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PREVIEW

PAUL MENARD PITTSBURGH PAINTS/MENARDS CHEVROLET

WATKINS GLEN INT'L

AUGUST 14, 2011

Twitter:
@RCR27PMenard
@RCRRacing

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PaulMenard27

This Week's Pittsburgh Paints/Menards Chevrolet at WGI ... Paul Menard will pilot Chassis No. 361 from the Richard Childress Racing NASCAR Sprint Cup Series stable. This No. 27 Chevrolet Impala is a brand new addition to the RCR fleet for the 2011 season and will make its first paces this weekend at Watkins Glen International.

By the Numbers, Making Lefts and Rights ... In seven career NSCS starts at "The Glen," Menard has finished each contested race and completed 100 percent of the laps (632 of 632). The last time around (August 2010), Menard logged his best finish of 16th at the 2.45-mile road course. His best start of 14th came in August 2009.

A Loopy Year in Review ... After 21 races, the Eau Claire, Wis., native has an average starting position of 11.8 – only one position behind the NSCS points leader. He maintains an average running position of 15.59, has made 2,542 green-flag passes, has spent 3,133 laps racing in the top 15 (ranked 14th of all drivers) and is ranked first in Quality Passes. He has also completed 95.3 percent of his laps (5,675 of 5,956).

2011 Season Statistics:

Starts: 21 **Win:** 1 **Top fives:** 4 **Top 10s:** 7 **Laps led:** 81
Best start: 2nd (Pocono Raceway, June) **Best finish:** 1st (Indianapolis Motor Speedway, July)

Menard is qualified for the Sprint Summer Showdown ... With his victory at Indianapolis Motor Speedway, Menard was crowned the first qualifier for the Sprint Summer Showdown presented by HTC EVO 3D. The Summer Showdown puts \$3 million on the line for drivers, their charities and one lucky fan in a six-race competition. Any driver who wins between Indianapolis and Bristol (the first five races) will become a finalist for the Labor Day weekend race in Atlanta (the sixth race). If one of those eligible drivers wins the Atlanta race, then the driver, the driver's charity and one lucky race fan each collect \$1 million. Fans can enter for their shot at the big bucks each week at www.sprint.com/speed.

DIRECTV Head2Head Knockout Challenge ... The Head2Head Challenge enters the second round at Sunday's race at Watkins Glen International. This week Menard is paired up against his RCR teammate Kevin Harvick in the fantasy racing game that ends with the August 27 race at Bristol Motor Speedway. Fans participating in the challenge can win an array of prizes and the drivers involved are competing to win money for their selected charities. Menard has designated Habitat for Humanity (Upper Midwest Region) as his charity of choice for the challenge. Fans can follow along with the bracket-style game at www.directv.com/nascar.

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Race Rewind ... Paul Menard and the No. 27 Chevrolet team followed up their historic Brickyard 400 victory with a top-10 result in the Good Sam RV Insurance 500 at Pocono Raceway. Despite storms that resulted in a nearly two-hour red flag period, the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series was able to complete their 200-lap event. Menard started in the seventh position and took the checkered flag in 10th, his best career-finish at the 2.5-mile triangular race track.

Double Duty Weekend ... In addition to his driving duties with RCR's No. 27 team, Menard will drive Kevin Harvick Incorporated's No. 33 Menards Chevrolet in Saturday's 200-mile NASCAR Nationwide Series race at "The Glen." The race will air live on ESPN beginning at 2:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time and will be broadcast live on MRN Radio and Sirius Satellite Radio.

"I like racing at Watkins Glen better than I do at Sonoma. We've had good runs there in the past. But, we've had bad runs in the past. I'm not a big fan of either of the road courses, but if I had to pick a favorite of the two, I like Watkins Glen better than Sonoma because it's more open, and you can pass more. You have more room to race."

— Paul Menard

