

Indiana native Ryan Newman gets much-needed win at the Brickyard

Ryan Newman, now a job seeker, couldn't have added a more important or timely accomplishment to his resume.

Taking advantage of an uncharacteristic glitch on pit road on the part of Jimmie Johnson's No. 48 team, Newman grabbed the lead during a long cycle of late green-flag pit stops and held on to win Sunday's Crown Royal presents the Samuel Deeds 400 at Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

The victory was Newman's first at the Brickyard, at the only NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race in his native state. Newman won for the 17th time in his career and for the first time since April 2012 at Martinsville.

Nearly three weeks ago, Newman learned there wouldn't be a ride for him next year at Stewart-Haas Racing, with Kevin Harvick scheduled to supplant him on the team and end Newman's five-year stint with SHR. To a prospective new employer, Newman now can sell himself as the winner of two of the crown jewels of NASCAR racing.

In 2008 he captured the 50th Daytona 500. On Sunday, he added the 20th renewal at the Brickyard to his portfolio.

"Starting on the pole and winning the race — just an awesome day for us," Newman said after climbing out of his car. "This is a dream come true for me. I can't wait to push my lips on those bricks."

"I don't realize it yet. It's a dream come true. It'll take a week or so for this to set in."

In the job search, there's no doubt the victory will be a benefit.

"Obviously, it helps," Newman said. "The emotions have been an absolute roller coaster — no doubt. I got fired a couple of weeks ago and come back here and win the pole and win the race, and it's all because of hard effort. These guys (his team) are behind me, and I'm behind them."

Johnson ran second, 2.657 seconds back. Casey Kahne came home third, followed by Tony Stewart — Newman's team owner — and Matt Kenseth. Dale Earnhardt Jr., Jeff Gordon, Joey Logano, Juan Pablo Montoya and Kyle Busch completed the top 10.



A slow pit stop on Lap 133, because of a problem with the left rear tire, cost Johnson his edge over Newman. With a quick stop one lap later, Newman was back on track with a five-second advantage over the No. 48 Chevrolet, as the drivers waited for pit stops to cycle through.

Johnson couldn't make a significant dent in Newman's margin over the remaining laps.

From the outset, Johnson and Newman were the speed horses in the field, and it seemed inevitable they would settle the issue between them. Johnson spent just over 17 seconds in his pit stall taking four tires on his final stop. Newman's two-tire stop lasted less than 12 seconds.

"There's definitely disappointment there," said Johnson, who has squandered winning opportunities on late-race restarts this year, notably at Dover and Kentucky. "But that's racing. It happens. I've given away a few out there this year, too..."

"We win as a team, lose as a team. There's been some late-race mistakes on my behalf that have taken race wins away from us. Granted, not a major event like this. But we win as a team, lose as a team. We still ended up second. We have a lot to be proud of over the course of the weekend. We'll do the best to let it roll off our shoulders by



(Monday) afternoon.

Stewart didn't have a winning car, but he got to enjoy Newman's victory as a car owner. Both Newman and Stewart both say they remain close friends despite the impending split.

"I can't wait to give him a hug and congratulate him," Stewart said after the race. "He did a great job all weekend. It was between him and the 48. That was clear to see. I didn't know what strategy was going to be at the end. I just kept watching the Jumbotrons coming off (Turn) 4 to see where he was at."

(Photos courtesy of NASCAR)

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