

MAHINDRA SPONSORED CANADIAN NASCAR RACING TEAM WINS THE 2010 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP



DJ Kennington accepting the championship trophy from George Silbermann of NASCAR
Photos Credit: Mathew Manor/NASCAR

September 25, 2010 Castrol Edge Dodge driver DJ Kennington began the 2010 NASCAR Canadian Tire series more focused than ever on the goal of a championship. The team arrived at Kawartha Speedway for the final event of the season with a forty point lead in the standings on Saturday knowing that a finish of sixth or better in the race would accomplish their mission. After a season in which they collected five race wins, and seven podiums the prize they were seeking became theirs!

Like the twelve previous events the #17 Castrol Edge/Mahindra Tractors/Hitachi Power Tools Dodge team showed up at the track ready to race. Kennington won last year's race at Kawartha Speedway and knew they'd be on top of their game. "Just like they did all season the Castrol Edge/Mahindra Tractors/Hitachi Power Tools team had the car so well prepared that practice was just some fine tuning" said the driver. "And we dialled it in pretty quick" he added.

Kennington made another statement to the competition when he claimed his fifth pole position starting spot of the year, qualifying with a lap time of 14.983 seconds for an average speed of 75.071mph. "We were the only car to get a lap under fifteen seconds" said Kennington. "And we really set the Castrol Edge/Mahindra Tractors/Hitachi Power Tools Dodge up for the race".

When the green flag waved to begin the 250 lap feature event Kennington would lead 78 of the first 79 racing laps. "The Castrol Edge/Mahindra Tractors/Hitachi Power Tools Dodge was just great" said Kennington. "I was able to keep a nice gap back to second place and just drove my race early on" he stated.

The evening was not without drama for the Castrol Edge/Mahindra Tractors/Hitachi Power Tools Dodge team however. Following the teams flawlessly executed pit stop for fuel and left side tires during a caution period, Kennington felt something amiss when the race restarted. "The car just wasn't handling well" said the driver. "I was just hanging on trying to figure out what was happening" he added.

During the next caution period the Castrol Edge/Mahindra Tractors/Hitachi Power Tools Dodge team would make another scheduled stop for right side tires. After which a puncture in the right rear was detected and the information relayed to Kennington. "We caught a big break that we got the caution and were able to make the pit stop and I didn't have to run too long with that tire going down" said the driver.

With a better handling race car Kennington moved the Castrol Edge/Mahindra Tractors/Hitachi Power Tools Dodge back toward the front of the field while being cautious and noting that he was now in position to clinch the overall point's title. "We always want to win the race" explained the driver "but you're always points racing, especially at this stage of the season. I knew where the #84 car was and what we had to do to take the championship".

Kennington kept the Castrol Edge/Mahindra Tractors/Hitachi Power Tools Dodge in the top-five for much of the closing stages and could see the #84 just ahead and knew if he just maintained position he would be the champion. While Kennington was running fourth on the final lap, the #84 was bumped aside and out of second place allowing Kennington to slide up into third place finish to claim the title.

After the race it was an emotional and extremely grateful Kennington who tried to thank everyone that had a helping hand in his first NASCAR title. "When I was sixteen years I raced my first full season with Castrol sponsorship. It took seventeen years but we finally got the #17 Castrol Edge Dodge a championship. I'm so happy that I could do this for them after finishing second so many times. Our team also gets fantastic support from Mahindra Tractors and Hitachi Power Tools came on board with us this year and have been great. Bryan Cathcart has been with us for a long time as well and I can't thank them all enough. And I have to thank my dad who works so hard to build these motors my mom and my whole family for their support".

Kennington will be honoured on December 11th at the NASCAR Night of Champions Touring Awards Gala to be held at the newly opened NASCAR Hall of Fame where he will receive his Championship Ring.

Follow the progress of the #17 Castrol Edge/Mahindra Tractors/Hitachi Power Tools Dodge by logging on to the team website www.djkracing.ca plus you can follow their daily activities at www.twitter.com/djkracing. You're also invited to join the Facebook Group DJK Racing.

The final race of the 2010 NASCAR Canadian Tire series season can be seen on TSN on Sunday October 10th at 1PM Eastern.