Madison, IL (July 17, 2010) – Max Papis rolled into Gateway International Raceway looking to make an impressive debut at the track that sits in the shadows of the historic St. Louis Arch. While the majority of the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series took the weekend off, Papis hopped into the #9 GEICO Toyota Tundra for this weekend's NASCAR Camping World Truck Series race to gain additional seat time.

GEICO's gecko must have felt at home given the high temperatures that blanketed the 1.25-mile oval. The intense heat did not distract Papis, as he sat 16th and 19th in the two practice sessions. He then qualified the #9 GEICO Tundra 21st after hustling around the uniquely shaped oval in just 34.418 seconds, at a rate of speed of 130.746 miles per hour.

Initially scheduled for Friday night, a power outage would force the CampingWorld200.com to be postponed to Saturday afternoon. While the night sky on Friday night would have shielded the track from the blazing temperatures, Saturday afternoon would present conditions that would drive the track temperatures upward near 140 degrees.

When the green flag was displayed on Saturday afternoon, things heated up quickly on the racetrack. Papis and the #9 GEICO Tundra quickly picked up four positions and slid into the 17th spot by the close of Lap 3. Soon thereafter, he narrowly avoided peril when Stacy Compton and Mario Gosselin got together on Lap 14, bringing out the yellow flag. After restarting P15 on Lap 16, Papis and the GEICO Tundra soon found their way into 14th position by Lap 19.

While he dropped to 20th for a few laps, Papis quickly returned the #9 GEICO Tundra to the front of the field. He ran solidly in the Top 15 and remained on the lead lap for the duration of the afternoon, even dipping into the Top 10 at one point. When the race came to a close after a hot, grueling Midwestern afternoon, Papis and the GEICO team came home on the lead lap in 15th place.

"We had a solid afternoon here at Gateway and it was good to get out of here with a Top 15 for the GEICO team," Papis said. "It was extremely hot, but that's the reason I train so hard everyday, so I am prepared for days like this. I'm looking forward to getting to Indy next week and redeeming myself from last year when we missed the race. We're focused on making it happen at the Brickyard for GEICO and for this Germain Racing team."

Next up for Papis and the GEICO Racing team is the Brickyard in Indianapolis, IN. Papis has

had a love/hate relationship with the historic racetrack over the past few years. In 2006, he pulled off a remarkable finish driving for Eddie Cheever in the Indy 500, while 2008 found him missing the world's biggest race after a devastating crash. Then, in 2009, Indy got the best of him again when it precluded him from making his NASCAR debut after he fell short of qualifying for the Brickyard 400.

Papis and the #13 GEICO Toyota Camry will begin their road to redemption when they hit the 2.5-mile oval of Indianapolis Motor Speedway for the opening practice session at 2:00 PM (EDT) on Friday, July 23rd. Qualifying will take place on Saturday morning at 10:10 AM (EDT).

The Brickyard 400 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race is on Sunday, July 25th, and it will be televised live on ESPN beginning at 1:00 PM (EDT), while the IMS Radio Network will carry the live radio broadcast.

To learn more about the GEICO Racing program, please visit: www.geicogarage.com

You can also follow GEICO Racing on Twitter: www.twitter.com/geicoracing

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