



Daytona 500 Race Report
No. 43 Cheerios/Betty Crocker Dodge
No. 45 Wells Fargo Dodge
February 17, 2008

Daytona International Speedway; Daytona Beach, Fla.

Ryan Newman used a big push from teammate Kurt Busch to score the victory in the 50th running of the Daytona 500. The win gives legendary car owner Roger Penske his first win in The Great American Race. Busch finished second to give Dodge a 1-2 finish and a strong start to the 2008 NASCAR Sprint Cup season as they took six of the top eight positions at the finish.

Bobby Labonte and the No. 43 Cheerios/Betty Crocker Dodge team finished the Daytona 500 in the 11th position. After starting the race 13th, Labonte spent the early portions of the race searching for the line that suited his Dodge Charger. Caution periods were scarce during the first half of the race, meaning crew chief Jeff Meendering had to make adjustments during green flag pit stops. Small chassis adjustments, along with a couple of strategic two tire stops, had Labonte moving up on the scoring charts by the halfway point of the event. As the race progressed into the latter stages, it became filled with the waving of caution flags. The No. 43 pit crew, which had been knocking off fast pit stops all day, kept Labonte up front at the end. Labonte will head to next week's event at the California Speedway in 11th place in NASCAR Sprint Cup points.

"What a great way to start the season for this Cheerios/Betty Crocker Dodge team and for the Petty Enterprises organization," said Labonte. "It was a long winter for all of us, with the move to Mooresville (N.C.). To come out of the box and have some success was our No. 1 priority. This gives us some momentum to start the season. We need to build on this when we get to places like California and Las Vegas."

Kyle Petty and the No. 45 Wells Fargo Dodge team finished 34th in Sunday's event. Fuel system problems plagued the team during Thursday's qualifying races. All 43 teams were allowed by NASCAR to change motors after the qualifying races. This seemed to correct the problems as Petty posted the third quickest time during Saturday's practice session. However, as the race began, it was evident that the new power plant would suffer from the same set of circumstances.

"We had some sort of fuel pressure issue - the exact same problem we had in the Duels on Thursday. We couldn't get it to run above 3 1/2 pounds - and that's not good at all. We don't know what caused it because this engine ran great Friday and Saturday. We made several long stops to try to fix the problem but nothing seemed to make a difference. The

positive thing is that even though the engine would give up at the end of the straightaways, the car handled great. We had a good set-up that we can come back with and continue to improve."