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Charging Off the Line in NASCAR Nextel Cup Competition

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Historic Dodge Charger Nameplate Returns to Streets and Tracks to the Delight of Muscle-car Fans

After an almost 30-year absence, Dodge Charger is back on the track. In February 2005, the historic Dodge Charger nameplate returned to NASCAR Nextel Cup competition at the Daytona International Speedway as the successor to the race-winning Dodge Intrepid race cars of 2001–2004, and to the storied Dodge Charger race cars of the late 1960s and 1970s that earned several national championships.

Following the adage that “racing improves the breed,” motorsports competition has long been part of the Dodge heritage. From engineering labs in Auburn Hills, Mich., to shop floors in Charlotte, N.C., Dodge, its teams and its dealers live the philosophy it takes to be successful in the ultra-competitive world of racing.

“Racing is at the core of Dodge’s DNA, and we’re excited to bring back a car that has an accomplished and heralded record as the Dodge Charger,” said Darryl Jackson, Vice President – Dodge Marketing, Chrysler Group. “The Dodge Charger is firmly woven into the all-American culture and heritage of stock car racing. The all-new Dodge Charger exhibits a modern upgrade to the same kind of power, performance and style that it represented throughout its gloried stock car history.”

2005 Dodge Charger NASCAR Nextel Cup Race Car

The newly designed 2005 Dodge Charger race car represents Dodge Motorsports’ modern-day foundation in powerful performance and technical innovation, while retaining original design cues of the baby blue No. 43 STP Dodge Charger that racing legend Richard Petty made famous in the 1970s.

“Dodge has an incredible heritage in auto racing, and the return of the Dodge Charger makes the statement that we will continue to make our mark in NASCAR’s history books,” said John Fernandez, Director – Dodge Motorsports Operations. “The new Charger is a natural evolution for the Dodge brand that has our NASCAR Nextel Cup teams energized.”

The Dodge Charger for NASCAR Nextel Cup Series competition features the same bold styling, signature grille and powerful performance found throughout the Dodge lineup. It takes its design cues from the new Dodge Charger production vehicle with its instantly recognizable crosshair front grille, bold rear fascia and signature rear side windows.

Dodge Motorsports Engineering led the race car development with the support of each of Dodge’s primary Nextel Cup Series teams: Evernham Motorsports, Petty Enterprises, Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates and Penske Racing South. Much of the on-track testing was done by veteran driver Bill Elliott. NASCAR approved the race car for competition in August, 2004.

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