CASEY MEARS NETS POLE AND POINTS JUMP AT BRISTOL

GEICO and Germain Racing score first NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Pole Award

Player Management International Media Release

Bristol, TN (August 25, 2012) – As the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series descended upon Bristol Motor Speedway for their final visit of the 2012 season, Casey Mears and the GEICO Racing team celebrated their second anniversary together. Since Mears arrival, the Germain Racing program has experienced significant growth, and this weekend their ascension in Sprint Cup Series status continued.

While Bristol Motor Speedway recently underwent a track resurfacing, Mears and his GEICO team chose to attack the unknown rather than fear it. As the weekend's first practice came to a close on Friday, the #13 GEICO Ford Fusion sat high atop the board, ending the session as the fastest car at the half-mile bullring. At many facilities, qualifying order may not matter, but at Bristol it does.

Given that the order of qualifying is based on speeds from the first practice, Mears won a practice session that every other team sought to control.

More importantly, the Germain Racing team mastered a track at which they've otherwise struggled in past visits.

Late Friday, the Tri-Cities region succumbed to an unexpected storm front, which ultimately forced the cancellation of Sprint Cup Series qualifying. Reverting back to first practice speeds, as dictated by NASCAR's rulebook, Mears and the GEICO Racing team were awarded the pole position and with it, the favored pit stall on pit road.

Friday marks the first NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Pole Award for GEICO and Germain Racing, but Mears is no stranger.

The Bakersfield, CA, native now has four starts from the front, including 2007 at Chicagoland Speedway, and back-to-back poles in 2004 at Pocono and Indianapolis.

"It's very exciting for our team and for our sponsor GEICO, who has been so supportive," Mears said after learning he would start from the pole. "The last couple years have been long but we have made lots of improvements, especially this season.

We couldn't ask for a bigger shot in the arm for this Germain Racing team.

GEICO has been with us every step of the way, so we're happy to share the excitement with them.

Being in this sport for a long time, my expectations are high.

I know we can compete week in and week out."

A packed house sat on the edge of their seats awaiting a sundown showdown on Saturday night at The World's Fastest Half-Mile. Mears led the field to the green flag and refused to surrender the top spot and remained the leader for 26 laps.

When the GEICO Ford Fusion picked up a tight handling condition, Mears dropped a few positions in an effort to take care of his racecar.

When the yellow flag flew on lap 82, crew chief Bootie Barker called Mears to pit road for four fresh tires, fuel and adjustments.

With varying pit strategies occurring among the different teams, the veteran driver restarted the race from the 17th position.

While Mears and his Sprint Cup Series counterparts collectively expressed their displeasure as passing became increasingly difficult, it didn't seem to deter the GEICO driver. Mears captured the 12th position with just 100 laps remaining and made his way ever closer to the top ten.

The pole sitter faced his biggest challenge on lap 414 when his left rear tire gave way, sending the #13 GEICO Fusion into the outside wall and bringing out the caution flag. The Germain Racing pit crew quickly provided Mears with four new tires and repairs, returning him to the racing surface just one lap down.

The racing gods would smile upon the GEICO team just a few laps later, on lap 424, when another yellow flag slowed the field and allowed Mears to return to the lead lap as the recipient of the coveted Lucky Dog award.

Despite falling victim to a flat tire, a persistent Mears managed to hustle the #13 GEICO Ford Fusion to a 21st place finish after the checkered flag ended 500-laps of intense racing action. His resilience helped to account for the team's 15th top 25 effort of the 2012 season.

Notably, Mears jumps up one position in the point standings to 26th and now sits just 16 points removed from the top 25.

“The GEICO Racing team worked hard all night,” Mears said after the race. “We would’ve come out of here with at least a top 10 or top 15 finish if the tire hadn’t blown, but all things considered, we’ll take 21st.

It’s Bristol, which is to say this place is unpredictable at best.

To start from the pole and run competitively is what we try to do each weekend and for it all to come together is a nice feeling. Hopefully we will keep this momentum and have another good run at Atlanta next weekend.”

Next week, the Germain Racing team will make their way to Hampton, GA, for race number 25 of the 2012 season.

Mears and the #13 GEICO Ford Fusion will hit the track at Atlanta Motor Speedway for the opening practice session on Friday, August 31st, at 2:30 PM (EDT). Qualifying will follow at 6:10 PM (EDT).

The AdvoCare 500 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race is on Sunday, September 2nd, and it will be televised live on ESPN beginning at 6:30 PM (EDT). The Performance Racing Network

(PRN) 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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