MEARS MAKES BIG MOVES AT NASCAR'S BIGGEST TRACK

Talladega, AL (April 17, 2011) – A week ago, the Lone Star state saw Casey Mears record a 26th place finish and put his GEICO team back in the Top 35, ensuring he would be locked into the Talladega race. Mears and the Germain Racing team arrived in Alabama looking to extend their run of positive happenings.

After sitting 24th in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series' opening practice session, Mears experienced a setback when qualifying saw him place the #13 GEICO Camry 40th on the starting grid. Patience is a virtue for the California native and race day would find it on full display.

On Sunday, the green flag turned the field loose for 188 laps of racing amid bright sunshine, cool temperatures and a slight breeze. Rolling off the starting grid from the 40th starting position, Mears wasted little time in making his presence felt.

By the close of Lap 1, he had the #13 GEICO Camry in 34th, while Lap 5 saw him in 27th, quickly approaching the Top 25.

Pacing the high-banks of Talladega Superspeedway's 2.66-mile tri-oval is a task better tackled by two, so Mears quickly connected with Robby Gordon. Gordon would end up being Mears' drafting partner for the balance of the afternoon and they would spend their day slicing through the field picking up position after position.

Things would later go awry, but for most of the race it was a mutually beneficial relationship that saw the pair reach the front of the field on multiple occasions.

On Lap 27, Brian Vickers found the wall and brought out the event's first caution flag of the day, allowing Mears to bring his #13 GEICO Camry to the attention of the Germain Racing pit crew. After outfitting Mears with four fresh tires and a tank of Sunoco racing fuel, they returned Mears to the racing surface where he restarted in the 17th position on Lap 32.

The dynamic duo of Mears and Gordon continued to collect positions and after cracking the Top 15 on Lap 103, Mears made his appearance in the Top 5 on Lap 107. As restrictor-plate racing goes, the #13 GEICO Camry would vacillate up and down the scoring monitor until Lap 130 saw Mears put the Gecko at the front of the field, taking the lead and collecting much needed bonus points.

The Mears-Gordon partnership proved to be productive and the pair were inside the Top 10 with just eight laps remaining in the race. It was then that Gordon made a decision to go it alone and pulled out of line and passed Mears, causing both cars to free-fall to 23rd position with just five laps left on the docket. Mears would re-engage Gordon and attempt to make up positions lost, but it was too late.

Despite the setback, Mears still managed to hustle the #13 GEICO Camry to a 22nd place finish at the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series' second restrictor-plate race of the season.

Most importantly, Mears' finish keeps the Germain Racing team in the Top 35 in the owner point standings.

"22nd is a decent finish, but it's frustrating knowing that we should've been in the Top 5," a visibly frustrated Mears exclaimed after climbing from the #13 GEICO Camry. "We weren't out there just racing today, we were out there competing for the win.

We had a great car and I'm proud of this GEICO team for all of their hard work.

The pit crew did a great job today and we did all we could to make it happen.

Unfortunately, you just can't control what other people are going to do.

But we had a really good day and it was nice to be able to take GEICO to the front of the field."

The NASCAR Sprint Cup Series will take a weekend off before traveling to Richmond, VA, the weekend of April 30th.

Mears and the #13 GEICO Toyota Camry will hit the 3/4-mile D-shaped oval of Richmond International Raceway for the opening practice session at 12:00 PM (EDT) on Friday, April 29th. Qualifying will follow at 5:35 PM (EDT).

The Crown Royal presents the Matthew and Daniel Hansen 400 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race is on Saturday, April 30th, and it will be televised live on FOX beginning at 7:30 PM (EDT).

The Motor Racing Network (MRN) 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

- PMI -

Contact: Doug Barnette, Player Management International

Email: dbarnette@pmifirm.com