



## ATLANTA MOTOR SPEEDWAY RACE REPORT

### PAUL MENARD • No. 98 CertainTeed/Menards Ford Fusion



- The No. 98 Ford qualified in the 23rd position for Sunday's race at Atlanta Motor Speedway
- Menard drove to a fifth-place finish, the second best of his NASCAR Sprint Cup Series career
- The Wisconsin native picked up eight positions in the point standings and now sits in ninth place

**Race Summary:** Though Paul Menard and the No. 98 Richard Petty Motorsports team didn't have the qualifying run they were hoping for on Friday, they knew their Ford Fusion would be fast on race day and they weren't wrong. Menard broke into the top 20 prior to Lap 100 and although they made minor changes to the car during several pit stops to remedy tight and loose handling conditions as track conditions changed, Menard was able to keep his eye on the leaders throughout the race.

While cycling through pit stops, Menard was credited with leading Lap 277 of the scheduled 334-lap event. A yellow flag in Lap 322 set up the first of two green-white-checkered flag situations. Crew chief Slugger Labbe called for a two-tire stop and Menard lined up for the restart at the front of the pack. Though it was tough to hold on to that top spot with cars that had taken four fresh tires behind him, Menard gave it his all, taking the checkered flag in fifth place. The top-five finish was the second best of his Cup career and catapulted him into the top-10 in the point standings.

**Paul Menard on the Atlanta Event:** "It felt really good. The car was fast and a top five is a great way to start the year. The Richard Petty Motorsports guys did their homework in the offseason and improved these cars so much. Slugger made a helluva call there taking two tires at the end to get some clean track and we knew we probably weren't going to hold off four tires, but it at least got us in front of the excitement and I guess there was some at the end. We dodged a bullet there at the end with all the action out there. These guys worked their tails off all during the offseason, and it was a lot of fun out there today. All of our cars were fast this weekend. We got three of the top six finishers, so I think Richard Petty Motorsports is back."

### Next Race

**Date:** March 21, 2010  
**Race:** Food City 500  
**Laps:** 500 Laps/266.5 Miles

**TV Information:** 1 p.m. ET on FOX  
**Radio Information:** 1 p.m. ET on PRN and Sirius/XM  
Satellite Radio

**For more information, please contact:**

Tiffany Breaux, Richard Petty Motorsports, 704-902-8127 or [tbreaux@rpm43.com](mailto:tbreaux@rpm43.com)  
Michelle Marckwardt, Richard Petty Motorsports, 704-622-3534 or [mmarckwardt@rpm43.com](mailto:mmarckwardt@rpm43.com)