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600-MILES NO MATCH FOR PROVEN ENDURANCE RACER CASEY MEARS; NOTCHES 9TH TOP 25 IN CHARLOTTE

CONCORD, N.C. (May 27, 2012) – The NASCAR Sprint Cup Series competes at 23 tracks throughout the 10-month season. However, when the series comes to Charlotte Motor Speedway, every driver and team has an extra pep in his or her step. Instead of sleeping in hotels and being away from family, the GEICO Racing team gets to be home, competing only miles away from the Mooresville, N.C. race shop.

Casey Mears relishes the opportunity to race in front of the 'home' crowd for another reason as well. Exactly five years ago to the day, the California native won the Coca-Cola 600, recording his first premier series victory. Heading into the weekend, Mears vividly remembered that special night and hoped to add another to his resume.

After three practice sessions and qualifying in the 25th position, the GEICO Racing team was prepared for the longest race of the season. Under warm and sunny skies, the green flag flew and quickly Mears reported his Germain Racing entry wouldn't turn at the top of the track. The first round of green flag pit stops came on lap 42, as Crew Chief Bootie Barker brought his driver in for four fresh tires and fuel.

The laps continued to pass by, as Mears ran consistent lap times in his No. 13 GEICO Ford. On lap 113, the first caution was displayed for debris. Barker called Mears to pit road twice – once for tires, fuel and an air pressure adjustment and again for a bump stop adjustment to help raise the splitter off the ground.

The bump stop adjustment helped the handling of the GEICO Fusion, allowing Mears to make strides on track. Over the next 100 laps, the track began to cool off as the sun set in the Carolina sky, positively helping the veteran driver. During every pit stop that Mears made, Barker continued to tweak the set-up, setting the stage for the final 100 laps.

As the race began to wind down, business started to pick up on the track. While there was only one caution, side-by-side racing filled the mile and a half oval and Mears moved his way into the 24th position by lap 350. Solid pit stops throughout the evening placed Mears in position to gain another spot during the final fuel run. As the checkered flag flew, Mears crossed the finish line in 22nd-place, collecting his ninth Top 25 of the 2012 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series season.

“I wasn’t sure what we were going to have starting the race,” said Mears. “We struggled with getting the GEICO Ford to turn this weekend and while it wasn’t perfect, Bootie and the guys made a lot of progress throughout the race tonight. Once we made the bump stop adjustments, the car seemed to handle a lot better. This Germain Racing team is making strides each week and we are going to keep moving in the right direction.”

Germain Racing remains 28th in the Owner Point standings, just 33 points outside the top-25.

Mears and the GEICO Racing team now head to Dover (Del.) International Speedway for the FedEx 400 on Sunday, June 3rd. Watch all coverage on FOX beginning at 12:30 p.m. ET.

To learn more about the GEICO racing program, please visit: www.caseymearsracing.com
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