



AUTO CLUB SPEEDWAY PREVIEW

PAUL MENARD • No. 98 Energizer Ford Fusion



- The Energizer brand will make its first appearance this season on the hood of the No. 98 Ford in Fontana
- Menard will run a full schedule in both the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series and NASCAR Nationwide Series this season
- Menards stands 14th in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series driver point standings after Daytona

Menard on Fontana: “The Daytona 500 is a great event and a great way to start the NASCAR Sprint Cup season, but it’s such an anomaly. Everyone looks forward to getting through those weeks and then getting back to the basics. We were happy with the results and our 13th-place finish in the Daytona (Fla.) 500, but we’re glad to be through it and moving on to concentrate on our downforce program for a while. We’ve built up a little bit of good momentum, so we’ll try to capitalize on it this weekend.

“The first year I raced the Cup race in Fontana, we had a couple of decent finishes, but it’s been a bit of a struggle at times since then. I know Slugger (Labbe, crew chief) and the guys have worked really hard to prepare a great car for this track and this race, so I think we’ve got a pretty fair shot at a good finish this weekend. My teammates Kasey (Kahne) and Elliott (Sadler) both have a win there and obviously know what it takes to be successful at this track, so we’re hopeful all four Richard Petty Motorsports teams will continue to work together to be successful.”

Crew Chief Slugger Labbe’s Thoughts: “Our goal in California is to find a package that Paul will be comfortable with and that we can build on for the events in Fontana, Las Vegas and Atlanta. We need to build a catalog of do’s and don’ts. The Menards Ford Fusion we’ve prepared is a new car and has all of the latest updates. We’ve worked hard at the 7-post and using SIM tests, plus we have good information from the No. 9 team’s tire test, so we think we have a good starting point.

“Daytona is restrictor plate racing and it’s such a different animal from all of the rest. You worry so much about the draft and when you get to California, you can start to concentrate on your downforce program. The cars have to drive well and handle well and you can start to get into the trend of working on the downforce cars and trying to find a good balance. We’ll concentrate on building a baseline that we can use for the next three races until we get to Texas and the new spoiler comes into play.”

Chassis History: Crew chief Slugger Labbe and the No. 98 Menards crew have prepared chassis No. 683 for this weekend’s Auto Club 500 at Auto Club Speedway. This is a brand new Ford Fusion specially prepared for this event. The Energizer bunny will adorn the hood as Energizer serves as primary sponsor for this event.

Race Information

Date: Feb. 21, 2010
Race: Auto Club 500
Laps: 250 Laps/500 Miles

TV Information: 3 p.m. ET on FOX
Radio Information: 3 p.m. ET on MRN and Sirius/XM
Satellite Radio

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