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RACE REPORT

PAUL MENARD

QUAKER STATE/MENARDS CHEVROLET

DAYTONA INT'L SPEEDWAY

JULY 2, 2011

Menard and the Quaker State/Menards Team Finish Eighth Under the Lights at Daytona

When it comes to restrictor-plate racing, it is truly anyone's game, and Paul Menard and the Quaker State/Menards team made all the right moves on Saturday night, hitting their marks flawlessly, to be in contention at the end of the Coke Zero 400 at Daytona International Speedway. The No. 27 Impala sported a slightly different look under the lights of the 2.5-mile Daytona Beach-based facility, displaying the green and fluorescent yellow Quaker State paint scheme for the second time this season. Menard took the green flag in the 10th position, his fifth consecutive top-10 start in points-awarding competition, and immediately dropped back in the field to find Richard Childress Racing teammate Kevin Harvick. The two paired up, creating a powerful two-car tandem, and quickly drove to the front. Restarts and pit stops were carefully coordinated between the two drivers, who spent the evening on the No. 29 team's radio channel talking to each other and working with Harvick's spotter Billy O'Dea. While under caution, the pair came to pit road on lap 24 for a fuel-only service stop. The grill of the No. 27 Chevrolet was cleaned of debris and a fresh coat of Vasoline applied to the bumpers. The quick stops put the pair in the lead for the restart on lap 26. Menard never fell out of the top 15, making green-flag pit stops on laps 94 and 141. Menard and Harvick were battling in the lead pack of two-car tandems when a spinning car on lap 157 brought out the caution and set the stage for a green-white-checked finish. When the field restarted on lap 161, the No. 27 and No. 29 cars made a powerful charge forward, carrying the momentum to challenge for the lead when another multi-car wreck slowed the field again, requiring another green-white-checked attempt. In the final two laps, Menard worked with Harvick to power to the front again when two separate packs of cars spun and wrecked behind them, narrowly missing the rear bumper of the Quaker State/Menards Chevrolet. Menard took the checkered flag in the eighth position, his fifth top-10 finish of the 2011 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series season.

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Start – 10th

Finish – 8th

Laps Led – 5

Points – 16th

PAUL MENARD QUOTE:

"It was a solid night for the No. 27 Quaker State/Menards team. I had a lot of fun running the two-car tandem with Harvick (Kevin, RCR teammate and driver of the No. 29 Budweiser Folds of Honor Chevrolet). We had great runs going after those last two restarts and the cautions just didn't go our way. I really think that if the race had stayed green for either of the final cautions, one of us would have had the win. These RCR Chevys are just built great and the ECR (Earnhardt-Childress Racing) engines are unreal. Unfortunately, as you know, it's always a crapshoot here at Daytona (International Speedway). Our car was a lot better than eighth but, then again, there are a lot of cars that got destroyed on those final laps. We were lucky to stay out of the mess and head home with a top 10. It should have helped us a little in the points, too."

