

= 2010 Sylvania 300 =

The 2010 Sylvania 300 was a stock car racing competition that took place on September 19 , 2010 . Held at New Hampshire Motor Speedway in Loudon , New Hampshire , the 300 @-@ lap race was the twenty @-@ seventh in the 2010 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series , as well as the first in the ten @-@ race Chase for the Sprint Cup , which ended the season . Clint Bowyer of the Richard Childress Racing team won the race ; Denny Hamlin finished second and Jamie McMurray came in third .

Brad Keselowski won the pole position , although he was almost immediately passed by Tony Stewart at the start of the race . Many Chase for the Sprint Cup participants , including Jimmie Johnson , Kurt Busch , and Hamlin , were in the top ten for most of the race , although some encountered problems in the closing laps . Stewart was leading the race with two laps remaining but ran out of fuel , giving the lead , and the win , to Bowyer . There were twenty @-@ one lead changes among eight different drivers , as well as eight cautions during the race .

The race was Bowyer 's first win in the 2010 season , and the third of his career . The result advanced Bowyer to second in the Drivers ' Championship , thirty @-@ five points behind Hamlin and ten ahead of Kevin Harvick , although he fell to twelfth in the standings after receiving a post @-@ race penalty . Chevrolet maintained its lead in the Manufacturers ' Championship , thirty @-@ two points ahead of Toyota and seventy @-@ four ahead of Ford , with nine races remaining in the season . Attendance was 95 @,@ 000 , while 3 @.@ 68 million watched it on television .

= = Report = =

= = = Background = = =

New Hampshire Motor Speedway is one of ten intermediate tracks that hold NASCAR races . The standard track at New Hampshire Motor Speedway is a four @-@ turn oval track , 1 @.@ 058 miles (1 @.@ 703 km) long . Its banking in the turns varies from two to seven degrees , while the front stretch , the finish line , and the back stretch are all banked at one degree .

Before the race , Denny Hamlin led the Drivers ' Championship with 5 @,@ 060 points , followed by Jimmie Johnson with 5 @,@ 050 . Kevin Harvick and Kyle Busch were tied for third place with 5 @,@ 030 points , and Kyle 's older brother Kurt Busch had 5 @,@ 020 points . Tony Stewart , with 5 @,@ 010 points , was tied with Greg Biffle , and Jeff Gordon , Carl Edwards , Jeff Burton , Matt Kenseth and Clint Bowyer rounded out the top twelve with 5 @,@ 000 points each . In the Manufacturers ' Championship , Chevrolet was leading with 188 points , twenty @-@ nine points ahead of their rival Toyota . Ford , with 120 points , was fifteen points ahead of Dodge in the battle for third place . Mark Martin was the race 's defending champion .

A number of drivers competing in the 2010 Chase for the Sprint Cup entered the race optimistic about their chances of winning the championship . Biffle argued that he , Burton , or Stewart were " capable of winning it " . Johnson , who already had eighteen previous wins in the Chase , observed that " those 10 races in the Chase is its own world . The people act and react differently under pressure , and for the last four years we have done a great job in that environment . " Hamlin commented , " Reliability is the only thing we need to work on . It 's taken us out of the last three Chases , not being reliable . You have to have it to be the champion . " Ray Evernham also opined on Hamlin , " I think Denny knows that he has the talent to win the championship . I think that he 's got focus right now and a good , veteran crew chief in Mike Ford . If Toyota gives him the speed , he could be a threat . "

= = = Practice and qualifying = = =

Three practice sessions were held before the Sunday race ? one on Friday , and two on Saturday . The first session lasted 90 minutes , and the second 50 minutes . The final session lasted 60

minutes . During the first practice session , Stewart was fastest , placing ahead of Edwards in second and Marcos Ambrose in third . A. J. Allmendinger was scored fourth , and Kyle Busch placed fifth . David Ragan , Johnson , Brad Keselowski , Biffle , and Hamlin rounded out the top ten fastest drivers in the session .

Forty @-@ five drivers attempted to qualify ; due to NASCAR 's qualifying procedure , only forty @-@ three could race . Keselowski clinched his first pole position in the Sprint Cup Series , with a time of 28 @.@ 515 . He was joined on the front row of the grid by Bowyer . Stewart qualified third , Jamie McMurray took fourth , and Juan Pablo Montoya started fifth . Johnson , one of the drivers in the Chase for the Sprint Cup , qualified twenty @-@ fifth , while Harvick was scored in twenty @-@ seventh . The two drivers who failed to qualify for the race were Jeff Green and Johnny Sauter . Once qualifying concluded Keselowski said , " I felt I got a shot at the pole before I qualified but you never really know . When I ran the lap I knew I gave up a little bit of time right in the middle of both corners but I had a plan going into it and stuck to it and it worked . I ? m really proud of that lap . "

On Saturday morning , Stewart was fastest in the second practice session , ahead of Sam Hornish , Jr. in second , and McMurray in third . Ryan Newman was fourth quickest , and Bowyer took fifth . Kurt Busch , who ended up receiving a penalty for using extra tires , managed sixth . Mark Martin , Johnson , Kasey Kahne , and Montoya followed in the top ten . Of the other drivers in the Chase , Hamlin was scored sixteenth fastest , while Harvick was scored in twenty @-@ fourth . McMurray paced the final practice session , with Jeff Gordon and Johnson following in second and third respectively . Stewart was fourth fastest , ahead of Montoya and Bowyer . Hamlin was scored seventh , Kahne eighth , Dale Earnhardt , Jr. ninth , and David Reutimann tenth . Other Chase drivers included Kyle Busch in twenty @-@ first and Kenseth in thirtieth .

== = Race == =

The race , the twenty @-@ seventh of a total of thirty @-@ six in the 2010 season , began at 1 : 00 p.m. EDT and was televised live in the United States on ESPN . Around the start of the race , weather conditions were partly cloudy with an air temperature around 70 ° F (21 ° C) . Jonathan DeFelice , president of St. Anselm College in Goffstown , New Hampshire , began pre @-@ race ceremonies with the invocation . Anthony Gargiula performed the national anthem , and Mark Corcoran , VP of Industrial and Commercial Sales for Sylvania , gave the command for drivers to start their engines . During the pace laps , two drivers had to move to the rear of the grid due to unapproved changes : David Gilliland because of an engine change , and Andy Lally because of a transmission change .

Keselowski retained his pole position lead into the first corner , with Bowyer behind him . One lap later , Stewart passed Keselowski to become the new race leader ; Montoya passed Keselowski for the second position on the next lap . By lap eight , Stewart had a lead of over one second . After starting the race in twelfth , Kurt Busch moved up to ninth position by lap nine . Paul Menard , who started in eighth , fell to eleventh position by lap twelve . After losing two positions early , Bowyer moved back up into third position by passing Keselowski . By the nineteenth lap , Johnson had moved up eight positions to seventeenth , and Harvick had moved up seven positions to twentieth .

Earnhardt , who began the race in thirty @-@ second , had moved up ten positions to twenty @-@ second by lap 22 . Two laps later , Bowyer passed Montoya for second position . Scott Speed spun sideways and collided with the wall four laps later , causing the first caution of the race . On lap 28 , Robby Gordon moved into the lead for one lap , delaying his pit stop until lap 29 . Once the race resumed , Bowyer regained the lead followed by McMurray in second . McMurray led the next lap , but Bowyer reclaimed the lead on lap 32 . Three laps later , Kyle Busch , in seventh place , collided with the wall , but escaped with minor damage . A collision involving Ambrose and Menard occurred on lap 39 and prompted the second caution .

Most drivers stayed on the track during the caution , allowing Bowyer to remain the leader on the restart . On lap 48 , Michael McDowell drove to the garage because of engine problems . Five laps later , Bowyer led the race , with McMurray 1 @.@ 3 seconds behind him . Landon Cassill went to the garage due to failing brakes on lap 56 . Johnson moved into sixth , as Edwards passed

McMurray five laps later for second . By lap 64 , Bowyer 's lead was over 3 @. @ 5 seconds .

Four laps later , Johnson passed Keselowski to claim fifth position . On the 81st lap , Earnhardt , Jr. moved into seventh after passing David Reutimann and Stewart . Two laps later , Kurt Busch and Jeff Burton passed Reutimann for ninth and tenth respectively . During lap 90 , Earnhardt passed Keselowski for sixth , as Johnson claimed fourth from McMurray . After 93 laps , Bowyer 's lead was over five seconds . Two laps later , green flag pit stops began , as Montoya was the first to pit . On lap 98 , Edwards became the new leader after Bowyer came into the pits . One lap later , Kurt Busch became the new leader , followed by Jeff Gordon and Robby Gordon . On lap 102 , Bowyer reclaimed the lead as the previous leaders made their stops . Bobby Labonte and Casey Mears were unable to continue the race after their pit stops .

On lap 113 , Burton moved up to sixth , while Jeff Gordon passed Earnhardt for eleventh . Allmendinger fell to twenty @- @ fifth after pit stops due to having run out of fuel on his way onto pit road . Three laps later , both Jeff Gordon and Earnhardt had passed Reutimann for tenth and eleventh respectively . By lap 120 , Bowyer had a lead of about four seconds over Edwards . Four laps later , Harvick passed Montoya for fourteenth . On lap 132 , Keselowski fell to ninth after being passed by Kurt Busch and Hamlin . On lap 147 , Bowyer 's lead of over seven seconds was reduced to nothing when the pace car moved on track . During the caution , which was caused by debris , most of the leaders made pit stops .

Bowyer maintained his lead on the restart . On lap 153 , Kyle Busch moved into tenth position by passing Jeff Gordon . Seven laps later , Burton claimed fourth . On the 162nd lap , Ryan Newman moved up to eleventh , as Keselowski fell to twelfth . Two laps later , Jeff Gordon passed Kyle Busch to move into ninth , while Stewart passed Burton for fourth . On lap 177 , Montoya passed Kyle Busch for tenth position . Afterward , Kyle Busch fell to twelfth after being passed by Newman . By lap 192 , Bowyer had a 3 @. @ 5 second lead over McMurray . One lap later , Montoya passed Kurt Busch for ninth . On lap 199 , Harvick moved into fifteenth position . Two laps later , Hamlin passed Jeff Burton to claim fifth .

On lap 206 , Martin 's car suffered a flat tire and the fourth caution was given as a result . Bowyer led on the restart , although he was passed by Stewart within one lap . On lap 213 , Hamlin spun sideways , prompting the fifth caution . Despite remaining undamaged , Hamlin fell from fourth to twenty @- @ second position . Stewart led on the restart , as Jeff Gordon claimed second from Bowyer . By lap 221 , a sixth caution came out as Kurt Busch , Johnson , and Kyle Busch all spun sideways . After the accident , Johnson fell to twenty @- @ fourth ; Stewart maintained his lead on the restart . Five laps later , Matt Kenseth spun out , causing the seventh caution . Stewart led the drivers back to the green flag , but was overtaken by McMurray one lap later .

On lap 241 , the pace car came out for the eighth and final caution , after Joey Logano collided with the outside wall . McMurray led on the restart , but Stewart reclaimed the lead on lap 247 . Seven laps later , Johnson was forced to pit due to a loose wheel . By lap 257 , Stewart had a lead of over one second . Five laps later , Hamlin claimed sixth from Harvick . During the 263rd lap , Bowyer passed McMurray for second . Four laps later , Newman passed Kyle Busch for tenth position . After 269 laps , Stewart lead was over Bowyer was 1 @. @ 6 seconds . Six laps later , Hamlin moved into fifth position after passing Earnhardt . During lap 290 , Hamlin passed McMurray for third . With two laps remaining , Stewart and Burton both ran out of fuel , handing the lead back to Bowyer . Bowyer maintained the lead to win his first race of the 2010 season . Hamlin finished second , ahead of McMurray in third , Earnhardt in fourth , and Harvick in fifth .

= = = Post @- @ race comments = = =

Bowyer appeared in victory lane to celebrate his first win of the season in front of 95 @, @ 000 people who attended the race . Bowyer also earned \$ 248 @, @ 250 in race winnings . Stewart took his last @- @ minute loss of the race with good humor , saying , " We went down swinging . I think I ran me out of fuel . " In the subsequent post @- @ race press conference , Hamlin said , " First thing I asked is how many cars on the lead lap , because I wanted to see how bad our day was going to be . I set a goal (of) top 15 , and then it was top eight and then top six and , ' Holy cow , we can win

this thing . ' We just made a heck of a charge at the end . " Bowyer was delighted with his victory : " [Crew chief] Shane [Wilson] built a brand new race car and we came here and we were fast right off the truck , and everybody had a lot of confidence , a pep in their step . And we showed it from the time we unloaded to qualifying , practice , we were one of the fastest cars here . That ? s what it takes to run at this level , to be a part of that Chase , if we can go and continue to have as much fun as we did this weekend . I know it ? s the key , I know it is to my success . "

Johnson was candid about his performance : " We had a decent car and ran in the top five and top 10 but just didn 't end up finishing there . " Harvick was somewhat more upbeat , saying , " We didn 't have a great day . We didn 't have a great weekend , honestly , and (fifth) says a lot about this team . If we keep doing that on our bad days , we will be in good shape . " The race result left Hamlin leading the Driver 's Championship with 5 @,@ 230 points . Bowyer , who finished first , moved to second on 5 @,@ 195 , ten points ahead of Harvick and twenty @-@ seven ahead of Kyle Busch . In the Manufacturers ' Championship , Chevrolet maintained the lead with 197 points . Toyota remained second with 165 points . Ford followed with 123 points , fourteen points ahead of Dodge in fourth . 3 @.@ 68 million people watched the race on television . The race took two hours , fifty @-@ eight minutes and twenty @-@ two seconds to complete , and the margin of victory was 0 @.@ 477 seconds .

Although Bowyer 's car passed initial inspection , NASCAR announced that they had " discovered issues with the car in a more thorough inspection at its research and development center " . Three days after the race , two teams were given penalties : Richard Childress Racing for Bowyer 's car , and Whitney Motorsports for McDowell 's car . Richard Childress Racing 's penalty , for unauthorized alterations to the rear bodywork of Bowyer 's car , included a \$ 150 @,@ 000 fine and a six race suspension for Wilson , and the loss of 150 owner and driver points for Richard Childress and Bowyer respectively . RCR 's car chief , Chad Haney , was placed on probation until December 31 , 2010 , and suspended from NASCAR until November 3 , 2010 . Whitney Motorsports ' penalty was for engine exhaust valves that did not meet NASCAR 's weight requirements . The penalties for that included a \$ 50 @,@ 000 fine and six race suspension for Jeremy Lafaver , while both McDowell and owner Dusty Whitney lost 50 driver and owner points respectively .

Childress and Bowyer were both upset with the penalties and almost immediately announced plans to appeal . Bowyer argued the penalties to be too severe , saying , " I don 't think the penalty fits the crime . Sixty @-@ thousandths of an inch , folks . Grab a quarter out of your pocket . Less than the thickness of that quarter right there is worth a 150 @-@ point fine ? " He also argued that his car could have been damaged slightly after the race as his car was pushed by a wrecker after it ran out of gas on its way to victory lane . " Is it possible that a two @-@ ton wrecker could bend the quarter @-@ panel 60 @-@ thousandths of an inch ? You have to ask yourself that . " The team lost the initial appeal , forcing them to make a final appeal to NASCAR National Commissioner John Middlebrook . As a result of the final appeal , Wilson 's fine was reduced to \$ 100 @,@ 000 while he and Haney 's suspensions were reduced from six to four races (they were allowed to work with the team during the appeal process) ; however , the points penalty administered to Bowyer and his team was upheld .

Asked if he thought Bowyer could still win the championship after this setback , Stewart argued , " It 's possible for sure . The biggest thing is going to be going to the race track and having that stress of not having his crew chief , not having his car chief and those are two key people on a race weekend ... I can promise you that Childress has the resources to cover this ... it 's definitely possible , but everyone else is going to have to have trouble . " Bowyer did not lose the victory title for the race itself ; NASCAR vice president of competition , Robin Pemberton , commented , " We don 't consider taking away the win . If you ask some , they would consider a 150 @-@ point penalty with only nine races to go in the Chase a pretty hefty penalty . "

= = Results = =

= = = Qualifying = = =

= = = Race results = = =

= = Standings after the race = =