

For Immediate Release

NASCAR ANNOUNCES ADJUSTMENTS TO 'CHASE' FORMAT AND POINTS SYSTEM
Increased Emphasis on Race Victories Highlights Adjustments

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (Jan. 22, 2007) – Race victories will become more important than ever in 2007 as a result of adjustments to the points system and the Chase for the NASCAR NEXTEL Cup format announced today by the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR).

The adjustments are designed to establish more balance between winning and consistency, but there is a new emphasis on the former.

“The adjustments taken today put a greater emphasis on winning races,” said NASCAR Chairman and CEO Brian France. “Winning is what this sport is all about. Nobody likes to see drivers content to finish in the top 10. We want our sport – especially during the Chase – to be more about winning.”

Chase Adjustments:

The Chase – consisting of the season’s last 10 races – will further reflect the importance of racing to win, via a variety of adjustments.

- During the format’s first three years, the top 10 drivers in points after the 26th race of the season (at Richmond International Raceway) qualified for the Chase; in addition, any other driver outside the top 10 but within 400 points of the standings’ leader was also eligible.
 - Starting this season, the **400-point cut-off is eliminated**.
 - Also, after Race 26, the **top 12 drivers in the points will qualify** for the Chase.
- All 12 drivers will have their point totals re-set to 5,000; each will then receive a **10-point bonus** for each race victory they had during the first 26 races.
- The Chase drivers will be “seeded” to start the Chase **based on the number of wins** amassed during the regular season.

Points adjustment:

In line with the Chase adjustments, wins throughout the season will be more valuable.

- Race winners throughout the 36-race season **will now receive 185 points, a five-point increase**. Counting the five-point bonuses available for leading at least one lap and leading the most laps, a race winner now can earn a maximum of 195 points, creating a possible maximum of 25 points between first- and second-place finishers.

The 2006 season of Kasey Kahne provides a dramatic illustration of the adjusted Chase format’s implications.

Kahne qualified for last year’s Chase, but started it in 10th place – despite having won a series-high five races. Under the new format, Kahne would begin the Chase in first place, with 5,050 points.

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NASCAR ANNOUNCES CHASE, POINT SYSTEM ADJUSTMENTS

Mark Martin and Jeff Burton, seventh and eighth at the outset of last year's Chase, would instead start in 11th and 12th, each with 5,000, since they had no race victories entering the Chase.

Also, Tony Stewart and Greg Biffle, who failed to make the Chase last year – they were 11th and 12th and beyond the 400-point cut-off – would qualify under the adjusted format. Stewart would be fifth with 5,020 points, Biffle 10th with 5,010.

“The Chase has been successful because it has done what it was designed to do – give more drivers an opportunity to win the championship,” France said. “It has reenergized our sport. And now, a good thing is about to get better.

“In 2004 when we unveiled the Chase, we said we would keep a close eye on it, and make adjustments if needed. We have done that, and we feel like the sport – and the sport's fans – will benefit.”

<u>2006 Pre-Chase Standings</u>	
1. Matt Kenseth	5,050
2. Jimmie Johnson	5,045
3. Kevin Harvick	5,040
4. Kyle Busch	5,035
5. Denny Hamlin	5,030
6. Dale Earnhardt Jr.	5,025
7. Mark Martin	5,020
8. Jeff Burton	5,015
9. Jeff Gordon	5,010
10. Kasey Kahne	5,005
x-Tony Stewart	-----
x-Greg Biffle	-----

<u>2006 Pre-Chase Standings Under New Format</u>			
	Reset Pts	Wins	Adjusted Pts*
1. Kasey Kahne	5,000	5	5,050
2. Matt Kenseth	5,000	4	5,040
3. Jimmie Johnson	5,000	4	5,040
4. Kevin Harvick	5,000	3	5,030
5. Tony Stewart	5,000	2	5,020
6. Jeff Gordon	5,000	2	5,020
7. Denny Hamlin	5,000	2	5,020
8. Kyle Busch	5,000	1	5,010
9. Dale Earnhardt Jr.	5,000	1	5,010
10. Greg Biffle	5,000	1	5,010
11. Mark Martin	5,000	0	5,000
12. Jeff Burton	5,000	0	5,000

* – Reflects 10-point bonus for each race win.

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