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MEARS' WATKINS GLEN CHARGE NETS 16TH AND JUMP IN POINTS

Watkins Glen, NY (August 12, 2012) – This weekend, the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series traveled to the Finger Lakes region of New York for the series' second road course race of the 2012 season. After an earlier 15th place finish at Sonoma in June, Casey Mears and the GEICO team looked to continue the success with their road course program.

Practice proved uneventful for the Germain Racing team, as Mears ended the first session in the 21st position, while the final practice saw him in 31st. Qualifying also provided little hope when Mears landed 30th on the starting grid after negotiating the rights and lefts of Watkins Glen International in a racecar that felt off balance.

When race day arrived, crew chief Bootie Barker and his staff had a plan that developed after long hours in the hotel lobby during the previous evening. And they would need one, given their #13 GEICO Ford Fusion would be starting the 90-lap event from the 30th position.

Mears kept it light during pre-race and appeared confident in his team.

The green flag set the field underway amid cloudy skies and cooling temperatures. Mears and the #13 GEICO Fusion made quick progress on the 2.45-mile road course and picked up five positions by the close of lap 12.

He said to Barker, "I'm really loose everywhere."

However unsettled he may have felt in the car didn't reconcile with his ascent up the leaderboard, as he reached 17th before the first caution of the day slowed the field on lap 25.

Mears brought his GEICO machine to the attention of the Germain Racing pit crew who quickly provided him with four tires, fuel and an air pressure adjustment.

Mears and the #13 GEICO Fusion would restart the race from the 17th position; 13 spots higher than where he began the race just 30 laps prior. He worked his way up to 11th by lap 57, and then quickly broke into the top 10 and ran 8th before Denny Hamlin brought out the caution on lap 58.

As the race began to wind down, Mears and his #13 GEICO Fusion had solidified their position in the top 20 before hustling to a 16th place finish. His effort accounts for the team's sixth top 20 finish of the 2012 season.

Also, Mears inches ever closer to the top 25 and now rests just 17 points removed from Kurt Busch, who currently occupies the 25th position.

"We had a decent day today and I'm proud of the guys on this GEICO team for working hard to get the car figured out, and they also did a great job getting me off of pit road," Mears said. "It was kind of fun driving the #13 GEICO Fusion from the back to the front and I'm glad we were able to get a good finish and make up ground in the points, also."

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

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