

27

RACE REPORT

PAUL MENARD SERTA/MENARDS CHEVROLET

TALLADEGA SUPERSPEEDWAY

OCTOBER 23, 2011

Menard and the Serta/Menards Team Finish 12th at Talladega Superspeedway

Paul Menard knows every lap at Talladega Superspeedway is a gamble and Sunday's Good Sam Club 500 proved no different as he finished 12th in the No. 27 Serta/Menards Chevrolet at the Alabama-based race track after a late-race restart left the field scrambled. Following a solid qualifying effort on Saturday, Menard lined up in the seventh position to start the 188-lap race. Menard and Richard Childress Racing teammate Kevin Harvick paired up for the two-car tandem-style racing which has become common at the superspeedways, and were a dominating force for more than 100 laps, proving they could drop back to avoid trouble and power to the front on a number of occasions. Finding the best result with the No. 27 Serta/Menards entry pushing the No. 29 Jimmy Johns Chevrolet, the duo led the field with Harvick in front on six occasions for 13 laps around the 2.66-mile superspeedway. On lap 104, trouble found the RCR pair with the No. 29 car receiving heavy damage by contact with a competitor's spinning car. With Harvick requiring repairs first in the pits and ultimately in the garage, Menard found himself looking for a new "dancing partner" as the race returned to green-flag conditions. The No. 27 Chevrolet restarted seventh on lap 110 and then plummeted through the field before finally hooking up with the No. 9 machine of Marcos Ambrose. The Eau Claire, Wis., native and the Aussie methodically worked their way into the top 15 by lap 143 and then into the top 10 only a few laps later. A lap-163 caution allowed the Slugger Labbe-led team to service the signature Menards yellow Chevrolet with right-side tires and fuel. Restarting 10th on lap 167, Menard partnered with Tony Stewart, pushing the No. 14 Chevrolet to the lead in only two circuits. With eight laps remaining, Regan Smith made hard contact with the outside retaining wall, slowing the field for the ninth caution period of the afternoon and setting the stage for a two-lap dash to the checkered flag. Restarting sixth on lap 186, Menard quickly paired with Stewart once again but in the mad scramble to the finish, lost ground and took the checkers in 12th.

Start – 7th

Finish – 12th

Laps Led – 0

Points – 21

Twitter:
@RCR27PMenard
@RCRRacing

Facebook:
Facebook.com/
PaulMenard27

PAUL MENARD QUOTE:

"We had a really fast Serta/Menards Chevrolet all weekend. We brought a brand new car this weekend and the team did a great job building it. We didn't require any adjustments for handling and the pit stops were solid. I thought we had a good shot at the win, especially drafting with (Tony) Stewart and restarting sixth after the last caution. I'm not exactly sure what happened in the big pack, but Superspeedway racing is always a crapshoot and I think we can be thankful that we are at least loading our car up in one piece."

