



**RACE REPORT:
No. 98 ENERGIZER / MENARDS FORD FUSION**

PEPSI 500
Two-Mile Auto Club Speedway
Fontana, Calif.
Sunday, October 11th, 2009

RACE SUMMARY

Paul Menard

Started: 42nd

Finished: 27th

Top Five

1. Jimmie Johnson, Chevrolet
2. Jeff Gordon, Chevrolet
3. Juan Pablo Montoya, Chevrolet
4. Mark Martin, Chevrolet
5. Tony Stewart, Chevrolet



Complete Race Results:

<http://www.yatesracing.com/index.php?q=/articles/recaps98>

POINTS SUMMARY

Paul Menard

Race Total: 82 points

Season Total: 2,529 points, Ranked 32nd

SEASON SUMMARY

Paul Menard

Starts	Wins	Top Fives	Top 10s	Poles
31	0	0	0	0

No. 98 ENERGIZER / MENARDS FORD FUSION RECAP:

MENARD POSTS 27th-PLACE FINISH AT AUTO CLUB SPEEDWAY

FONTANA, Calif. (October 11, 2009) – Yates Racing driver Paul Menard and the No. 98 Energizer / Menards team fought an ill-handling race car for most of the day in Sunday's Pepsi 500 at Auto Club Speedway. After starting the race from the 41st position, Menard was able to pick up a handful of positions, however was left with a disappointing 27th-place finish to end the day.

The morning clouds and haziness over Auto Club Speedway did not burn away until 50 laps into the Pepsi 500. Menard, who started the race 41st picked up a number of positions in the early laps of the 500-mile event and noted to crew chief Larry Carter that the car was working well around the speedway.

During the first pit stop on lap 31, Menard entered pit road scored in the 31st position and asked for only a slight air pressure adjustment to help with a "loose off" handling issue he was fighting. After working his way up to the 28th place, the sun began to come through the clouds and drastically change the track condition.

As the next run went on, Menard radioed that his No. 98 Energizer / Menards Ford Fusion continued to lose grip in the corners. Shortly after relaying the message to the team, Menard was passed by race leader and eventual race winner Jimmie Johnson.

Menard and the No. 98 team continued to make changes to the balance of their Ford Fusion, but nothing seemed to give the No. 98 the grip it needed. Despite the issues, Menard held his track position and avoided a number of accidents, including two late in the race that claimed several competitors running around the No. 98.

In the closing laps of the race, a multi-car wreck forced NASCAR to red flag the event. After several minutes of clean up, the race re-started with just five laps remaining. Johnson held off his teammate Jeff Gordon to capture the win at Fontana. Juan Pablo Montoya, Mark Martin and Tony Stewart rounded out the top five in today's Pepsi 500 at Auto Club Speedway.

"Coming into the race and even in the early part of it, I thought we had a great car," Menard said following the race. "However, when the sun came out, the track began to lose a lot of grip and our No. 98 Energizer / Menards Ford Fusion wasn't setup for that. We made the changes we thought would work, but we continued to lose grip in the longer green-flag runs. The guys in the pits did a great job today with their pit stops, but we just weren't setup for the changing track conditions."

Next week, the No. 98 Johns Manville / Menards team will enjoy a week at home for the homecoming race at Charlotte Motor Speedway in Concord, N.C. ABC television and PRN radio affiliates will carry the live race broadcast beginning at 7:00 p.m. (EST).

NEXT UP:

NASCAR Banking 500

Charlotte Motor Speedway (1.5-mile speedway)

Concord, N.C.

Saturday, October 17, 2009