



### **A Late-Race Flat Tire Ends Harvick's Solid Top-10 Run at Charlotte Motor Speedway**

**CONCORD, N.C. (May 28, 2011)** - Kevin Harvick returned to the driver's seat of the No. 33 Rheem Tankless Water Heaters Chevrolet Impala this weekend at Charlotte Motor Speedway. The Kevin Harvick Inc. (KHI) co-owner led 33 laps and ran solidly inside the top 10 throughout the day until a left-front tire went down with only 45 laps to go in the event, leaving the team one lap down with a 16th-place finish.

Harvick qualified the No. 33 Rheem Chevrolet in the second position for the start of the Top Gear 300 on Saturday, the team's 10th top-five start in 13 races so far this season. As the 200-lap race came to life, the driver was shuffled back to the fourth position. On lap 12, Harvick relayed to crew chief David Hyder that his vehicle was a touch too tight in the center of the turns as he held on to the fourth position.

NASCAR waved the yellow flag on lap 25 for a scheduled competition caution. With the caution period, Hyder brought Harvick down pit road for two tires, fuel and an air-pressure adjustment. The KHI team also made sure the grille was clear of debris before sending the No. 33 Rheem Chevy back on track. A solid stop by the crew put Harvick in the lead for the lap 31 restart.

Quickly after the field resumed green-flag racing, the caution waved for the second time on lap 34 for an accident in turn three. With Harvick in the lead position, the team opted not to make a pit stop during the caution. Back to green on lap 38, Harvick maintained the race lead until he was passed on lap 61.

The third caution of the day slowed the field on lap 73 with the No. 33 Chevrolet running in the second position. Harvick felt the car was handling a little too tight but did not think any adjustments were necessary. However, Hyder used the opportunity to bring him down pit road for four fresh tires and fuel. Another solid stop by the Rheem team kept Harvick in the second position for the lap 78 restart.

Back under green, the driver radioed that he felt the car was still tight off turn two. He slipped to the third position just before the yellow flag waved for a fourth time on lap 82. As the field was brought to a cautious pace, Hyder and Harvick made the decision to stay out on the track as they both felt the tight-handling condition was not significant enough to come to pit road for adjustments. On lap 91, the event resumed green-flag racing conditions. Harvick moved quickly to the second position where he remained before being shuffled to fourth on lap 97 following close door-to-door racing around the 1.5-mile racetrack.

Harvick felt the balance was really good on the Rheem machine as the race approached the halfway point. By lap 130, the No. 33 was steadily maintaining the fourth position, but the driver relayed that his Chevrolet was becoming tighter as the long green-flag run continued. Given Harvick's feedback, Hyder made the decision to pit earlier than the scheduled lap-135 pit stop and brought the driver down pit road to the attention

of his crew for four tires, fuel and a chassis adjustment.

With 55 laps to go, teams continued to cycle through green-flag pit stops as Harvick settled into the fifth position. For the fifth time, the yellow flag flew on lap 148. The team called Harvick to pit road for an additional chassis adjustment while bolting on four tires and adding fuel. The race resumed with 46 laps to go with the No. 33 Rheem Chevrolet running in the eighth position. Just as the field was climbing back to full speed, spotter Billy O'Dea called over the radio that Harvick had smoke coming from the left-front tire. The team determined the smoke was a result of the left-front fender rubbing on the tire, which came from contact Harvick made with another competitor on the restart. With the tire going down, Harvick wheeled the vehicle to pit road for the KHI team to replace the left-side tires and make sure the fenders of the car did not rub the tires any further.

Harvick returned to the track one lap down to the leaders and fought hard to overcome the setback over the remaining laps. The driver was able to climb from 22nd to 16th, where he stayed as the checkered flag flew.

The No. 33 Rheem team will head to Chicagoland Speedway with Harvick behind the wheel for the NASCAR Nationwide Series event on Saturday, June 4. Tune in to ESPN at 8:00 p.m. ET to catch the racing action live.

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**RACE RCAP:**

**May 28, 2011**

**Charlotte Motor Speedway**

**Race: 13 of 34**

**Started: 2nd**

**Finished: 16th**

**Owner's Point Standings: 5th (-38)**

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

**Date: June 4, 2011**

**Track: Chicagoland Speedway**

**Driver: Kevin Harvick**

**Event Name: STP 300**

**Broadcast: ESPN at 8:00 p.m. ET**

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