



## **INNOVATIVE MOTORSPORTS, LLC**

### **“HANK PARKER, JR. UP IN SMOKE WITH 17<sup>TH</sup> PLACE FINISH“**

MOORESVILLE, NC (June 29, 2004) Hank Parker, Jr. and the #21 Innovative Motorsports race team were on their way to a Top 10 finish in Milwaukee until the truck “literally” went up in flames.

After qualifying 13<sup>th</sup> for the 200-lap event, Hank maintained his position on the track until his first pit stop under caution on lap 62. The IMI pit crew made quick work of raising the track bar, changing tires, and filling the tank with fuel, sending Hank out two spots better in 11<sup>th</sup>. Restarting on lap 66, the track bar adjustment seemed to be working as Hank was running lap times equivalent to the leader. Gere Kennon, Hank’s crew chief, radioed Hank and said, “You’re killing them off of turn two, just keep arcing it in there.” Parker, Jr. replied, “It feels good, but it’s a little tight in the center.”

Planning a fuel mileage strategy, Hank made what was scheduled to be the #21 team’s last pit stop of the race under caution on lap 102. The crew took two rounds of wedge out, changed the tires, and topped off with fuel, sending Hank out in 10<sup>th</sup> position. After the restart, Hank quickly picked up two more spots, and settled into eighth position. Conserving fuel under three more caution flags over the next 58 laps, Hank was safely in his fuel window to finish the race without having to pit again.

Taking the caution flag on lap 165, Hank radioed that he smelled smoke in his truck. Driving another caution lap, it became obvious that he was a victim of built up tire rubber that caught on fire in the drivers side rear wheelwell. Though the pits were closed, Hank had to bring his truck in because flames had engulfed the rear wheelwell and smoke filled the truck. The crew was able put out the fire with water and Hank rejoined the field as the last truck on the lead lap in 19<sup>th</sup> spot. Hank passed two more trucks over the remaining laps, and finished 17<sup>th</sup>.

After the race, Hank was treated and released from the infield care center for smoke inhalation. Hank was in good spirits after being released and had this to say, “We had an awesome truck tonight. It’s ashame that we had that fire, but that’s a part of racing. I would rather have a truck with a shot to win the race catch fire, than race a truck with no shot of winning.” Parker, Jr. continued, “The

guys gave me a real hot rod tonight, and I am really proud of my team. We never gave up. We'll catch a break soon and start a string of good runs."

Hank and the No. 21 Toyota Tundra return to the track on July 3, 2004, at the Kansas Speedway. Live television coverage will be on Speed Channel, with radio coverage on the MRN Affiliates and XM Satellite Radio.