FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEARS AND GEICO TEAM ON RIGHT TRACK WITH FONTANA FINISH

Fontana, CA (March 25, 2012) – Coming off of a Top 25 finish in Bristol, Casey Mears and the GEICO team viewed Fontana as a way to continue building both their new Ford program and their status in the Top 35 in the owner point standings. Germain Racing entered this weekend 33rd in the standings and with Martinsville being the first race based on 2012 owner points, it was critical for Mears and the #13 GEICO Ford Fusion to post a solid finish in Fontana.

The weekend started off rough with Mears 29th in the first practice and later posting a qualifying effort of 33rd. Final practice on Saturday saw a change of fortune when Mears and the #13 GEICO Ford Fusion jumped from 30th on the chart to 17th, where they ultimately concluded the session. Crew chief Bootie Barker made changes to the GEICO car that filled Mears and his teammates with optimism.

Although inclement weather loomed over southern California on Sunday, the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series took the green flag at the advertised start time. Rolling off the grid from 33rd, Mears and the #13 GEICO Fusion began their ascent through the field and quickly picked up nine positions in the first seven laps.

Mears cracked the Top 20 and then made his first scheduled green flag pit stop of the day on Lap 34. After his GEICO pit crew outfitted him with four fresh Goodyear tires and a full tank of Sunoco racing fuel, Mears rejoined the race and ran solidly in the 23rd position until he reported a flat left front tire on Lap 55. He quickly directed the #13 GEICO Fusion down pit road where his pit crew provided him with four new tires and returned him to the racing surface two laps down in the 35th position.

Mears quickly began to make up ground and by Lap 68 had returned to the Top 25 before nipping at the Top 20 on Lap 70. Barker radioed to Mears: “You’re doing great, Casey. Those are Top 10 lap times you’re running.”

Lap 105 saw Mears recover a lap and sit in the Lucky Dog position as weather threatened the area.

While running in the 22nd position on Lap 123, Mears reported to Barker: “It’s raining pretty hard in turns three and four.”

The caution flag waved for rain on Lap 124.

Getting close on fuel, Barker ordered the #13 GEICO Fusion down pit road for service.

Joined by several other cars, including his close friend Jimmie Johnson, Mears quickly took on four tires and fuel before returning to the track in the 23rd position.

A subsequent red flag sent the field to pit road as rain blanketed the two-mile D-shaped oval.

A short time later, NASCAR announced that the race was officially over with just 71 laps remaining. In a display of unwavering resiliency, Mears and his GEICO team recorded a 23rd place finish after a noble recovery from an early race flat tire. Their finish accounts for their third Top 25 of a young 2012 season.

Also, after entering Fontana 33rd in the owner point standings, Germain Racing exited SoCal sitting 29th.

“It feels great to have horsepower in this #13 GEICO Ford Fusion and this is probably the best intermediate car we’ve had this year,” Mears said with his trademark grin. “When I hit the gas pedal it goes and there is nothing that feels better.

We had a setback early on with the flat tire, but we were able to hustle and get back towards the front.

I really believe that if the race would’ve went back to green, we could’ve challenged the Top 10 and maybe the Top 5.”

He continued, “We’re definitely on the right track and now we’re right in the mix with the big teams.

We’re excited to get to Martinsville and then to Texas.”

Next week, Mears and his GEICO team go short track racing when they visit the ½-mile paperclip-shaped oval of Martinsville, VA.

Mears and the #13 GEICO Ford Fusion will hit the track at Martinsville Speedway for the opening practice session on Friday, March 30th, at 12:30 PM (EDT). Qualifying will follow on Saturday, March 31st, at 11:40 AM (EDT).

The Goody's Fast Relief 500 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race is on Sunday, April 1st, and it will be televised live on FOX beginning at 12:30 PM (EDT). The Motor Racing Network (MRN) will carry the live radio broadcast.

To learn more about the GEICO Racing program, please visit: www.geicoracing13.com

You can also follow GEICO Racing on Twitter: www.twitter.com/geicoracing

Please visit the Casey Mears Facebook fan page: www.facebook.com/caseymearsracing

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