

For Immediate Release

Media Selects Top Drivers, Top Races Of Decade In NASCAR's Three National Series

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (Dec. 21, 2009) – With the recently completed 2009 season closing out another decade of NASCAR racing, media members have selected the top drivers and top races of the decade for all three national series as voted upon in a poll on NASCARMedia.com.

The listing of drivers and races for the poll was compiled following discussions with the three series directors and other long-time observers in the industry – and also resulted from direct input from NASCAR fans.

Jimmie Johnson was selected as the top NASCAR Sprint Cup Series driver of the decade, followed by **Tony Stewart** and **Jeff Gordon**. Johnson won an unprecedented fourth consecutive series championship in 2009 and posted 47 NASCAR Sprint Cup victories this decade – most of any driver. He is the only driver to earn a spot in the Chases for the NASCAR Sprint Cup all six years of the format's existence.

Earlier today, the Associated Press named Johnson its Male Athlete of the Year, making him the first race-car driver to win that honor.

Kevin Harvick was chosen the top NASCAR Nationwide Series driver of the decade, followed by **Kyle Busch** and **Carl Edwards**. Harvick won two series titles in the decade – 2001 and '06 – and was named the series' Raybestos Rookie of the Year in 2000. During the decade, he leads all NASCAR Nationwide drivers with 34 wins.

Ron Hornaday Jr. was picked as the top NASCAR Camping World Truck Series driver of the decade, followed by **Todd Bodine** and **Johnny Benson**. Hornaday is the series' first four-time champion and won a pair of NCWTS titles during the decade – 2007 and '09. He has the most series wins (20) in the decade and set a modern-era record for consecutive wins (five) this past season.

The **March 16, 2003** race at **Darlington Raceway** was voted the top NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race. In what is the closest Margin of Victory – .002 seconds – since the advent of electronic scoring in May 1993, **Ricky Craven** edged **Kurt Busch** to the finish line in that thriller. The **Oct. 14, 2000** race at **Talladega Superspeedway**, which marked **Dale Earnhardt's** final career victory, came in second, followed by the **March 11, 2001** event at **Atlanta Motor Speedway**, with **Kevin Harvick** getting his first NASCAR Sprint Cup victory in a narrow defeat of **Jeff Gordon**.

The **Aug. 2, 2003** event at **O'Reilly Raceway Park at Indianapolis** was named the top NASCAR Nationwide Series race. **Brian Vickers** battled **Shane Hmiel** in some closely-contested side-by-side racing to pick up his first career series victory. The **July 2, 2004** race at **Daytona International Speedway**, which saw **Mike Wallace** navigate his way down the frontstretch to claim his first series win in 10 years, came in second. The **Aug. 2, 2008** event at **Circuit Gilles Villeneuve** in Montreal, where Canadian **Ron Fellows** won NASCAR's first national series points race on rain tires, was voted third.

The top NASCAR Camping World Truck Series race was the **Feb. 18, 2005** event at **Daytona International Speedway**. The 2004 series champion, **Bobby Hamilton**, won by leading the last two feet.

Jimmy Spencer mistakenly thought he had won the race and came to Victory Lane, when he in fact had finished second. The **Nov. 14, 2003** race at **Homestead-Miami Speedway** came in second. Heading into the season finale, any one of the top four drivers in the points standings – **Brendan Gaughan, Ted Musgrave, Travis Kvapil** and **Dennis Setzer** – had a shot to win the championship. Kvapil took home his first NASCAR title after Gaughan was involved in an early wreck and Musgrave jumped a restart. Third-place honors went to the **Feb. 16, 2007** race at **Daytona**, when three-time series champion **Jack Sprague** won following a three-wide race to the checkered flag.

For more information, contact:

Kerry Tharp, NASCAR Public Relations, (704) 720-3115 or ktharp@nascar.com