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RACE REPORT

PAUL MENARD

MOEN/MENARDS CHEVROLET

RICHMOND INT'L RACEWAY

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After Heavy Damage, Menard Finishes 34th at Richmond International Raceway

With their Chase for the NASCAR Sprint Cup hopes dashed when contact with a competitor forced the No. 27 Chevrolet into the outside wall, Paul Menard and the Moen/Menards team repaired the heavily damaged car and returned to finish 34th in the Wonderful Pistachios 400 at Richmond International Raceway. Under a full moon in the Virginia Commonwealth's state capitol, Menard started 15th and remained in the top 15 despite three caution periods within the first 40 circuits of the 400-lap affair. He reported the car started out well-balanced but had developed a loose-in and off condition as the Goodyear tires were put through a series of heat cycles. The lap-43 restart placed Menard in the outside line, where he lost valuable track position as he waited for a hole to slide into in the bottom line of cars. Running 20th when the yellow flag was displayed again on lap 50, crew chief Slugger Labbe called Menard to pit for four tires, air pressure adjustments to the left-side tires and fuel. Over the next 100 laps, Menard battled to get back into the top 20, fighting heavy traffic and a tight condition through the center of the turns. The Labbe-led crew made chassis adjustments to the bright yellow Chevrolet Impala to assist in the car's turning capabilities. On lap 156, the team was assessed a pit road penalty for running over the air hose as Menard exited the pit box, dropping the Eau Claire, Wis., native deep into the field in 28th. While running there on lap 171 contact from a competitor, running inside the No. 27 Chevrolet sent Menard hard into the outside wall, suffering heavy right-front damage. Labbe called him to the garage area and the Moen/Menards team went to work to repair the No. 27 entry. They ultimately returned Menard to the track 80 laps later in the 36th position on lap 251. Over the final 149 laps, Menard was able to gain two additional positions to finish 34th.

Start – 15

Finish – 34

Laps Led – 0

Points – 23

PAUL MENARD QUOTES:

"Tonight's result doesn't show how hard this team worked this weekend. We came a long way from where we started in practice on Friday. The car drove pretty well tonight, we just had the handling shift with the number of cautions and restarts early in the race. When we hit the wall, the team did a great job working together to get us back on track. They made a lot of repairs in the garage and the car drove really well after that, all things considered. It's disappointing that we couldn't get the wild card, but I am really proud of the year we have had so far. Our season is far from over, though. We have 10 races left and we'll go in just like we do each week, try to win."

