



No. 11 America's Incredible Pizza Company Racing Chevrolet / Scott Lagasse Jr. Memphis Post-Race Report

Date: Saturday, October 25, 2008
Event: Kroger 250
Track: Memphis Motorsports Park, Memphis, TN
Pole Sitter: James Buescher, 22.961 sec.
Lagasse's Qualifying Position: 28th, 23.598 sec.
Race Winner: Carl Edwards
Lagasse's Finishing Position: 24th



CJM Racing and America's Incredible Pizza Company teamed up with St. Jude and ran a special paint scheme at Memphis. (Credit: Phil Cavali 2008)

A Race Like No Other; Lagasse Jr. Overcomes the Obstacles to Finish 24th at Memphis

(October 25, 2008) Memphis, TN – The NASCAR Nationwide Series was back in action as teams headed to Memphis Motorsports Park over the weekend to participate in race 32 out of the 35 race schedule. The event would mark the final stand-alone event of the season and the first NASCAR Nationwide Series race at Memphis for Lagasse Jr. The race itself would turn out to be anything less than normal as only six cars crossed the finish line on the lead lap. Despite the craziness that ensued on the track Lagasse Jr. held strong, ran a clean race and finished out the Kroger 250 in the 24th position.

Teams entered the race track bright and early Friday morning and began to prepare for Saturday afternoon's race. It was quickly apparent that two things were different about the America's Incredible Pizza Company race team.

The No. 11 displayed some very unusual colors that weekend as 14-year old Cornell Robinson, a patient at St. Jude, put his artistic flair on the car. CJM Racing and America's Incredible Pizza Company teamed up with the "Design a Dream" program in hopes of bringing some awareness to the St. Jude Children's Hospital based out of Memphis. In addition to the changes to the car, a new crew member arrived with the team. Mike Sibley, a Camping World East crew chief from Joe Gibbs Racing, came to Memphis to lend a hand until a permanent crew chief can be assigned to the America's Incredible Pizza Company race team.

49-cars took to the track Friday afternoon for two extended practice sessions. The team found their rhythm fairly quickly and was able to make the much needed adjustments Lagasse Jr. called for. By the time final practice rolled around Lagasse Jr. had placed the No. 11 America's Incredible Pizza Company Chevrolet in the 12th position in race trim. The team opted not to make a mock qualifying run at the end of practice so eventually the No. 11 ended up running the 23rd quickest time with a 23.599 second run, 114.412 mph.

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Moving into Saturday, the weather was perfect and the teams anxiously awaited what they hoped was not going to be a marathon race like last years event where a record 25 caution flags flew. Lagasse Jr. qualified the America's Incredible Pizza Company Chevrolet in the 28th position for the race and knew he had his work cut out for him.

"If this race is anything like what I saw last year the key is patience. I hate that we're starting so far back because I would hate to fall victim to a wreck mid-pack. Hopefully everyone will keep their cool and we'll run a safe, clean race," explained Lagasse Jr.

Almost immediately after the green flag flew in the air the caution flag dropped for a spin in turn one. The teams and drivers took a deep breathe and hoped this wasn't setting the precedent for the remaining 249-laps. It took 26 more laps to see the caution flag again and some teams opted to come down pit road for service. The America's Incredible Pizza Company race team opted to stay out on track and was running in the 21st position when the race got back underway.

Surprisingly the Kroger 250 ran without any on-track incidents for the rest of the first half of the race. That did though present a problem when it came to pit strategy. Lagasse Jr. would have to come down pit road under green flag conditions for fuel, tires and an adjustment for a loose in handling condition on lap 104. The front runners charged ahead and Lagasse Jr, would find himself a couple laps down by the midway point.

Despite the obstacles in race strategy, Lagasse Jr. and the America's Incredible Pizza Company race team didn't give up. They worked together to find a balance and to get Lagasse Jr. comfortable in the handling of the race car. By lap 125 only four cars were displayed on the lead lap as Carl Edwards continued his relentless charge to victory lane.

Two more pit stops were made on laps 132 and 214 for fuel, fresh tires and adjustments to help relieve the tight center/off condition.

Lagasse Jr. focused on gaining as many positions as possible in the closing laps. He maneuvered through the cars multiple laps down with ease and kept the America's Incredible Pizza Company in one piece. By the time the checkered flag flew, Lagasse Jr. was credited with the 24th finishing position.

"Well that didn't end up like we had hoped strategy wise. I think we were all expecting it to be similar to last year's race but for the most part everyone ran a fairly clean race," exclaimed Lagasse Jr. "The goal was to keep the fenders on this thing and finish on the lead lap. The car is in one piece but we fell short with being a couple laps down. We'll get them next week."

Race Results:

1. Carl Edwards
2. David Reutimann
3. Kenny Wallace
4. Austin Dillon
5. Joey Logano
- 24. Scott Lagasse Jr.**

NNS Driver Points Standings:

- | | | |
|--------------------|------|------|
| 1. Clint Bowyer | 4552 | |
| 2. Carl Edwards | 4356 | -196 |
| 3. Brad Keselowski | 4266 | -286 |
| 4. Mike Bliss | 4017 | -535 |
| 5. David Ragan | 4013 | -539 |