

= 2011 Budweiser Shootout =

The 2011 Budweiser Shootout was a stock car race and the first exhibition event of the 2011 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series . It was held on February 12 , 2011 at the Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach , Florida . The 75 @-@ lap race was won by Kurt Busch for the Penske Racing team . Jamie McMurray finished second and Ryan Newman came in third .

Pole position driver Dale Earnhardt , Jr. maintained his lead through the first corner , but Clint Bowyer , who started seventh on the grid , led the first lap . On the 25th lap , the first caution was given , as Jeff Burton became the leader . During the caution all the teams made a pit stop . Two laps later , an accident involving several racecars prompted the second caution to be given . On lap 63 , Newman became the leader . He maintained the lead until the final lap , when Denny Hamlin passed him below the yellow line ( out of bounds line ) , as Busch passed him on the other side . Hamlin passed Newman below the yellow line giving the win to Kurt Busch .

There were four cautions and 28 lead changes among ten different drivers throughout the course of the race . It was Busch 's first win in the 2011 season , as well as his first win at a track that uses restrictor plates , such as Daytona International Speedway and Talladega Superspeedway . A total of 80 @, @ 000 people attended the race , while 7 @. @ 8 million watched it on television .

= = Report = =

= = = Background = = =

The track , Daytona International Speedway , is one of six superspeedways to hold NASCAR races . The standard track at Daytona International Speedway is a four @-@ turn superspeedway that is 2 @. @ 5 miles ( 4 @. @ 0 km ) long . The track 's turns are banked at 31 degrees , while the front stretch , the location of the finish line , is banked at 18 degrees .

The Budweiser Shootout was created by Busch Beer brand manager Monty Roberts as the Busch Clash in 1979 . The race , designed to promote Busch Beer , invites the fastest NASCAR drivers from the previous season to compete . The race is considered a " warm @-@ up " for the Daytona 500 . It was renamed the Bud Shootout in 1998 . The name changed to the Budweiser Shootout in 2001 , and it was rebranded the Sprint Unlimited in 2013 .

A total of thirty drivers were eligible to compete in the race , including previous Sprint Cup Series champions , past winners of the race , rookie of the year winners , previous year pole position winners , the participants of the 2010 Chase for the Sprint Cup , and the winners of the Daytona 500 and Coke Zero 400 . The race was 75 laps long , with two segments of 25 and 50 laps . In between the segments there was a pit stop that lasted ten minutes . During the pit stop , teams were able to change tires , add fuel , and make normal chassis adjustments , but they were not be allowed to change springs , shock absorbers or rear @-@ ends . Also , all the work was done in either the garage or on pit road . The caution laps , as well as the green flag laps was scored in the race . Kevin Harvick was the defending race winner .

= = = Practice and qualifying = = =

Two practice sessions were held before the race , which was on Friday afternoon . The first session lasted 45 minutes , while the second lasted 60 minutes . Dale Earnhardt , Jr. was quickest with a time of 45 @. @ 031 seconds in the first session , less than five hundredths of a second faster than Mark Martin . Jimmie Johnson with a quickest time of 45 @. @ 082 seconds was third , ahead of Clint Bowyer , Kyle Busch , and Jeff Burton . Ryan Newman was seventh , still within a second of Earnhardt 's time . In the second and final practice session , Joey Logano was quickest with a fastest time of 44 @. @ 316 seconds . Busch followed in second , ahead of Michael Waltrip and Bobby Labonte . Greg Biffle was fifth quickest , with a time of 44 @. @ 787 . Denny Hamlin , Jeff Gordon , Kevin Harvick , Carl Edwards , and Matt Kenseth rounded out to the first ten positions .

Also in the final practice session , a caution came out because the flood lights ( that light the track for racing ) in the first and third turns were turned off .

For qualifying , the 24 drivers that appeared to race chose their starting positions by a draw . Earnhardt chose the pole position , ahead of Tony Stewart , Edwards , Hamlin , and Kahne who rounded out the first five positions . Labonte chose sixth place , while Bowyer chose seventh , ahead of Newman and Derrike Cope in eighth and ninth . Waltrip , Biffle , Gordon , Juan Pablo Montoya , and Jamie McMurray chose the next five positions . Burton , who chose fifteenth , was followed by Kevin Conway , Kurt Busch , Harvick , Kenseth , and Martin in the first 20 positions . Kyle Busch , Logano , Johnson , and Regan Smith chose the last four positions in the race .

= = = Race = = =

The 2011 Budweiser Shootout was the first exhibition race of the season , and was televised live in the United States on Fox which began at 8 : 10 p.m. EST . The conditions on the grid were dry before the race , the air temperature at 51 ° F ( 11 ° C ) with clear skies expected . Country music singer Laura Bell Bundy began pre @-@ race ceremonies , performing the national anthem . Bob Hadley of Westside Baptist Church in Daytona Beach , Florida then delivered the invocation , and actress Amber Heard gave the command for drivers to start their engines .

Earnhardt retained his pole position lead into the first corner , but by the conclusion of the first lap , Bowyer was leading . Bowyer remained the leader for the next four laps with assistance from Earnhardt . On the sixth lap , Kahne drove to pit road because of problems with his racecar . On the following lap , Stewart and Hamlin began to draft with each other while in the third and fourth positions . By lap nine , Johnson had moved up 16 positions into the fifth position . One lap later , Burton , with assistance from Earnhardt , moved up to the first position , but on lap 11 , Earnhardt reclaimed the lead . On the twelfth lap , Stewart became the leader , but after one lap Burton reclaimed the first position as Edwards moved up to second . On the 14th lap , Burton remained the leader , ahead of Edwards and Kurt Busch . Afterward , Earnhardt fell to fifth . However , he moved up to the second position on the following lap while drafting with Kyle Busch to become the leader on lap 17 . Kyle Busch became the fourth different leader in the race .

On the 20th lap , Burton , with assistance from Edwards moved to first and second , as Waltrip had a highest speed of 206 miles per hour ( 332 km / h ) . On lap 22 , Busch became the leader , but after leading one lap , Earnhardt took over the lead position . Three laps later , the first caution was given as a break during the race . Also on the same lap , Burton became the leader . Just after the caution was given , all the teams pitted . After ten minutes the racecars returned to the track for the restart . Burton remained the leader , ahead of Harvick , Kenseth , Earnhardt , and Johnson . On the 27th lap , the second caution was given because of an accident involving Earnhardt , Montoya , Smith , Edwards , and Logano . Two laps later , Johnson , Bowyer , and Hamlin pit for new tires . Before the restart on lap 34 , it was announced that both Edwards and Earnhardt were out of the race . At the lap 34 restart , Burton remained the leader . On lap 36 , the third caution was given because of an accident involving Kyle Busch , and Martin . During the caution , Hamlin pitted .

At lap 39 , Burton remained the leader . On the following lap , Gordon became the leader , but after one lap , they were passed by Harvick and Burton . On the 42nd lap , Kyle Busch drove to the garage . Four laps later , Johnson , with assistance from Biffle , became the leader . On lap 48 , Waltrip collided into the wall , prompting the fourth caution to be given . One lap later , it was announced that Kyle Busch was out of the race . At the lap 50 restart , Johnson remained the leader . Two laps later , Burton became the leader , after having assistance from Bowyer . On the 56th lap , Johnson reclaimed the lead , but after one lap , Kurt Busch passed him for the first position . On lap 59 , Burton became the leader , as Hamlin moved to second . Four laps later , Newman became the leader , after assistance from Hamlin . On lap 70 , Newman remained the leader ahead of Hamlin , Kurt Busch , and McMurray . On the final lap , Hamlin moved below the yellow line and became the leader , as Kurt Busch and McMurray were passing them . After Hamlin passed below the yellow line , Kurt Busch became the leader because Hamlin was not scored . McMurray scored second , while Newman finished third , ahead of Johnson and Biffle in fourth and fifth . Gordon , Harvick ,

Burton , Bowyer , and Labonte rounded out the top ten finishers in the race .

== Post @-@ race ==

Kurt Busch appeared in victory lane after his victory lap to start celebrating his first win of the season , and his first on any restrictor plate track such as Daytona International Speedway and Talladega Superspeedway , in front of a crowd of 80 @, @ 000 people ; earning \$ 203 @, @ 000 for the victory . Following his celebration he said , " McMurray was the man [ Saturday night ] . He stayed with us . He stayed true . I can 't thank him enough for doing that . I hope it was the show the fans wanted to see . " He also commented , " What an unbelievable experience , this two @-@ car draft . I had no idea what to expect going in . I was just going to take it one lap at a time and see how it played out . I wanted to learn as the race went on how this Shell / Pennzoil Dodge raced . "

McMurray , who finished second in the race , expained , " It 's completely different plate racing than we 've ever had . I hope it was exciting for the fans to watch . But from the driver 's seat , it was actually really exciting to push two @-@ by @-@ two and do the side draft . It is awesome the runs you were able to get , so I hope the fans enjoyed it . " In the post race press conference , Hamlin , who passed Newman below the yellow line , described his misfortune , " That yellow line is there to protect us and the fans in the stands , and I just chose to take the safer route . A win in the Shootout is not worth sending the 39 [ Newman ] through the grandstands . For me , as fast as we 're running , if I got into his left rear , that car will go airborne . " Edwards who was involved in the largest accident in the race , " We were three- or four @-@ wide back there , and I was going between the 88 and the 78 , and I don 't think the 78 knew I was in there . He kept coming down , and I just had enough of my car in there . I laid up against the 88 and then the 78 got me in the right @-@ front , but that 's just everybody trying to get the best position they can so we can go out there and race . " 7 @. @ 8 million people watched the race on television .

== Results ==

== Qualifying ==

== Race Results ==