BRISTOL BULLRING LEAVES MAX PAPIS WITH BATTLE SCARS

BRISTOL, Tenn. (August 24, 2011) – Every driver leaves Bristol Motor Speedway with either a huge smile or upset feelings. When the action picks up at The World's Fastest Half Mile, it picks up rapidly and Max Papis was on the receiving end of the action on Wednesday night. The NASCAR Camping World Truck Series kicked off the festivities with a rare mid-week race but the GEICO Racing team was prepared to battle. Unfortunately, the concrete bullring didn't play nice and left Papis with a 26th-place finish.

The misfortune struck early for Papis as the GEICO Toyota Tundra scrapped the outside wall during qualifying on Wednesday afternoon. The Germain Racing crew quickly went to work to repair the minimal damage, however this forced Papis to start from the rear of the field when the green flag flew later that evening.

The O'Reilly 200 began shortly after 8:15 p.m. ET and Papis knew the GEICO team must be patiently aggressive to maneuver their way to the front. Papis quickly gained seven positions to take over 29th-place as the first caution was seen on lap 11. Crew chief Randy Goss took this opportunity to pit for fuel and wedge adjustments as Papis reported the truck as "tight center off." Returning to green flag conditions on lap 18, the Como, Italy native was scored in the 27th position.

Marred with a very tight handling condition at a track that is difficult to pass on, Papis faced obstacles when moving through traffic. As the second caution slowed the pace on lap 32, Goss brought his driver back down pit road for four tires, fuel, and two rounds up on the track bar. Papis took off from 28th-place on lap 37. By lap 50, Papis broke into the top-25 and less than 10 laps later, the GEICO machine was holding the 18th position.

On lap 63, a fellow competitor got loose underneath Papis, causing a multi-truck accident and bringing out the fourth caution. The GEICO Toyota received a heavy amount of damage but the over-the-wall crew worked hard to keep the No. 9 on the track. Due to the numerous pit stops for repairs, Papis restarted from 30th-place on lap 72.

Papis began to feel a loose handling condition because of the damage. With the GEICO Tundra in the 27th position on lap 114, another multi-truck accident occurred and Papis had nowhere to go. Once again, the pit crew never gave up and repaired the battle scars as much as possible.

Over the final 75 laps, Papis continued to wheel the GEICO machine, although the Italian was only able to move up one position due to the number of laps the team was down to the leaders. When the checkered flag flew, Papis and the team were left with a 26th-place finish.

“We had a rough day but I couldn’t be more proud of my guys on this GEICO Toyota,” said Papis. “They worked so hard all day and never gave up during the race even when we got in those two wrecks. We will keep digging as hard as we can and getting back in the top-10 is

coming soon for us.”

Papis now sits in the 17th position in the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series driver championship point standings. He is only three points behind 16th-place Miguel Paludo and 11 points behind 15th-place Justin Lofton.

The GEICO team will head to Atlanta Motor Speedway next Friday night, September 2nd, to kick off Labor Day weekend in the ATL. The green flag waves shortly after 8 p.m. ET and all the action can be seen live on SPEED. MRN Radio and Sirius-XM Satellite Radio will both carry the live radio broadcast.

To learn more about the GEICO Racing program, 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> .

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