the green flag Friday night and maintained the lead position until the first caution on lap 25 for oil on the track. As the field slowed, the driver radioed to his team that the Rheem/Menards Chevrolet was good and felt no adjustments were needed. Menard brought the No. 33 down pit road for four tires and fuel and with the varying strategies during the round of pit stops, lined up in the fifth position for the lap 30 restart.

After the restart, Menard worked his way up to fourth and as he moved into third, the caution flag waved for a second time on lap 40 for debris in turn two. The KHI team opted to remain on track, maintaining the third position as the field returned to green-flag conditions on lap 45.

On the restart, Menard fought for position going three-wide around the 1.5-mile track. By lap 59, the driver moved into the second spot.

NASCAR brought out the yellow flag for a third time on lap 69 for debris on the backstretch. Under the caution, Menard steered the Rheem/Menards Chevrolet down pit road for four tires, fuel and an air-pressure adjustment. Quick work by the KHI crew put the driver back on track in the second position for the lap 74 restart.

As the cars roared back to full speed, the No. 33 competed in a tight, door-to-door battle for the lead. After several laps of close racing, Menard settled in the second spot. The Wisconsin native fought to hold on to second but fell to third as the race approached the halfway point.

Running in the third position, the KHI team elected to bring the No. 33 to pit road for a scheduled green-flag pit stop on lap 127. Just as the team bolted on four tires and filled the Chevrolet with fuel, an accident in turn two brought out the caution flag for the fourth time. The untimely caution put the No. 33 a lap down, but the team returned to the track able to take the wave around which placed Menard in the 14th position and on the lead lap when the 200-lap race returned to green on lap 135.

The driver maneuvered his way up to 12th quickly after the green flag waved. As he settled into the position, he radioed to his team that he thought there was an issue with the right-front wheel. Menard brought the Rheem/Menards Chevrolet down pit road where the crew added four fresh tires and returned to the track 23rd, one lap down to the leader.

With 30 laps to go to the end of the race, the caution lights flashed for a fifth time. Menard, running a lap down in the 17th position, opted to take the wave around and lined up back on the lead lap in the 16th spot for the restart with 24 laps remaining.

Menard worked his way up to the 14th position just as the sixth caution of the night fell on lap 185 for debris in turn four. As he slowed the Rheem/Menards Chevrolet, the driver relayed that it was a touch tight. The KHI team made the call to bring the No. 33 to pit road for four tires, fuel and a chassis adjustment to help ease the tight-handling condition. Menard returned to the track in the 15th position and the race returned to green with 12 laps to go.

Back under green, Menard quickly made his way toward the top 10. By the time the race's seventh and final caution came with only nine laps remaining for an accident in turns three and four, the driver was up to the ninth position. The team elected to stay on track and took the restart from the ninth spot with only five laps to go to the end. As the field reached the white flag, Menard moved to eighth where he remained to the checkered flag.

The Nationwide Series will return to action on November 5 at Texas Motor Speedway with Clint Bowyer behind the wheel of the No. 33 Rheem Chevrolet. Tune in to ESPN2 at 12:55 p.m. ET and listen to PRN at 12:30 p.m. ET.

### **RACE RECAP:**

**October 14, 2011**

**Charlotte Motor Speedway**

**Race:** 31 of 34

**Started:** 1st

**Finished:** 8th

**Owner's Point Standings:** 4th (-91)

### **Up Next on the Nationwide Series Schedule:**

**Date:** November 5, 2011

**Track:** Texas Motor Speedway

**Driver:** Clint Bowyer

**Event Name:** O'Reilly Auto Parts Challenge

**Broadcast:** ESPN2 12:55 p.m. ET

PRN 12:30 p.m. ET