DESPITE SETBACK, MEARS MAINTAINS MOMENTUM IN POCONO

Long Pond, PA (June 12, 2011) – The last couple of weeks have found Casey Mears' dance card unusually full. He and his wife Trisha have welcomed home a baby boy, and Mears has managed to keep his #13 GEICO Toyota Camry 33rd in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Owner Point standings. Pocono offered the Bakersfield, CA, native the opportunity to further solidify his status in the Top 35.

After being 36th in the opening practice session on Friday, Mears gained speed and rested 29th on the chart when the final practice session closed later in the afternoon. His qualifying draw did him no favors, as he was just the ninth driver to take a shot at a starting position for Sunday's NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race when qualifying got underway on Saturday at Pocono Raceway. M ears paced the 2.5-mile tri-oval in 53.360 seconds, landing the #13 GEICO Camry 35th on the starting grid, just behind Kyle Busch in 34th.

Race day found teams pondering Mother Nature's plans, as overcast skies, cool temperatures and light drizzle encompassed the Pocono area. With 200 laps on the docket, teams were plotting strategies that would hopefully find them at the head of the field at the halfway point.

Fortunately, for the full house of race fans on hand Sunday, the weather would hold off and the field would go green at its advertised start time.

Mears and the GEICO Camry rolled off of the starting grid in the 35th position when the green flag was displayed in Long Pond, PA, on Sunday afternoon. Bookended on the starting grid by Kyle Busch and Greg Biffle, Mears was looking to make quick progress in the #13 GEICO Camry. By the close of the opening lap, he had moved into the 34th position, and Lap 2 saw the #13 GEICO Camry in 31st.

Mears wheeled effortlessly around the 'Tricky Triangle', maneuvering the #13 GEICO Camry into the 17th position on Lap 12. The Gecko's assault on Pocono would continue and Mears would eventually break into the Top 5 on Lap 21.

Mears' success would not come without adversity, however, as he seemed to have a war brewing with Turn 3. Lacking rear bite, Mears struggled to make it through the turn on each lap.

A scheduled green flag pit stop on Lap 45 provided the Germain Racing pit crew the opportunity to refresh the #13 GEICO Camry with four new Goodyear tires, a tank full of Sunoco racing fuel and much needed adjustments.

Upon his return to the racing surface, Mears would once again approach the Top 20 before Lap 64 delivered a gut-punch of sorts. Mears radioed to crew chief Bootie Barker that his shifter handle had broken, leaving the #13 GEICO Camry stuck in fourth gear.

The good news is that the car was stuck in fourth gear, which allowed Mears to remain at speed while navigating the racetrack under green flag conditions.

The challenge would be getting the #13 GEICO Camry off of pit road during any upcoming pit stops when the first three gears were not available to assist.

The first hurdle came on Lap 73, when Mears visited pit road for service under green flag conditions. He would quickly go down a lap and find himself in the 33rd position. An undaunted Mears would not surrender to his frustration, but instead continued the fight.

By the halfway point of the race, Mears had the #13 GEICO Camry once again approaching the Top 25 and ran in 27th on Lap 98.

A much needed caution flag was displayed on Lap 110, allowing the Germain Racing pit crew the opportunity to fix the infamous shifter handle. It would take two separate visits to pit road in order to avoid going down another lap, but the GEICO crew made the repair and Mears returned to the racetrack with all four gears in operable condition.

After restarting the race in the 32nd position on Lap 117, Mears spent the balance of the afternoon trying to make up lost ground.

When the checkered flag waved in the Pennsylvania mountains, Mears and the #13 GEICO Camry recorded a 30th place finish and further solidified their position in the Top 35. The Germain Racing team remains 33rd in the standings, but they now have a 39-point cushion over 35th.

“It was a frustrating day for us because we had a good car and a good motor and the #13

GEICO Camry felt good out there early on," Mears said after exiting the GEICO Camry. "The important thing is that we showed how well we can run and we also remained composed when we had to get the shifter repaired.

I love the attitude of this team and the fact that we never quit.

We could've very easily gone down three or four laps, but we didn't.

It was a tough day, but we still were able to gain in the point standings."

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