

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (February 18, 2011) – Entering Daytona Beach, Florida, Casey Mears and the No. 13 GEICO Toyota team had high hopes of getting their 2011 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series season off to a quick start. Unfortunately, the stars weren't lined up as two engine failures in two days created a very disappointing week for the GEICO Racing crew at Daytona International Speedway.

On Wednesday afternoon during final practice before the Gatorade Duels, the first engine expired on Mears, causing the driver to sit out the remaining practice time and the team to change engines in the No. 13 Camry.

The start of the second Duel on Thursday afternoon saw Mears starting from the rear of the field, because of the engine change on Wednesday. After three quick laps on the 2.5-mile legendary superspeedway, the second engine failure occurred, putting Mears and the GEICO team in the garage permanently and ending their hopes of making Sunday's running of the Daytona 500.

"I don't know, we didn't even get a shot," said Mears, after the second engine expired. "We'll see, we have a good team and I know we are going to do good at some of the other races but you know the fact that we couldn't run through practice on Wednesday and then run a few laps before the Duel didn't help us. I don't have to say what this feels like; obviously it feels terrible. But we will keep digging, look forward to next weekend and hopefully have a good day in Phoenix."

Two Engine Failures Create a Disappointing Week for Casey Mears and GEICO Team

Mears and the GEICO team will head to Phoenix (Ariz.) International Raceway next weekend, to attempt to make the second race of the 2011 season on February 27, 2011. Qualifying will take place on Saturday afternoon at 2:05 p.m. Eastern Time. Live coverage of the race can be seen on FOX, Sunday afternoon at 3 p.m. Eastern Time.

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