

## Week 8: The NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Top 12 – And Beyond

**DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (April 6, 2009)** – Below is a look at the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series top 12, along with other notable drivers, going into the Subway Fresh Fit 500 at Phoenix International Raceway on April 18. (Note: Drivers listed below who are outside the top 12 are chosen based on past performances at the upcoming track and/or are within striking distance of the top 12.)

### 1 – Jeff Gordon (No. 24 DuPont Chevrolet)

- Season-to-Date Driver Rating: 121.6

#### 2009 Rundown

- One win, five top fives, six top 10s
- Average finish of 4.6
- Led six races for a total of 394 laps

#### Phoenix International Raceway Outlook:

- One win, eight top fives, 15 top 10s; three poles
- Average finish of 10.2
- Finished 41st in November
- Led eight of 20 races for 247 laps

#### Season-To-Date Loop Data Highlight

- Series-best Average Running Position of 5.2

### 2 – Jimmie Johnson (No. 48 Lowe's Chevrolet)

- Season-to-Date Driver Rating: 108.5

#### 2009 Rundown

- One win, three top fives, five top 10s
- Average finish of 11.3
- Led six races for 308 laps

#### Phoenix International Raceway Outlook:

- Three wins, six top fives, nine top 10s; one pole
- Average finish of 5.5
- Won the last three Phoenix races
- Led six of 11 races for 505 laps

#### Season-To-Date Loop Data Highlight

- Average Running Position of 7.9, second-best

## Chase Contenders

### The Top 12 ... And Beyond

Following Race 7 of 36

Driver	Pts	Wins	Poles	Rank Last Week	Season Driver Rating
1. Jeff Gordon	1,154	1	0	1	121.6
2. Jimmie Johnson	992	1	0	4	108.5
3. Kurt Busch	974	1	0	3	100.5
4. Clint Bowyer	967	0	0	2	85.6
5. Tony Stewart	963	0	0	7	100.8
6. Denny Hamlin	938	0	0	5	100.1
7. Kyle Busch	914	2	1	6	105.2
8. Carl Edwards	889	0	0	8	99.5
9. Matt Kenseth	864	2	0	12	81.3
10. Kasey Kahne	851	0	0	9	80.8
11. David Reutimann	845	0	1	11	82.8
12. Jeff Burton	835	0	0	13	81.6

#### ADDITIONAL DRIVERS

13. J.P. Montoya	819	34. Robby Gordon	531
14. Kevin Harvick	796	35. Joey Logano	510
15. Greg Biffle	775	36. David Gilliland	462
16. Dale Earnhardt Jr.	768	37. Aric Almirola	451
17. Ryan Newman	743	38. Scott Speed	386
18. Mark Martin	742	39. Travis Kvapil	292
19. Brian Vickers	737	40. Regan Smith	276
20. AJ Allmendinger	731	41. Bill Elliott	228
21. Michael Waltrip	721	42. Scott Riggs	216
22. David Stremme	720	43. Joe Nemechek	205
23. Casey Mears	688	44. Dave Blaney	187
24. Martin Truex Jr.	672	45. Jeremy Mayfield	158
25. Elliott Sadler	667	46. Brad Keselowski	143
26. Bobby Labonte	663	47. Todd Bodine	123
27. Jamie McMurray	658	48. Max Papis	113
28. Marcos Ambrose	656	49. Terry Labonte	91
29. David Ragan	626	50. Mike Bliss	71
30. Reed Sorenson	624	51. Sterling Marlin	43
31. Sam Hornish Jr.	571		
32. Paul Menard	543		
33. John Andretti	540		

Note: The first 26 races of the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series season determine which 12 drivers qualify for the Chase for the NASCAR Sprint Cup, contested over the final 10 races of the season.

## 2-2-2-2

### TOP 12 AND BEYOND

#### **3 – Kurt Busch (No. 2 Miller Lite Dodge)**

- Season-to-Date Driver Rating: 100.5

##### **2009 Rundown**

- One win, two top fives, four top 10s
- Average finish of 10.9
- Led four races for 238 laps

##### **Phoenix International Raceway Outlook:**

- One win, three top fives, six top 10s
- Average finish of 13.3
- Finished second in November
- Led five of 12 races for 508 laps

##### **Season-To-Date Loop Data Highlight**

- 135 Fastest Laps Run, sixth-most

#### **4 – Clint Bowyer (No. 33 Cheerios/Hamburger Helper Chevrolet)**

- Season-to-Date Driver Rating: 85.6

##### **2009 Rundown**

- Three top fives, four top 10s
- Average finish of 10.1
- Led one race for nine laps

##### **Phoenix International Raceway Outlook:**

- Two top fives
- Average finish of 15.3
- Finished 12th in November
- Led one of seven for 21 laps

##### **Season-To-Date Loop Data Highlight**

- 520 Green Flag Passes, sixth-most

#### **5 – Tony Stewart (No. 14 Office Depot/Old Spice Chevrolet)**

- Season-to-Date Driver Rating: 100.8

##### **2009 Rundown**

- Two top fives, five top 10s
- Average finish of 10.6
- Led three races for 34 laps

##### **Phoenix International Raceway Outlook:**

- One win, six top fives, eight top 10s
- Average finish of 10.6
- Finished 22nd in November
- Led four of 14 races for 293 laps

##### **Season-To-Date Loop Data Highlight**

- Average Running Position of 10.5, fifth-best

### **3-3-3-3**

#### **TOP 12 AND BEYOND**

##### **6 – Denny Hamlin (No. 11 FedEx Toyota)**

- Season-to-Date Driver Rating: 100.1
- **2009 Rundown**
- Two top fives, three top 10s
- Average finish of 11.9
- Led two races for 303 laps
- **Phoenix International Raceway Outlook:**
- Four top fives; one pole
- Average finish of 11.0
- Finished fifth in November
- Led two of seven races for 93 laps
- **Season-To-Date Loop Data Highlight**
- Average Running Position of 9.7, third-most

##### **7 – Kyle Busch (No. 18 M&M's Toyota)**

- Season-to-Date Driver Rating: 105.2
- **2009 Rundown**
- Two wins, three top fives
- Average finish of 15.1
- Led four races for 519 laps
- **Phoenix International Raceway Outlook:**
- One win, six top 10s; one pole
- Average finish of 14.5
- Finished eighth in November
- Led three of eight races for 78 laps
- **Season-To-Date Loop Data Highlight**
- Has been passed 281 times, the fewest on the series

##### **8 – Carl Edwards (No. 99 Aflac Ford)**

- Season-to-Date Driver Rating: 99.5
- **2009 Rundown**
- One top five, three top 10s
- Average finish 13.7
- Led four races for 40 laps
- **Phoenix International Raceway Outlook:**
- Four top fives, six top 10s; one pole
- Average finish of 13.3
- Finished fourth in November
- Led one of nine races for 87 laps
- **Season-To-Date Loop Data Highlight**
- Series-high 379 Quality Passes (passes of cars in the top 15 under green)

#### **4-4-4-4**

### **TOP 12 AND BEYOND**

#### **9 – Matt Kenseth (No. 17 DEWALT Ford)**

- Season-to-Date Driver Rating: 81.3
- **2009 Rundown**
- Two wins, three top fives
- Average finish of 16.9
- Led three races for 146 laps
- **Phoenix International Raceway Outlook:**
- One win, five top fives, six top 10s
- Average finish of 18.5
- Finished 15th in November
- Led five of 13 races for 154 laps
- **Season-To-Date Loop Data Highlight**
- Ranks eighth in average Green Flag Speed

#### **10 – Kasey Kahne (No. 9 Budweiser Dodge)**

- Season-to-Date Driver Rating: 80.8
- **2009 Rundown**
- One top five, two top 10s
- Average finish of 14.6
- Led one race for one lap
- **Phoenix International Raceway Outlook:**
- One top five, three top 10s
- Average finish of 20.2 in nine races
- Finished 13th in November
- **Season-To-Date Loop Data Highlight**
- Average Running Position of 15.8, 12th-best

#### **11 – David Reutimann (No. 00 Aaron's Dream Machine Toyota)**

- Season-to-Date Driver Rating: 82.8
- **2009 Rundown**
- One top five
- Average finish of 15.0
- Led two races for 41 laps
- **Phoenix International Raceway Outlook:**
- Average finish of 25.0 in three races
- Finished 25th in November
- **Season-To-Date Loop Data Highlight**
- Laps in the Top 15 percentage of 62.9%, ninth-best

**5-5-5-5**

**TOP 12 AND BEYOND**

**12 – Jeff Burton (No. 31 Caterpillar Chevrolet)**

- Season-to-Date Driver Rating: 81.6

**2009 Rundown**

- One top five, three top 10s
- Average finish of 15.6
- Led one race for 61 laps

**Phoenix International Raceway Outlook:**

- Two wins, five top fives, 11 top 10s
- Average finish of 11.0
- Finished ninth in November
- Led four of 19 races for 215 laps

**Season-To-Date Loop Data Highlight**

- 68 Fastest Laps Run, 10th-most

**14 – Kevin Harvick (No. 29 Shell/Pennzoil Chevrolet)**

- Season-to-Date Driver Rating: 77.7

**2009 Rundown**

- Two top fives
- Average finish of 17.7
- Led one race for nine laps

**Phoenix International Raceway Outlook:**

- Two wins, three top fives, six top 10s
- Average finish of 13.2
- Finished seventh in November
- Led three of 12 races for 316 laps

**Season-To-Date Loop Data Highlight**

- Fourth-best “Closer,” improving 19 positions in the final 10% of races

**For more information, contact:**

**Mike Forde, NASCAR Public Relations, (386) 681-4391 or [mforde@nascar.com](mailto:mforde@nascar.com).**