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Texas Domination

Johnson Wins, Regains Championship Point Lead with Two Races Remaining

Date: Nov. 3, 2013
Event: AAA Texas 500 (Round 34 of 36)
Series: NASCAR Sprint Cup Series
Location: Texas Motor Speedway in Fort Worth (1.5-mile oval)
Start/Finish: 3rd/1st (Running, completed 334 of 334 laps)
Point Standing: 1st (2,342 points, 7 points ahead of second)
Winner: Jimmie Johnson of Hendrick Motorsports (Chevrolet)

Hendrick Motorsports Finish: Jimmie Johnson (Started 3rd, Finished 1st / Running, completed 334 of 334 laps)
Dale Earnhardt Jr. (Started 7th, Finished 2nd / Running, completed 334 of 334 laps)
Kasey Kahne (Started 11th, Finished 5th / Running, completed 334 of 334 laps)
Jeff Gordon (Started 8th, Finished 38th / Running, completed 147 of 334 laps)

Hendrick Motorsports Points: Jimmie Johnson (1st with 2,342 points, 7 points ahead of second)
Dale Earnhardt Jr. (5th with 2,280 points, 62 out of first)
Jeff Gordon (6th with 2,273 points, 69 out of first)
Kasey Kahne (13th with 2,209 points, 133 out of first)

To say that Jimmie Johnson's No. 48 Lowe's Chevrolet SS was the dominant car in the AAA Texas 500 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race Sunday at Texas Motor Speedway in Fort Worth is quite simply, an understatement.

Johnson led 10 times for a race-high 255 of the 334 laps. After starting third, he took the lead for the first time at lap 10 and never looked back.

Even a miscue on a late-race pit stop couldn't slow the impressive performance Johnson gave as he drove to a commanding victory. It was his sixth win of the season and allowed him to regain the Chase for the NASCAR Sprint Cup lead by seven points over Matt Kenseth with just two races remaining until a champion is crowned.

"We came here and tested and did an awesome job of understanding what I needed in the car and what was going to create speed," Johnson said. "We came back and had a very smooth qualifying session and practice sessions yesterday and just kept putting more and more speed in the car. It paid off today. Obviously, we need a lot of speed in the car and a win to get any points because Matt (Kenseth) is there in the top-five. It's nice to gain just a few points on him."

"But just a dominant day for this Lowe's team. I can't thank everybody at Hendrick Motorsports enough for their hard efforts. Great car, great effort, pit stops – all across the board. This Chevy was fast. I know there are a lot of Lowe's employees watching and excited and are cheering, so thank you. Thanks to all the No. 48 fans. Hopefully my wife (Chandra) gets here soon with my two little ones; I can't wait to see them."

Johnson's impressive performance produced his 66th career Sprint Cup Series win and his third at Texas. His 255 laps led is the second-highest amount in Texas history behind Tony Stewart, who led 278 circuits en route to victory Nov. 5, 2006.

"This was an awesome, awesome racecar," Johnson said. "I have to go back to the test session we had last week or the week before. We did a nice job of developing a plan on how we wanted to show up in qualifying trim and in race trim. Matt didn't have the best day, and he finished fourth or fifth. So it's hard to get points in this championship battle, and we got a couple today. We have to go to Phoenix and have a very strong race and then back that up with another one at Homestead. It still isn't over until the last lap at Homestead."

Dale Earnhardt Jr. finished 4.390 seconds behind Johnson in the runner-up spot, while Joey Logano, Kenseth and Kasey Kahne rounded out the top-five. Brad Keselowski, Denny Hamlin, Kevin Harvick, Ryan Newman and Clint Bowyer comprised the remainder of the top-10.

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There were five caution periods for 26 laps, with seven drivers failing to finish the 334-lap race.

With two races remaining before a champion is crowned after the season finale Nov. 17 at Homestead-Miami Speedway, the top-13 drivers competing for the title rank as follows:

1.	Jimmie Johnson (2,342 points) +/-0 position
2.	Matt Kenseth (2,335 points, -7) -1
3.	Kevin Harvick (2,302 points, -40) +1
4.	Kyle Busch (2,290 points, -52) +1
5.	Dale Earnhardt Jr. (2,280 points, -62) +2
6.	Jeff Gordon (2,273 points, -69) -3
7.	Clint Bowyer (2,273 points, -69) -1
8.	Greg Biffle (2,269 points, -73) +/-0
9.	Joey Logano (2,251 points, -91) +2
10.	Kurt Busch (2,246 points, -96) -1
11.	Carl Edwards (2,226 points, -116) -1
12.	Ryan Newman (2,224 points, -118) +/-0
13.	Kasey Kahne (2,209 points, -133) +/-0

The next event on the Sprint Cup schedule – the penultimate race of the 10-race Chase – is the AdvoCare 500k on Nov. 10 at Phoenix International Raceway. The penultimate race of the season begins at 3 p.m. EST, with live coverage provided by ESPN beginning with a pre-race show at 2 p.m.

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