

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HEATED KENTUCKY A BREEZE FOR MEARS

Germain Racing nets third consecutive Top 20

Sparta, KY (June 30, 2012) – Casey Mears blew into Sparta, Kentucky, looking to continue the momentum gained in the previous two weeks at Michigan and Sonoma. The #13 Valvoline NextGen Ford Fusion was quick off of the truck and when the first practice session concluded on Friday, Mears sat 21st on the speed chart.

He quickly bettered his effort and turned heads when he jumped to sixth in Happy Hour.

When Mears and his Germain Racing team took to the grid for qualifying on Friday evening, they had little idea what Mother Nature had in store. Just moments before the #13 Valvoline

NextGen car was scheduled to make its qualifying laps, the skies darkened and heavy winds engulfed the speedway sending team personnel scattering for cover.

After inflicting significant damage and also sending a NASCAR crewman to the hospital, the storm cleared and NASCAR Sprint Cup Series qualifying resumed.

Mears' qualifying effort would have matched his Happy Hour result had his racecar not bottomed out on the first lap. The second lap was faster and the #13 Valvoline NextGen Fusion would start 21st in Saturday night's NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race.

With the iconic Valvoline 'V' on the hood and GEICO on the lower rear quarters of his #13 Ford Fusion, Mears took the green flag on Saturday evening and set sail for 400-miles of racing. The #13 Valvoline NextGen Fusion dropped to 25th in the opening laps, but Mears quickly recovered and began moving forward.

He reached 22nd before the first caution of the day slowed the field on lap 43.

Mears brought his #13 Valvoline NextGen Ford Fusion down pit road for service and after quickly receiving four tires and a tank of fuel, the Germain Racing pit crew returned him to the racing surface two spots to the good, in 20th.

As the race wore on, Mears ran solidly in the Top 20 and even found his way to the front of the field when he took the lead on lap 152 before being forced down pit road for fresh tires and fuel.

Lap 171 heard a concerned Mears notify crew chief Bootie Barker of a vibration that seemed to be getting worse. Any vibration seemed to serve as little distraction, as he continued to run lap times consistent with the leaders and then promptly overtook Kurt Busch for the 18th position.

When the checkered flag waved on a hot Kentucky night, Mears crossed the finished line in 18th and accounted for Germain Racing's third consecutive Top 20 finish.

"We had a good weekend and we were fast, which is good for both Valvoline NextGen and GEICO," Mears said. "We did a really good job as a team tonight and we kept fighting hard and we're showing quantifiable progress. The pit crew stepped up and got me off of pit road quickly which really helped with track position."

He continued, "It was great to have Valvoline on-board for a couple of races and we're glad we were able to do a good job for them.

Their support helped us close the gap a little bit and I hope they join us again sometime."

The second half of the 2012 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series season kicks off next week when Mears and his #13 GEICO Ford Fusion travel to Daytona. Restrictor-plate racing is a bit of a hobby for the California native, as he has led laps at both Daytona and Talladega in recent visits.

Mears and the #13 GEICO Ford Fusion will hit the track at Daytona International Speedway for the opening practice session on Thursday, July 5th, at 4:00 PM (EDT). Qualifying will follow on Friday afternoon at 4:10 PM (EDT).

The Coke Zero 400 powered by Coca-Cola NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race is on Saturday, July 7th, and it will be televised live on TNT beginning at 6:30 PM (EDT). The Motor Racing Network (MRN) will carry the live radio broadcast.

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