

# 27

# PREVIEW

## PAUL MENARD SERTA/MENARDS CHEVROLET

TALLADEGA SUPERSPEEDWAY

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**This week's Serta/Menards Chevrolet at Talladega Superspeedway ...** Paul Menard will pilot Chassis No. 335 from the Richard Childress Racing NASCAR Sprint Cup Series stable. This is a brand new No. 27 Chevrolet Impala that will turn its first laps during opening practice on Friday at Talladega.

**Talladega Days ...** In 10 starts at Talladega Superspeedway, Menard has earned one top-five and five top-15 finishes, completed 78 percent of his laps (1,483 of 1,901) and led for 18 circuits. He has an average starting position of 21.7 and an average finishing position of 23.6. His best finish of second was recorded in his October 2008 visit to the 2.66-mile Alabama facility. Menard recorded his best start of fifth on two occasions: October 2008 and April 2011. He also earned one pole award (April 2005) in the NASCAR Nationwide Series and one win (September 2003) with the ARCA Racing Series at the 2.66-mile superspeedway.

**April in Alabama ...** The Eau Claire, Wis., native started his No. 27 Chevrolet from the fifth position in April's Aaron's 499 at Talladega. With all bets off in the closing laps, Menard found himself scrambling for a "dancing partner" after dominating the majority of the afternoon in the top 10 as a duo, first with the No. 6 car and then with the No. 78 Chevrolet Impala. A spinning car on the race track separated the pair and Menard quickly found another partner until the caution came out one last time and he found himself on his own on the restart. Menard fell back to as far as the 20<sup>th</sup> position, but fought tenaciously to bring home a 12<sup>th</sup>-place finish in the mad dash to the checkers. Some notable statistics from his April 2011 performance: Menard made 465 green-flag passes and 376 quality passes (both the second-highest of all drivers). He also received the third-highest driver rating with a 103.4.

**A Loopy Year in Review ...** After 31 races, Menard has an average starting position of 11.8, ranking him sixth among of all drivers and fourth among those competing full time. He maintains an average running position of 16.7, has made 3,279 green-flag passes (ranked sixth of all drivers), has spent 4,083 laps racing in the top 15 (ranked 18th of all drivers), and is ranked fourth in the Loop Data category of Quality Passes (1,656 green-flag passes while running in the Top 15). He has also completed 95.9 percent of his contest laps this season (8,674 of 9,049).

**2011 Season Statistics:**

**Starts:** 31      **Win:** 1      **Top-five finishes:** 4      **Top-10 finishes:** 7      **Laps led:** 81  
**Best start:** 2nd (Pocono, June and Chicagoland)      **Best finish:** 1st (Indianapolis)

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**Race Rewind ...** Menard started from the 38th position in last fall's NSCS visit to Talladega Superspeedway. Five laps into the race he had already worked the draft to his advantage and moved into the top 25. Continuing his drive toward the front, he took over the 10th position by Lap 30. An accident with about 50 laps to go resulted in minor damage to Menard's car; however, he stood inside the top 20 with 38 laps remaining in the race and, like a veteran drafting pro, worked his way up to the front of the pack not long after. He was credited with leading a lap and held down the 13th position as he took the checked flag.

**Testing, Testing 1, 2, 3 ...** The No. 27 Richard Childress Racing team will participate in NASCAR's Electronic Fuel Injection test session Thursday, October 20 at Talladega Superspeedway. Menard will be available for questions from members of the press inside Talladega Superspeedway's infield media center at the test's conclusion.

**Meet the Driver ...** Menard will participate in an autograph session on Saturday, October 22 from 9 - 10 a.m. Central Daylight Time inside the track's hospitality village, located outside the tri-oval and turn one. Ticketholders selected to attend by the track were notified earlier this month, but fans can visit the Sprint Experience on Friday as Miss Sprint Cup will be giving away extra passes.

"I think you're still going to see the same two-car breakaway drafting that we've seen all year. I'm not sure that rule changes are going to change that a whole lot. We'll probably go a little bit faster when we do it, but it should be about the same two-car drafting."

— Paul Menard

