



## **RCR Post Race Report -- Las Vegas**

**NASCAR Sprint Cup Series**

**RACE: Kobalt Tools 400**

**TRACK: Las Vegas Motor Speedway**

**DATE: March 6, 2011**

### **Race Highlights:**

- RCR teammates finished 12th (Paul Menard), 15th (Clint Bowyer), 17th (Kevin Harvick) and 21st (Jeff Burton).
- Menard recorded his best start (18th) and finish (12th) at Las Vegas Motor Speedway and led his first laps around the 1.5-mile speedway, which came in his 150th Sprint Cup Series start.
- Menard ranks sixth in the Sprint Cup Series point standings, his highest placement in his Sprint Cup Series career.
- Bowyer, Burton, Harvick continue their streaks of running at the end of every Sprint Cup Series race contested at LVMS.
- Bowyer has led at least one lap in four out of the five last races held at Las Vegas.
- Burton's finish marks only the third time he has finished outside the top 15 in 14 starts at the Las Vegas facility.
- Carl Edwards scored the win and was chased to the line by Tony Stewart, Juan Pablo Montoya, Marcos Ambrose and Ryan Newman.
- The next Sprint Cup Series race is the Jeff Byrd 500 presented by Food City at Bristol Motor Speedway on Sunday, March 20, televised live on Fox and broadcast live on the Performance Racing Network and Sirius XM Satellite Radio beginning at 12:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.



### **No. 27 Moen/Menards Team Turn in Another Solid Performance with 12th-place finish in Las Vegas**

Paul Menard climbed behind the wheel of the No. 27 Moen/Menards Chevrolet on Sunday afternoon and started the Sprint Cup Series event at Las Vegas Motor Speedway from the 18<sup>th</sup> position. Menard broke into the top 10 by lap 50 and remained there throughout most of the afternoon, bringing home a 12<sup>th</sup>-place finish and advancing to sixth in the driver championship point standings. Citing a loose-on-exit condition, the Slugger Labbe-led Moen/Menards crew made minor adjustments over the course of the race's 267 laps to improve the car's handling. Following the first green-flag pit stop of the afternoon on lap 58, Menard turned fast laps despite reporting that he was still loose driving off turn four. A caution on lap 97 allowed the No. 27 team to make additional adjustments to help with his drive off of the corners. The field was slowed by three more cautions before Labbe called his driver back to pit road for service to work on the tight-center and loose-off conditions that persisted. Following the lap-156 restart, Menard turned his fastest laps of the afternoon around the Las Vegas-based speedway and powered his way back to the sixth spot. He informed Labbe that the car's handling started off good, but as the run progressed, he lost the drive-off again. Restarting on lap 203 following the day's seventh caution, the Eau Claire, Wisc., native was shuffled back to the 12<sup>th</sup> position. Over the course of the final run, Menard charged back inside the top 10; however, he was unable to make up lost ground following the final green-flag pit stop and brought home a 12<sup>th</sup>-place finish.

**Start - 18<sup>th</sup>**

**Finish - 12<sup>th</sup>**

**Laps Led - 3**

**Points - 6<sup>th</sup>**

**PAUL MENARD QUOTE:**

"This Moen/Menards Chevrolet was a lot better than the 12<sup>th</sup>-place finish we gave it today. We started the race out too loose on exit. I just couldn't get on the gas as aggressively as I would have liked. Slugger made gradual adjustments throughout the race, but we still continued to struggle with the drive-off (of the corners). I think we had a top-10 finish up until that last green-flag pit stop. It was the first time we took only two tires all day and it tightened the car up a little too much. I just couldn't get back into the top 10 before we ran out of laps. I want to thank Slugger and all of the (No.) 27 guys for their hard work. We were really well prepared for these first three races and I think the results have shown that. We've had strong qualifying efforts and solid finishes. I think it is also safe to say that we're not satisfied and could have had even better finishes. We've learned a lot together and will regroup before we head to Bristol in two weeks."



**Harvick, No. 29 Team Score 17th-Place Finish in Vegas after Late-Race Penalty**

A penalty for speeding on pit road ended Kevin Harvick and the No. 29 Budweiser Chevrolet team's chances at a top-five finish in Sunday's Kobalt Tools 400 at Las Vegas Motor Speedway, and instead left them with a 17<sup>th</sup>-place result. Harvick started the race from 26<sup>th</sup> position, was running inside the top 20 by lap 10 and made it all the way up to the second position as teams made green-flag pit stops at lap 57. Once the field cycled through their stops, he was running 16<sup>th</sup> at lap 60. Harvick raced his way into the top 10 in less than 40 laps and told crew chief Gil Martin to not make any adjustments to the car when he brought the Budweiser Chevrolet down pit road on lap 98. When he got back on track he wasted no time picking off more positions and was running in the top five within less than 10 laps. Harvick was fourth when the caution flag waved on lap 149 and he brought the No. 29 Budweiser Chevrolet to pit road for four tires and fuel two laps later. As Harvick went back onto the track following the stop, the team was informed that the No. 29 car would be assessed a penalty for speeding on pit road. Harvick was forced to restart from the tail end of the field when the green flag waved at lap 156. Mired in the back, he radioed to the team the car was too tight in traffic as he ran in the 21<sup>st</sup> position at lap 165. The Budweiser pit crew helped Harvick gain some ground on pit road during the final two stops and he was running 14<sup>th</sup> with 20 laps to go. In the closing laps he fell back several positions and took the checkered flag in 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Start - 26<sup>th</sup>**

**Finish - 17<sup>th</sup>**

**Laps Led - 1**

**Points - 20<sup>th</sup>**

**KEVIN HARVICK QUOTE:**

"Gil (Martin) and the guys on the Budweiser crew gave me a good car today. That speeding penalty killed us. We got stuck back in traffic and just couldn't go anywhere after that."



**Burton, Cat Racing Team Leaves Vegas Disappointed, Settles for 21<sup>st</sup>-Place Result**

Like many others who visit the city of Las Vegas, Jeff Burton and the Caterpillar race team found themselves at a loss and looking for more as they said goodbye to Sin City. After starting the Kobalt

Tools 400 from the 21<sup>st</sup> position, handling issues plagued the No. 31 black and yellow Chevrolet Impala throughout the 267-lap event. The Todd Berrier-led crew used each pit stop throughout the day to apply every adjustment in their arsenal to the Caterpillar Chevrolet but to no avail, forcing Burton & Co. to settle for a disappointing 21<sup>st</sup>-place finish at Las Vegas Motor Speedway.

***Start - 21st***

***Finish - 21st***

***Laps Led - 0***

***Points - 32<sup>nd</sup>***

**JEFF BURTON QUOTE:**

"We are really disappointed with our finish. Everyone on the Caterpillar Chevrolet team works hard and this finish is not a reflection of our effort, but we certainly have to figure out what we were missing today. We'll put this behind us and look forward to getting to Bristol in a few weeks."



**No. 33 Team Brings Home 15th-Place Finish at Las Vegas**

Clint Bowyer and the No. 33 Wheaties FUEL Chevrolet team fought hard all day and brought home a 15<sup>th</sup>-place finish in the Kobalt Tools 400 at Las Vegas Motor Speedway. Rolling off the starting grid on the outside of row 14, Bowyer found himself battling a loose-handling race car from the beginning of the 267-lap event. He worked his way into the top 20 of the 43-car field, passing cars on the track while early cautions provided the Shane Wilson-led Helping Hands pit crew opportunities to make minor adjustments on the No. 33 Chevrolet, trying to find more grip and improve acceleration in the corners. After 102 circuits, Wilson directed the crew to make major chassis adjustments to the car despite the fact that all teams were fighting ever-changing track temperatures due to cloudy conditions at the 1.5-mile facility, located just 25 minutes from the famous Las Vegas Strip. Initially, those changes worked well on short runs as Bowyer was able to gain positions. However, on long green flag runs, the Emporia, Kan., native reported that the car loosened up dramatically, making it difficult to turn. Another change to the car on lap 149 gave Bowyer the grip he needed to work his way back into the top15 where he stayed for the remainder of the event, also gaining a valuable bonus point by leading lap 243. The final 65 laps were completed under green-flag conditions and Bowyer crossed the finish line with a solid 15<sup>th</sup>-place effort.

***Start - 28<sup>th</sup>***

***Finish - 15<sup>th</sup>***

***Laps Led - 1***

***Points - 18<sup>th</sup>***

**CLINT BOWYER QUOTE:**

"We battled a loose-handling race car and changing track conditions all day, but were still able to score a top-15 finish and gain a few spots in points. The Wheaties FUEL paint scheme car looked really cool. It was fun to drive a black car again and I want to thank everyone at Wheaties FUEL for their support. I am looking forward to the off weekend before we head to Bristol."

