

= 2010 Showtime Southern 500 =

The 2010 Showtime Southern 500 , 61st running of the event , was a NASCAR Sprint Cup Series motor race that was held on May 8 , 2010 at Darlington Raceway in Darlington , South Carolina . It was the eleventh race of the 2010 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series season . The event began at 7 : 30 p.m. EDT . It was televised live in the United States on Fox and its U.S. radio coverage was broadcast on Motor Racing Network starting at 6 p.m. EDT .

The 367 @-@ lap race was won by Denny Hamlin for Joe Gibbs Racing after starting seven positions behind polesitter Jamie McMurray . McMurray finished second in a Chevrolet , and Kurt Busch finished third in a Dodge . The race had a total of 11 cautions and 22 lead changes among 11 different drivers . Kevin Harvick remained the point leader after finishing the race in the sixth position .

= = Background = =

Coming into the race , Richard Childress Racing driver Kevin Harvick led the Drivers ' Championship with 1 @,@ 467 points , with Hendrick Motorsports driver Jimmie Johnson trailing by ten points for second . Behind them in the Drivers ' Championship , Kyle Busch was third with 1 @,@ 358 points , and Matt Kenseth was fourth with 1 @,@ 348 points . Greg Biffle rounded out the top five drivers fourteen points behind Kenseth . In the Manufacturers ' Championship , Chevrolet was leading with 76 points , eighteen points ahead of their rival Toyota . In the battle for third place , Dodge had 4 points , one ahead of Ford .

= = Practices and qualifying = =

There were two practice sessions the day before the race . In the first practice , A. J. Allmendinger , Dave Blaney , Mike Bliss , Michael McDowell , and Denny Hamlin were the fastest drivers . In the second session , Jamie McMurray , Hamlin , Kurt Busch , Ryan Newman , and Juan Montoya were the top five in speed . During qualifying , McMurray won his second pole position in 2010 and set a new track record , while Jeff Gordon , Brian Vickers , David Reutimann , and Mark Martin also qualified to start in the first five positions , respectively . There were three drivers who entered but did not qualify for the race : Joe Nemechek , Casey Mears , and Mike Bliss .

= = Race summary = =

To begin the pre @-@ race ceremonies , Ken Sandifer , a pastor at First Baptist Church of Darlington , delivered the invocation . John Norman and Kenneth Shelton , from Pope Air Force Base , then sang the national anthem . Next , Michael Waltrip introduced the mothers of the drivers , who commanded , " Sons and gentlemen , start your engines ! "

Jamie McMurray led the drivers to the start of the race , but Jeff Gordon passed him before the first lap ended . Gordon maintained the lead until Brian Vickers overtook him on lap 38 . On the same lap , Dave Blaney went to the garage because of transmission problems . Seven laps later , the first caution was flown when Michael McDowell crashed into the wall in turn 2 . During the pit stops throughout the caution , McMurray made a pit stop quickly , leaving pit road first and leading at the subsequent restart . On lap 53 , Bobby Labonte and Joey Logano both spun sideways , bringing out the second caution . Most drivers did not pit ; McMurray led the drivers to the third green flag of the day . The third caution came out on lap 62 when Paul Menard turned sideways on the back straightaway .

The first 10 drivers did pit under this caution , so McMurray held onto his lead position on the restart . On lap 83 , a multiple car collision brought out the fourth caution . Greg Biffle , Martin Truex , Jr . , and Jimmie Johnson were involved , but all received only minor damage to their cars . After the drivers made pit stops , Tony Stewart took the lead . Three laps later , Gordon reclaimed the lead and led up to the green flag pit stops on laps 121 ? 154 . During the pit stops , Denny Hamlin , Kevin

Harvick , and Scott Speed led , with Hamlin ultimately emerging in the front . On lap 171 , debris in the second turn , which is situated before the backstretch , brought out the fifth caution . During subsequent pit stops , McMurray came off pit road first , which gave him the lead on the restart .

Two laps later , Kevin Conway collided with the wall , bringing out the sixth caution . On the same lap , A. J. Allmendinger 's brakes failed , allowing him to decide to go down on the track apron ; his car turned sideways , went backwards , and collided into the driver 's door of Johnson 's Impala . Both were uninjured , but the crash put them out of the race . On lap 190 , McMurray brought the drivers to the green flag . 10 laps later , Stewart spun on the backstretch and brought out the seventh caution . McMurray led the restart on lap 204 .

2 laps later , Kyle Busch passed McMurray to lead for the first time . On lap 227 , the eighth caution came out when Labonte crashed into the wall after blowing a tire on the backstretch . All the lead lap cars made pit stops , and David Reutimann was the first off pit road , leading to the green flag on lap 223 . Debris from Truex , Jr . ' s car allowed David Ragan to collide with the wall , bringing out the ninth caution on the next lap . On lap 237 , Jeff Burton led to the green flag but Gordon passed him on lap 261 . 20 laps later , Labonte and Gilliland collided , bringing out the tenth caution . On lap 283 during pit stops , Kyle Busch left pit road in the first position and led on the restart .

On lap 189 , Hamlin passed teammate Kyle Busch and successfully battled Burton for the lead , which he took on lap 341 . The eleventh and final caution came out on the same lap when Logano spun coming out of pit road . After the drivers made pit stops , Hamlin led the restart on lap 347 , maintaining the lead to win both the Nationwide Series and the Sprint Cup Series races for the weekend .

= = Post race = =

Denny Hamlin appeared in victory lane after his victory lap to start celebrating his fourth win . In the subsequent press conference , Hamlin said , " I can 't tell you how excited I am about us winning right now , because I know what our team is capable of by the time we hit Chase time . " Jamie McMurray , who finished second , said that his season " has actually been really good , winning the [Daytona] 500 , almost winning at Talladega , running second again tonight . " He continued to say that he and his team have " been able to put ourselves in position to win three races this year . I don 't know that in my career I 've been able to do that , much less in the first eight or ten races . "

The race results left Kevin Harvick leading the Driver 's Championship with 1 @,@ 622 points . Johnson , who failed to finish the race , was second with 1 @,@ 512 , three points ahead of Kyle Busch and thirty @-@ seven ahead of Jeff Gordon . Matt Kenseth was fifth with 1 @,@ 472 points . On May 12 , Michael McDowell and Robby Gordon were penalized 25 owner 's and drivers ' points and \$ 25 @,@ 000 each for violations , specifically unapproved rear gear and for unapproved door braces , after the race 's final inspection .

= = Results = =

Jamie McMurray started the race on the pole position , and Denny Hamlin won . During the race there were 11 different leaders , 22 lead changes , and 11 cautions . Jeff Gordon led the most laps , with 111 . Hamlin , McMurray , Jeff Burton , Kyle Busch , Brian Vickers , Tony Stewart , David Reutimann , Scott Speed , and Robby Gordon also led laps .