

## **ADVERSITY NO MATCH FOR MEARS IN DARLINGTON; GIVES GEICO BUMP IN STANDINGS**

Darlington, SC (May 7, 2011) – Mother’s Day weekend is special to everyone, but for Casey Mears it means a bit more this year. Aside from having a three year old daughter, Mears’ wife Trisha is nearly nine-months pregnant with their first son.

While Mears spent the better part of Saturday night beating and banging with his fellow competitors on the racetrack, Trisha spent her evening at the racetrack in the couples’ motorhome battling the kicks of the forthcoming Mears.

The NASCAR Sprint Cup Series took to the track ‘Too Tough To Tame’ on Friday for its opening practice session. Mears was looking sporty in his #13 GEICO Toyota Camry and rested 26th on the speed charts at its conclusion. Unfortunately, the final practice would be rained out, forcing the GEICO team to head into qualifying with a bit of uncertainty.

When qualifying got underway on Friday evening, Mears calmed the nerves of his GEICO team when he calmly paced the Lady In Black in just 27.879 seconds, at a rate of speed of 176.391 miles per hour. His effort placed him 32nd on the starting grid for Saturday night’s Showtime Southern 500.

A packed house and clear skies saw the field get underway when the green flag was displayed on a cool Saturday evening. Starting 32nd, Mears and the #13 GEICO Camry quickly jumped to the 30th position by the close of the event’s second lap. When the evening’s first caution flag was displayed on Lap 5, Mears radioed to crew chief, Bootie Barker: “The car is so tight.”

Along with providing Mears with four tires and fuel, the Germain Racing pit crew made the necessary adjustments to free the car up when Mears brought the #13 GEICO Camry down pit road under caution.

Mears' visit to pit road proved fruitful and the #13 GEICO Camry began strategically navigating its way through the field. After reaching the 9th position on Lap 38, Mears eventually found himself as the leader, putting the Gecko at the front of the field for the second time this season.

As the Sprint Cup Series field continued to circuit the 1.366-mile oval, Mears would once again begin to battle his racecar. On Lap 133, Mears radioed to Barker: "It's terrible, I can't go. I can't do anything because I'm too loose."

When the caution flag was displayed on Lap 230 for a Brian Vickers/David Ragan crash, Mears took the opportunity to bring his #13 GEICO Camry to the attention of the Germain Racing pit crew.

After furnishing him with four fresh Goodyear tires, a full tank of Sunoco racing fuel and much needed adjustments, the GEICO crew returned Mears to the racing surface in the 28th position.

Mears quickly moved the #13 GEICO Camry forward and landed back in the Top 25 on Lap 247. Mears remained in hot pursuit of the field and for a series of laps he nipped at the bumper of Juan Pablo Montoya before the Columbian driver fell victim to the Gecko and surrendered the 24th position on Lap 279.

As the #13 GEICO Camry continued notching positions on the racetrack, Mears' voice grew silent on the team's radio frequency. Mears's progress continued until NASCAR placed the field under caution when Mark Martin scraped the wall on Lap 280.

Sitting inside the Top 20, Mears' night would take a challenging turn on the Lap 285 restart. As the field went back under green with just 82 laps to go, cars began to bunch up giving Mears no other option but to check up, consequently causing David Reutimann to make contact with the rear of Mears' #13 GEICO Camry.

The result was significant rear end damage to Mears' machine, forcing him down pit road under green flag conditions on Lap 287 to repair the affected sheet metal and attempt to restore the racecar's stability.

With just 80 laps remaining, Mears would spend the balance of his evening fighting to keep the car under control, but turned respectable lap times nevertheless. His efforts would be

rewarded when the checkered flag was displayed, as he was able to salvage a 30th place finish despite the heavy damage to the #13 GEICO Camry.

Mears finished just ahead of Clint Bowyer, Jeff Burton and Brian Vickers and was able to solidify the #13 GEICO Camry in the Owner Point standings, jumping the team to 34th.

“Man, we had a nice run going, so it’s a little tough to take a 30th place finish,” Mears said after the race. “The good thing is that we were able to work hard and run up front tonight. Crashes happen in racing, so while it’s frustrating, it doesn’t take away from how well we did.

We were right there and we were definitely going to get a good finish for GEICO and the Germain Racing team.

We’re doing all of the right things and we’re getting better each week, so I know we’ll continue moving forward and making it happen.”

He added, “It’s great to see Regan (Smith) win because he, as well as the whole Furniture Row team, are good people.

It’s also encouraging to see a single car team win a race.

Those guys were sitting where we are sitting now about six years ago, so to see them make it to Victory Lane is very encouraging.

We will be there.”

Next week will find the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series taking aim at the Monster Mile in Dover, Delaware.

Mears and the #13 GEICO Toyota Camry will hit the one-mile oval of Dover International Speedway for the opening practice session at 11:00 AM (EDT) on Friday, May 13th. Qualifying will follow on Saturday, May 14th, at 12:10 PM (EDT).

The FedEx 400 benefiting Autism Speaks NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race is on Sunday, May 15th, and it will be televised live on FOX beginning at 1:00 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](http://www.geicogarage.com)

You can also follow GEICO Racing on Twitter: [www.twitter.com/geicoracing](http://www.twitter.com/geicoracing)

Please visit the Casey Mears Facebook fan page: [www.facebook.com/casemearsracing](http://www.facebook.com/casemearsracing)

- PMI -

Contact: Doug Barnette, Player Management International

Email: [dbarnette@pmifirm.com](mailto:dbarnette@pmifirm.com)