



Food City 500 Race Report
No. 43 Cheerios/Betty Crocker Dodge
No. 45 Marathon American Spirit Motor Oil Dodge
March 16, 2008
.533-mile Bristol Motor Speedway; Bristol, Va.

RACE RESULTS:

1. Jeff Burton, Chevrolet
 2. Kevin Harvick, Chevrolet
 3. Clint Bowyer, Chevrolet
 4. Greg Biffle, Ford
 5. Dale Earnhardt, Jr., Chevrolet
- 28. Kyle Petty, Marathon American Spirit Motor Oil Dodge**
38. Bobby Labonte, Cheerios/Betty Crocker Dodge

Jeff Burton picked up his first NASCAR Sprint Cup victory of the year in a wild finish to Sunday's Food City 500 at the Bristol (Va.) Motor Speedway (BMS). Kevin Harvick and Clint Bowyer crossed the finish line behind Burton to give Richard Childress Racing the first 1-2-3 finish in the history of that racing stable.

There is a reason that BMS has sold out over 50 consecutive times. It routinely provides the most exciting racing on the circuit. Sunday was no different. On a late restart after a lap 490 caution, Tony Stewart slowed allowing teammate, Denny Hamlin, a chance to take the lead. A few laps later, Harvick and Stewart got together to bring out the final caution. On that restart, Hamlin slowed and Burton was on his way to Victory Lane.

Kyle Petty and the No. 45 Marathon American Spirit Motor Oil Dodge team scored a 28th place finish in the Food City 500. Petty started the race from the 35th position due to qualifying having been rained out and the field set by the NASCAR rulebook. When the green flag fell, he immediately moved into the top-30 and looked to have the car dialed in. However, the longer Petty made laps around the "World's Fastest Half-Mile," the looser the car became. When the NASCAR-mandated, competition caution flew at lap 50, crew chief Bill Wilburn called Petty down pit road to pull spring rubbers from both rear springs. This was exactly what the Dodge Charger needed and as the race progressed, Petty could be found running some of the fastest lap times on the track. On lap 415, Petty knocked off a lap as fast as the leader.

"The reason that we were so loose at the start, that's all on me," said Petty. "I wanted spring rubbers in both rear springs. I really didn't think the track would be that free

because of all the weather we've had. Once we took those out and it started to warm up outside, the car was a rocket. Now we get a weekend off to regroup and go to Martinsville.”

Bobby Labonte and the No. 43 Cheerios/Betty Crocker Dodge team finished 38th in Sunday's event. Labonte was completely different than Petty at the start of the race in that he was really tight. After small changes during the first caution, crew chief Jeff Meendering went big during a lap 94 caution. Those big changes gave Labonte a “new” car and he began to slice his way through the field. On lap 190, Labonte was running in the 17th position when he fell victim to an on-track incident, with several other cars, that was not of his making. This ended any chance for Labonte to challenge for the win, but he did continue on to pick up some valuable spots and points.

“Wow, the car was so tight at the beginning,” sounded Labonte. “With the rain and the changing track conditions, it really was a crap shoot as to what setup we needed. But we were still on the lead lap and in good position. Jeff (Meendering) made some outstanding calls from the pit box today. The longer we ran, the more the cars in front started to back up to me. When everyone got together in front of me, I just had no where to go. The track was just blocked. I hate it for my guys, but they worked hard and we tried to claw for as many points as we could.”

The NASCAR Sprint Cup Series will take a break for Easter before heading to the Martinsville Speedway on Sunday, March 30. The race will be broadcast on FOX, the Motor Racing Network (MRN) and Sirius Satellite Radio channel 128.