

NASCAR Sprint Cup Series – Auto Club 500

Date: Feb. 21, 2010
Event: Auto Club 500 (Race 2 of 36)
Series: NASCAR Sprint Cup Series
Location: Auto Club Speedway (2.0-mile oval)
Winner: Jimmie Johnson of Hendrick Motorsports
JGR Finish: Joey Logano (Started 19th, Finished 5th / Running, completed 250 of 250 laps)
Kyle Busch (Started 9th, Finished 14th / Running, completed 250 of 250 laps)
Denny Hamlin (Started 25th, Finished 29th / Running, completed 248 of 250 laps)

Joey Logano earned his first top-five finish of the 2010 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series season to lead Joe Gibbs Racing yesterday in the Auto Club 500 at Auto Club Speedway in Fontana, CA.

Logano put together a solid effort behind the wheel of the No. 20 Home Depot Toyota all weekend long on this hard to handle 2-mile track to earn a solid fifth-place finish. Logano started the day in 19th and had raced his way into the top 10 by lap 104. He would remain just outside the top 10 as the Home Depot crew continued to make adjustments to improve the handle on his No. 20 Camry. Logano would restart the race in 15th place following the caution for rain on lap 199 and drove his way into the top 10 when the final caution came out on lap 223. A great stop gained Logano a couple of spots on pit road as he lined up seventh for the final restart on lap 229. He would gain two more spots over the race's final laps for an impressive fifth-place finish.

Kyle Busch started the No. 18 Interstate Batteries Toyota from the ninth position today and quickly raced his way into the top-five. He eventually would take the lead by lap 155 and go on to lead 11 laps. Busch would ultimately relinquish the lead back to Jeff Burton and following a round of pit stops and with the rain cleared; he would line up second for the restart on lap 199. Unable to take the lead and losing ground to the leaders, Busch asked crew chief Dave Rogers for more drive off the corners and came to pit road along with eventual race winner Jimmie Johnson for what they hoped to be their final pit stop on lap 223. But this day would come down to just a few feet on the two-mile track. Around 60-feet to be exact. The caution would come out with Johnson and Busch on pit road in what first appeared to be a great benefit for both drivers. However Johnson came off pit road just before race-leader Jeff Burton crossed the same line while Busch was just about 60-feet behind. The difference meant Johnson would line up first on the final restart while Busch was a lap down. Although Busch would be granted the wave around while the rest of the field pitted under caution, he was forced to restart in 19th position. With just over 20 laps

remaining, he would manage to gain several positions and drive the Interstate Batteries Toyota to a 14th-place finish.

Good fortune was certainly not on the side of Denny Hamlin and the No. 11 FedEx Freight Toyota team yesterday as he was forced to start the race from the rear of the field following an engine change. He managed to work his way through the field however, and had moved up 24 positions by lap 90 into 19th place. He had moved all the way into 12th by lap 177 and for a moment appeared to be in great position when he stayed out on the track during a round of pit stops. Rain quickly followed to force a caution on lap 192, but unfortunately for Hamlin and crew chief Mike Ford, the rain wasn't heavy enough to force a quick red flag or cause a rain-shortened finish. The No. 11 ultimately was forced to come to pit road for fuel. Still when the race restarted on lap 199 Hamlin appeared in good position to make a solid run into the top 10, but just two laps later he found himself headed to pit road with a flat tire. The misfortune put Hamlin one lap down and proved to be the first of two flat tires that spoiled a likely top-ten finish or better for the FedEx team. He would return to pit road a second time after losing a tire while under the race's final caution. The result was a finish two laps down and in 29th place.

Jimmie Johnson of Hendrick Motorsports captured the victory. Kevin Harvick was second, followed by Jeff Burton third, Mark Martin fourth, and Logano fifth. There were six cautions for 30 laps and 26 lead changes among 13 different drivers.

Next on the NASCAR Sprint Cup schedule is the Shelby American at Las Vegas Motor Speedway in Las Vegas, NV on Sunday, February 28. The race begins at 3 PM ET with live, high-definition coverage provided by FOX beginning with its pre-race show at 2 PM. The race will also be broadcast live on SIRIUS Satellite Radio Channel 128.