

NASCAR Rear View

Carl Edwards wins but Jimmie Johnson makes the record books

By Melissa Gaona
Statesman Sports

Jimmie Johnson, up by 69-points, not only won the 2008 Sprint Cup Championship, but he has made the record books, along with Carl Yarborough, by winning his third consecutive championship title.

Carl Edwards, however, celebrated in victory lane after tallying up 72-points in the finale, Sunday, November 16, at Homestead Miami Speedway for the Ford 400. This victory marks his ninth this season, three of those came in the last four races. Even though Edwards has won nine races and Johnson has won seven, Edwards made some mistakes this season that put him behind the points leader; the wreck at Talladega that caused multiple cars to wreck and at Lowes Motor Speedway where he finished in 33rd.

Jimmie Johnson, started 30th and finished in 15th at Homestead, making this only the second time he finished out of the top ten; the other was at Texas Motor Speedway. Johnson has 22 total wins over the past three Championships and has racked up 40 total career wins.

David Reutimann started and led the first lap of the race, but Matt Kenseth passed him by lap 2.

The first caution of the race came on lap 69 when Aric Almirola spun out on turn 4. Thankfully, no one else was involved.

Kurt Busch ran into the wall twice; one of those coming from a flat tire and the other simply by himself.

With only four laps to go both Matt Kenseth and Carl

Edwards were running on fumes and battling it out for first. Kenseth's car couldn't hang on and by lap 2 he was out. Talk about coasting it home; by the time Edwards crossed the finish line he was out of gas and had to be pushed to victory lane.

"I don't know what to say," Edwards said. "Second place in the championship isn't what we came here for, but ... [Johnson] deserved to win. We got beat by a true champion."

Jeff Gordon: remember that name? This skilled driver, who has a total of 81 career victories, has shown us something we're not used to seeing. Gordon has not won a race since Charlotte in 2007. However, Gordon started at Homestead in 37th and was able to pull off a fourth place finish. This is his 13th top five finish this season.

"Coming from 37th, I couldn't be more proud of Steve Letarte and all the guys on this Dupont Chevrolet," Gordon said. "We showed what we're made of and that we're not going to give up. Hey, we didn't win a race this year — but I'm really excited about 2009. We've got a lot of great things happening."

As far as Tony Stewart goes, this will be his last season with Joe Gibbs Racing. The ten year relationship has come to an end and he will now drive for Stewart-Haas Racing and drive the No. 14 car. Stewart will leave this team with 33 career wins and two championship titles on his belt.

Tony Stewart isn't the only one saying goodbye to his team for the

2008 season. Ryan Newman drove his last race with Roger Penske Racing and will now head to Stewart's new team, Stewart-Haas. Clint Bowyer will not be changing teams, but Richard Childress Racing will have a new crew chief, Shane Wilson, and Bowyer will drive the No. 33 car instead of No. 7.

There's only about a three month break for 43-drivers before NASCAR heads to the one and only Daytona International Speedway, Saturday, February 7, for the Budweiser Shootout. One week later, Sunday, February 15, the Daytona 500 will kick off.

How far will Jimmie Johnson go to start on his fourth championship? Or should the question be, how far will 42 drivers go to *not* allow Johnson a fourth title in 2009?

Homestead Miami Speedway Ford 400 Race Results

- 1). Carl Edwards
- 2). Kevin Harvick
- 3). Jamie McMurray
- 4). Jeff Gordon
- 5). Clint Bowyer
- 6). Kasey Kahne
- 7). Travis Kvapil
- 8). Casey Mears
- 9). Tony Stewart
- 10). Martin Truex

Final Standings in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Championship

- | | |
|--------------------|------|
| 1). Jimmie Johnson | 6684 |
| 2). Carl Edwards | 6615 |
| 3). Greg Biffle | 6467 |
| 4). Kevin Harvick | 6408 |
| 5). Clint Bowyer | 6381 |
| 6). Jeff Burton | 6335 |
| 7). Jeff Gordon | 6316 |
| 8). Denny Hamlin | 6214 |
| 9). Tony Stewart | 6202 |
| 10). Kyle Busch | 6186 |
| 11). Matt Kenseth | 6184 |
| 12). Dale Jr. | 6127 |



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Top: Brownsboro's Wide Receiver Tristain Warren (3) jumps high to catch a long pass in the Bears vs. Waco La Vega game.

Bear and Bearette Sports Highlights



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Top: Varsity Bearette Montoya Hightower runs to cover a Lady Pirate in the Bears vs. Winona game Friday.



Melissa Gaona Photo

Top: Bearette Sierra blocks Frankston then unties the game 26-24 with only 1:38 left to play, Friday night, November 14.

Freshman Bearettes beat Frankston

It was a close call when the freshman Bearettes played against Frankston's Lady Indians, Friday, November 14.

The Lady Indians kept a close lead up until the fourth quarter.

Both teams then tied 24-

24 with only 3:17 left to play. Bearette Sierra snapped the tie when she scored two-points with 1:38 left on the clock. The game ended 29-26, Brownsboro.

The next game for freshman will be on November 22, against Kerens.

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