Darlington Raceway has a reputation for being one of NASCAR's toughest race tracks. But the No. 77 Lofton Cattle Toyota Tundra team refused to relent to its challenges on Saturday, overcoming numerous obstacles in the Too Tough to Tame 200, and finishing with an impressive 13th place finish.

"The guys on this team worked nonstop all day. We had a rough start in practice but they thrashed on it and we got it turned around for qualifying. We had a good starting spot, but there's not much you can do when trucks scatter on the start. There was nowhere to go there and we suffered a bit of damage, but the guys fixed it up as best as they could and we kept digging," Lofton said.

Knowing that he had no points to rely on in order to make the event, Lofton and the No. 77 Lofton Cattle team showed no signs of concern early on after suffering through a spin and a "Darlington stripe" in both morning practice sessions. Instead, they simply worked harder, getting the truck ready for the afternoon qualifying run.

The hard work paid off, as Lofton laid down the 17th fastest speed, securing a solid starting spot for the race. Once the green flag waved however, more trouble found Lofton.

As the field got up to speed on the first lap, contact near the front of the field ignited a melee, collecting at least seven damaged race trucks, including Lofton's No. 77 Toyota.

Lofton radioed to crew chief Ryan Fugle that the wheel was off in addition to the cosmetic damage. He made multiple stops down pit road under the caution flag, with the crew repairing as much as they could before being forced to send him back on track for the restart.

Despite battling an ill-handling machine, Lofton maintained a spot on the lead lap through the third caution flag on lap 26. The yellow allowed him to make another trip to pit road. The crew

swapped out right side tires and fixed the alignment. Lofton took the restart from the 30th position.

With a repaired truck, Lofton settled in behind the wheel, and consistently clicked off positions lap after lap.

By the time the yellow waved on lap 90, Lofton showed in the 13th position. At that time, Fugle called him to pit road. The crew worked their magic, laying down a solid four-tire change, gaining a position. Some leaders however, opted for two tires, leaving Lofton 12th for the restart.

Three more caution flags waved through the final 50 laps of the race, with spotter Mark Green calling Lofton through multiple near misses.

Lofton took advantage of one of those yellows, making his final pit stop of the night on lap 120. After taking on an air pressure adjustment, two tires, and fuel, Lofton rejoined the race in 17th.

With only three laps remaining following the final restart on lap 144, Lofton flexed his muscle, wheeling his battered, yet strong No. 77 Lofton Cattle Toyota Tundra to a solid 13th place finish.

"I can't thank my guys enough. Rudy (crew chief Ryan Fugle) is such a great motivator. He stayed positive, laid out a plan to get the truck fixed, and kept me focused. It feels great to leave Darlington with a 13th place finish after the challenges we faced all day," Lofton added.

After Darlington, Lofton picked up eight spots to 15th in the driver point standings. The No. 77 team will next hit the track on April 2 at Martinsville Speedway.

For more on Justin Lofton, visit LoftonRacing.com and on Twitter, @jlracing.

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