

**THE MONSTER PUTS NO FEAR IN MEARS; GEICO DRIVER NETS 23RD**

DOVER, Del. (May 15, 2011) – Weather outlooks are very similar to those for a NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race. Sometimes what you think will be the result, is actually far from the actual one. While the forecast called for rain to wash out all on-track activities throughout the weekend at Dover (Del.) International Speedway, Casey Mears and the GEICO Racing team battled all 400 miles at The Monster Mile on Sunday afternoon. During the FedEx 400, Mears faced challenges on the track but in the end, the No. 13 Toyota Camry crossed the finish line in the 23rd position to solidify their spot inside the Top-35 in the point standings.

On Friday afternoon, Mears took to the concrete oval for two practice sessions, where the GEICO Camry finished the final session 14th on the speed charts. Optimism was in the air for the Germain Racing crew heading into qualifying on Saturday. Unfortunately, rain showers plagued the Dover area, forcing the field to be set off a combination of practice speeds. This placed Mears in the 30th position for the start of the main show on Sunday.

Even with the rain percentages reaching as high as 80%, the 11th race of 2011 season started on time at the track known for fast-paced action. With a lack of rubber laid on the racing surface, Mears completed laps conservatively in the beginning. The first caution slowed the field on lap 21 for a spin on the backstretch. Crew chief Bootie Barker called Mears to pit road for four tires, air pressure, and track bar adjustments to help the tight handling condition. Teams weren't allowed to take fuel until after the competition caution, displayed by NASCAR, around lap 40.

Mears worked his way into 28th-place by the time the aforementioned competition caution came on lap 42. The previous adjustments significantly helped the GEICO Toyota, so Mears came to the attention of his pit crew for just four tires and fuel. The California native restarted on lap 46 from the 30th position to start a long, but expected green flag run that lasted for over 100 laps.

Clocking consistent lap times, Mears held his own as the GEICO Toyota became tighter through the center and exit as the run went on. Barker radioed for his driver to pit on lap 109 for four tires, fuel, and an air pressure adjustment. The concrete monster began to rear its ugly head as Mears reported that the front end wasn't turning as well as it needed to. The team made plans to help the Camry on the next stop, which came on lap 163 as the caution was brought out for a slight rain shower that popped up over the track.

After the brief shower passed and a solid stop completed by the GEICO team for four tires, fuel, and adjustments, Mears returned to green flag conditions on lap 170 from 29th-place. By the halfway mark of the event, the Gecko was scored in the 26th position. The fourth caution of the afternoon slowed the pace on lap 217, as Mears continued to run inside the top-30. The No. 13 Camry returned to pit road for another stop for tires, fuel, and track bar adjustments to help the stability of the back end.

Another 100 lap green flag run ensued forcing Mears to make up ground the tough way on the high banks. With 300 laps in the books, the GEICO Toyota was handling well in the rear but still needed to turn better in the front for Mears to gain additional positions. The fifth caution came on lap 333 for an accident in turn one. Once again, the No. 13 machine came to the attention of its crew for four fresh tires, fuel, and a minor air pressure adjustment.

Mears restarted on lap 338 from the 27th position and continued his assault to leave Dover with a top-25 finish. With the track laying rubber marbles in the bottom groove, the majority of drivers were running strictly the high line, hindering the ability to pass. Despite the obstacle, Mears found a way in his GEICO Toyota as he broke into the top-25 by lap 355.

The sixth and final caution came a handful of laps later on lap 362, allowing Mears to make one last set of changes to his GEICO entry. Barker brought Mears in for four tires, fuel, wedge, and air pressure adjustments. Gaining one spot on pit road allowed Mears to restart on lap 367 from the 24th position. Over the final 30 laps, the veteran driver picked up one more position to cross the finish line in 23rd-place.

“We had a decent day, but it probably could’ve been better,” Mears said. “We got behind a little bit early, but the GEICO pit crew did a great job of getting me on and off of pit road as the race wore on. Today’s

finish was of great help in the point standings and now we are just one point out of 33rd.

We are moving in the right direction and I think we have shown that we are a contender out here.

Days like this make you feel good about the progress you’re making.”

Mears and the No. 13 Germain Racing Toyota team sit 34th in the owner point standings, only one point behind 33rd-place.

The NASCAR Sprint Cup Series heads home to Charlotte (N.C.) Motor Speedway for the running of the Sprint All-Star Challenge on Saturday, May 21st. Mears and the GEICO Racing team will attempt to transfer to the main show via winning the 60-lap Showdown. All of the action can be seen live on SPEED Channel, as well as heard on PRN Radio and Sirius XM Radio.

To learn more about the GEICO Racing program, please visit: [www.geicogarage.com](http://www.geicogarage.com)  
<<http://www.geicogarage.com/>>

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