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SRT Motorsports - Weekend Motorsports Preview - June 14

It's "Home, Sweet Home" for Brad Keselowski

A.J. Allmendinger Looks to Turn Season Around at Michigan

June 13, 2012, Auburn Hills, Mich. - After 14 races, Brad Keselowski is exactly where he wants to be in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series point standings – the top 10. Now, he just wants to solidify his position over the next 12 races to make sure he's among the elite 10 after race 26 when the field for the Chase for the Sprint Cup is set for the 10-race shootout for the season championship.

At the same time, Keselowski could be holding a wild card. He's one of only four drivers with more than one win this season. Should he fall outside the top 10, the driver of the No. 2 Miller Lite Dodge Charger is in a great position to secure one of two wild card berths which go to the drivers in the top 20 in the point standing with the most wins. That completes the Chase field. Keselowski knows that route and definitely wants to stay away from having to rely on that expensive card.

Each driver in the Chase will start with 2,000 points. The drivers in the top 10 will get three bonus points for each win. The wild card entries don't get bonus points for the wins they've accumulated. Keselowski knows how expensive that is. He lost nine points (he had three wins) last year as a wild card entry.

It's "Home Sweet Home" for Keselowski this weekend as the Sprint Cup Series travels to the Irish Hills for Sunday's 400-mile event at Michigan International Speedway. Keselowski is from Rochester Hills. His dad and uncle previously raced at MIS. On his last visit to the two-mile track, Keselowski finished third. However, those notes may have lost their value during the off-season. The track was repaved.

"Whenever you repave a track or drastically make a change of the nature of a repave, it's going to change the racing and how it works," said Keselowski. "You know the question will be – is it going to be better? Is it going to be worse? Is it going to be this or is it going to be that? You know, only time will tell. I think the track has a lot of key events that will probably indicate how the Cup race will go. The Cup race is obviously the Granddaddy race for this track. There is a Nationwide event and an ARCA event beforehand. I think that will probably provide the biggest indicator of the quality of racing that we will see come Sunday, but I feel pretty good about our chances with the Miller Lite Dodge."

The No. 2 Dodge team did take part in the Goodyear tire test at the track earlier this year and teams will get an extra day (Thursday) of practice on the new surface.

"A win at Michigan would have special meaning for Keselowski and provide the perfect Father's Day gift. "My dad was easily the most influential person in my racing career," he said. "He is my hero and I try to model myself after him as much as I can. He was always keenly aware of what went into his cars and trucks, each part and piece, and what it was intended to do. Having that knowledge about your racecars is something that I take pride in as well. To get him a win this weekend, at a place that means a lot to our family, would be a great Father's Day gift – probably the best one I could give him."

Teammate A.J. Allmendinger (No. 22 Shell/Pennzoil Dodge Charger) looks to rebound from eight consecutive finishes outside the top 10 after a runner-up effort at Martinsville. Drivers know the speeds will increase dramatically at MIS with the repave. The question is how much? The track record is 186.548 mph.

"Michigan has always been a basic, really fast two-mile oval and with the new repaving it will be much faster," said Allmendinger. "Just how much greater the speeds we will run? That's the big question heading there and everyone is curious to find out. The qualifying record will fall at Michigan on Saturday; that's pretty much a given. Based on

what we saw at Pocono last week, it will be really interesting to see how much the old record is beaten by and how many drivers can do it. Of course everyone will be talking about the high speeds we are taking into the corner."

What You Need To Know

The Races: Quicken Loans 400 (Race 15 of 36)

The Place: Michigan Int'l Speedway

The Date: Sunday, June 17

The Time: 1:00 p.m. (ET)

The Track: 2.0-mile track

The Distance: 200 laps/400 miles

TV: TNT, 12:00 p.m. (ET)

Radio: MRN, Sirius XM Ch. 90

NASCAR Nationwide Series

Sam Hornish Jr. and Brad Keselowski will pilot the two Dodge Challengers from Penske Racing in Saturday's 125-lap event. Hornish has finished 13th or better in the last 11 races including five consecutive top 10s. He's currently fourth in the driver standings, 50 points behind the leader. He will be at the controls of the No. 12 Alliance Truck Parts Dodge Challenger. Keselowski returns to the seat of the No. 22 Discount Tire Dodge Challenger.

"Michigan is my home track," said Hornish. "I have many great memories from races I went to as a kid with my parents - some of the best days of my childhood were spent there. The new surface is a bit of an unknown for us, but I am very much looking forward to driving and racing on it. I am very proud to carry the Alliance Truck Parts colors on our Dodge Challenger especially since they are the title sponsor of this event. We are looking forward to this race and we are going to do our best to have a strong finish."

What You Need To Know

The Races: Alliance Truck Parts 250 (Race 13 of 33)

The Place: Michigan Int'l Speedway

The Date: Saturday, June 16

The Time: 3:45 p.m. (ET)

The Track: 2.0-mile track

The Distance: 125 laps/250 miles

TV: ABC, 3:30 p.m. (ET)

Radio: MRN, Sirius XM Ch. 90

NASCAR Camping World Truck Series

Drivers get a break until June 28 when Kentucky Speedway hosts the series for a 150-lap event on the 1.5-mile track.

Dodge Weekend Motorsports on TV

(All Times Eastern)

Friday, June 15

11:00 a.m. – NASCAR Live (SPEED)

11:30 a.m. – Nationwide Practice at Michigan (SPEED)

12:30 p.m. – Sprint Cup Practice at Michigan (SPEED)

2:00 p.m. – Nationwide Final Practice (SPEED)

3:30 p.m. – Sprint Cup Final Practice (SPEED)

7:00 p.m. – Trackside at Michigan (SPEED)

Saturday, June 16

11:00 a.m. – Nationwide Qualifying (ESPN2)

1:00 p.m. – Sprint Cup Qualifying (SPEED)

3:30 p.m. – Nationwide Countdown (ABC)

3:45 p.m. – Nationwide "Alliance Truck Parts 250" (ABC)

Sunday, June 17

10:00 a.m. – NASCAR RaceDay (SPEED)

12:00 p.m. – NASCAR Countdown to Green (TNT)

4:30 p.m. – NASCAR Victory Lane (SPEED)

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