

Late Race Spin Pushes Max Papis Back to a 23rd-Place Finish at Nashville

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (April 22, 2011) – In 2008, Max Papis made his first career start in the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series, but since that day three short years ago, the Como, Italy native hasn't competed in more than nine Truck Series events in one season. So even though Papis isn't running for the Rookie of the Year title, the GEICO Racing driver entered Nashville (Tenn.) Superspeedway with a yellow stripe on the rear of his No. 9 Toyota Tundra for the fifth race of the 2011 season on Friday night.

After a brief rain shower delayed the start of the two practice sessions Friday morning, Papis took to the concrete track and quickly adjusted to the new racing surface. At the conclusion of both practices, the No. 9 GEICO Toyota was scored in the fifth position. Papis then laid down two solid laps in qualifying to place his Germain Racing entry in 11th-place to start the 150-lap race under the lights.

Once the green flag waved in Music City, Papis was ready to vie for the coveted Gibson guitar trophy. The first 40 laps of action saw Papis in the 13th position, gaining additional seat time at the unique one-of-a-kind circuit, as the driver reported to his GEICO crew that his Tundra was fighting a tight handling condition. Green flag pit stops began on lap 50 and Papis made his way to the attention of his crew for four tires, fuel, and adjustments. However through the sequence, the No. 9 GEICO Toyota fell one lap down to the leaders. On lap 59, the opening caution slowed the field for debris after the field had completed green flag pit stops. Papis placed himself in position to receive the Lucky Dog Award, which put him back on the lead lap.

The field restarted on lap 64, with Papis in the 17th position. Papis continued to battle with his competitors but remained in the same running order as the second caution was displayed 12 laps later on lap 76 for oil on the racetrack. A few leaders in front of the GEICO Toyota came to pit road for service, while Papis stayed out, allowing him to take the green flag restart on lap 80 from 14th-place.

On lap 83, Papis was on the topside of a three-wide battle and contact was made between Papis and David Starr. The GEICO Toyota received damage in the left rear and lost a handful of

positions, pushing Papis back to 18th-place. The third caution was brought out on lap 103 for debris, giving Papis the opportunity to return to pit road for four tires, fuel, and additional adjustments.

Restarting on lap 107, Papis took off from the 15th position, as the GEICO crew gained three spots on pit road. Two short circuits later, the fourth caution came out on lap 109 for a spin by Austin Dillon in turn two. After track cleanup concluded, Papis took the green flag restart on lap 113 from 16th-place.

For the next 20 laps, Papis still felt uneasy handling effects from the contact that took place earlier in the event. Another caution closed in the field on lap 138 for an accident in turn four, as Papis was in the 18th position. With less than 10 laps remaining, Papis looked to make a late race push on the lap 142 restart. Unfortunately three laps later, Papis received contact from Brad Sweet, spinning the No. 9 GEICO Toyota in turn two. No damage was sustained as Papis did a great job of keeping his truck off the wall.

Papis took the green flag on lap 148 from the 24th position and over the final three laps, the Italian gained one spot to cross the finish line in the 23rd-place.

As the GEICO Racing team never gave up, Papis unofficially remains in the ninth position in the NCWTS driver championship point standings, only two points behind eighth-place Clay Rogers. The NASCAR Camping World Truck Series will have a break in action before heading to Dover (Del.) International Speedway on Friday, May 13th.

-PMI-

Contact: Samantha Jones, Player Management International

Email: sjones@pmifirm.com Web Site: www.pmifirm.com