Fontana, CA (October 10, 2010) – After the checkered flag had been displayed in Kansas last weekend, GEICO driver Casey Mears was quick to pack up his things and board a flight with his wife and daughter to California. That's because Mears spent his childhood in Bakersfield, just 150-miles removed from Fontana.

Mears' week proved fruitful, as he got to visit home, and also celebrated his daughter's second birthday. Capping off his week was the success that met him when he arrived in Fontana for the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series' opening practice session on Friday.

Mears sent the #13 GEICO Toyota Camry to the top of the speed charts within five minutes of being on the racetrack. He quickly shot up to seventh and would later end up 23rd when the only practice session prior to qualifying ended. The #13 GEICO Camry was the fastest 'go or go home' car, with Jason Leffler being the next closest contender in 30th.

When qualifying got underway, Mears went out 38th, meaning he would be the third 'go or go home' car to take to the racing surface for his two lap qualifying effort. Mears would not need to wait around to learn his fate for Sunday's race because he quickly placed the #13 GEICO Toyota Camry on Row 6 on the starting grid for the Pepsi Max 400.

Qualifying 12th, Mears handed GEICO their best ever qualifying effort since their foray into the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series in 2009.

Hot temperatures heated the racetrack when race day arrived and a stronger than expected wind worried crew chiefs and drivers alike. Fortunately, it did not appear that either of these conditions would ultimately play a role in Sunday's race.

After starting 12th, Mears held strong in the Top 15 when the green flag was displayed, battling for positions and even garnering significant television time while holding off several Chase contenders. Unfortunately, however, he soon appeared to freefall through the field. On Lap 23, Mears radioed to Crew Chief Bootie Barker, "The car is really loose.

It's tight in the center and loose in and loose off."

Barker assured him they would go to work on the #13 GEICO Camry when the first caution flag came out.

They would not have to wait long, as Greg Biffle's engine blew on Lap 40, bringing out the event's first caution flag of the day, and allowing the Germain Racing team the opportunity to right the #13 GEICO Camry. Mears came down pit road and took on four fresh tires, a tank of fuel, and adjustments. Mears entered the pits 32nd, but the Germain Racing pit crew sent him back out 30th, netting two positions during the stop.

After restarting 30th on Lap 46, Mears quickly jumped to 23rd by Lap 51 before the event's second caution flag of the day was brought out by a Marcos Ambrose spin on Lap 53. When Mears brought the #13 GEICO Camry in for service, the Germain Racing pit crew outfitted his car with four tires, fuel, and a half round of wedge in the left rear.

Despite making the adjustments during the pit stop, Mears would not lose any positions on pit

road and would restart 22nd when the race went back under green on Lap 58.

However, the caution flag would immediately make another appearance on behalf of Carl Edwards before one lap was completed under green.

Having picked up two spots on the single green flag lap, Mears restarted 20th on Lap 59.

Mears picked up three positions in two laps and by Lap 63 he was flirting with the Top 15, as he sat 17th.

Mears continued to battle a loose condition and to add to the issue, he reported a vibration on Lap 95. When the caution flag was displayed on lap 114, the Germain Racing pit crew serviced the #13 GEICO Camry and sent Mears back out two spots to the good, allowing him to restart 19th after coming into the pits in the 21st position.

The call of the day came on Lap 155 when Mears was running 24th when the yellow flag waved. During Mears' trip down pit road, Barker ordered the Germain Racing pit crew to only put two tires on the #13 GEICO Camry in order to gain valuable track position. He added that they needed to pack the fuel tank full of fuel in hopes of having enough to make it to the end.

The former worked, as Mears was able to pick up 17 positions on pit road, but the latter did not fair as well, as the #13 GEICO Camry would still be half a lap short of being able to go the distance.

Restarting 7th with just 42 laps remaining, Mears ran solidly in the Top 10 before competitors

with four fresh tires would begin to get the best of him. He also continued to suffer from an incident that happened midway through the race.

A fellow competitor took a trip through the infield grass, but Mears suffered the consequences, as grass and dirt filled the grill of the #13 GEICO Camry.

The Germain Racing pit crew worked feverishly to clean out the grill, but the engine would continue to lose power nevertheless. Despite the setback, Mears still managed to run comfortably in the Top 20.

As the race began to wind down, Barker began to contemplate when he would need to bring the #13 GEICO Camry down pit road to top off with fuel. On Lap 182, the racing gods answered his prayer when the caution flag was displayed, allowing Mears the opportunity to take on the necessary Sunoco racing fuel. He would also take on four tires and then restart the race in the 21st position on Lap 187.

When you go to Hollywood, you would expect drama. NASCAR is no different, and with just seven laps remaining in the 400-mile race, the final caution flag of the day came out, providing fans with an entertaining finish.

Mears brought the #13 GEICO Camry down pit road and took on just two tires before restarting the race 21st with just three laps left on the docket. Despite losing power in the engine and battling the flag-to-flag loose condition, Mears managed to hustle to his second consecutive Top 25 finish and also put smiles on the faces of his hometown crowd.

“We are competitive and this GEICO team can be really good; we’re getting there,” Mears said after climbing from the GEICO Camry. “We’ve come a long way pretty quick and we have high expectations for ourselves, so we’re going to continue working hard at the shop, as well as working on getting sponsorship for the remaining races, both this year and next.”

He continued, “We have GEICO on-board for Charlotte and Talladega for the remainder of this year, so we need to find a company to partner with us for the other races and have as much fun as we’re having building this program. GEICO is a tremendous partner and their support is unwavering; I really can’t thank them enough for giving us this opportunity.”

Next week, Casey Mears and the GEICO team get to sleep in their own beds, as they will race under the lights at Charlotte Motor Speedway.

Mears and the #13 GEICO Toyota Camry will hit the 1.5-mile quad-oval in Concord, NC, for the opening practice session at 3:30 PM (EDT) on Thursday, October 14th. Qualifying will follow at 7:10 PM (EDT).

The Bank of America 500 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race is on Saturday, October 16th, and it will be televised live on ABC beginning at 7:30 PM (EDT), while the Performance Racing Network (PRN) 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

Please visit the Casey Mears Facebook fan page: www.facebook.com/caseymearsracing

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