FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AFTER RAINY RICHMOND, MEARS' FOCUS ON GEICO 400

Richmond, VA (September 8, 2012) – Casey Mears and the Germain Racing team looked to rebound in Richmond after falling victim to a non-team related issue in Atlanta a week earlier that ended their day prematurely. At the same time, something greater awaits the GEICO team when they venture to Chicago next weekend for the GEICO 400, a once-a-year entitlement sponsorship that finds the insurance giant taking over one of the nation's largest cities.

Mears and his Germain Racing counterparts would need to first deal with Richmond before moving on to the Windy City. It seemed as though things were headed in the right direction in the opening NASCAR Sprint Cup Series practice session when Mears and his #13 GEICO Ford Fusion landed 22nd on the speed chart. Changes to the set-up between practice sessions did not sit well with the GEICO machine and Mears later rested 43rd on the board in final practice, and ultimately qualified 42nd for the Federated Auto Parts 400.

If rainy days and race delays always get you down, then Richmond International Raceway was not the place for you on Saturday evening. The blue skies and sunshine that filled the Richmond area on Saturday afternoon would later be betrayed by a storm front that dumped heavy rain on the ¾-mile tri-oval just hours before the green flag was scheduled to fly.

Once the track was dry and racing action got underway, Mears and the #13 GEICO Fusion made quick work of the field, marching from 42nd to 38th before the completion of the opening lap. 26 laps later saw him eleven positions to the good, in 31st, when he reported to crew chief Bootie Barker that he was in a tussle with an ill-handling racecar. The scheduled competition caution on lap 45 gave Mears the opportunity to take a much-needed trip down pit road. Aside from providing the GEICO Fusion with four fresh tires, fuel and adjustments, the Germain Racing pit crew turned in a stellar stop and ultimately helped Mears gain two positions on pit road.

Even with adjustments handed down from his crew, Mears still struggled to wheel his #13 GEICO Fusion around the racetrack. On lap 65, Mears reported, “It doesn’t turn any better. It’s a lot looser in and looser off.

Terrible in the center.”

His battle would not be short-lived and would instead plague him for the balance of the evening.

Undaunted, Mears and his GEICO team had climbed to the 23rd position before rain once again delivered a heavy blow to the Richmond area.

What ensued was a red flag that lasted 51 minutes and 45 seconds, pushing the race even later into the evening.

With the exception of a single lap just past the halfway point of the race where Mears turned his fastest lap of the evening and voiced his approval of the feel of the car, the late night saw more of the same for the GEICO team. Mears struggled, the team worked hard and, in the end, they managed to salvage a 29th place finish when the checkered flag halted the field in the early morning hours.

“This sport can be so frustrating at times and when you have nights like this it can really get the best of you, but we’ve always been resilient and no one on this GEICO team is hanging their head,” Mears stated. “We’ve come a long way and worked really hard to get here and we know what’s in the heart of this team, so minor bumps in the road don’t get us down.

If anything, it inspires us.

We have a great, committed sponsor and team owner in GEICO and Bob Germain, so it gives us motivation knowing their level of commitment and belief.

We recently received some great news and we’ll be releasing it this week sometime.

Focus and perspective are key and we have both.”

He added, “Obviously, we’re excited to get to Chicago next weekend for the GEICO 400.

We truly have the best sponsor in auto racing and it’s exciting to see all the ways GEICO supports NASCAR as a whole and cares about the health of the sport.

We’re proud to have them as a partner.”

Next week, the Germain Racing team will arrive in Chicago where they will see their sponsor’s name highly visible all over the grounds of the speedway. Along with the #13 GEICO Fusion, fans will see giant inflatable Geckos, an expansive GEICO display area in the midway and several opportunities to meet Casey Mears at scheduled autograph signings.

Mears and the #13 GEICO Ford Fusion will hit the track at Chicagoland Speedway for the opening practice session on Friday, September 14th, at 1:00 PM (EDT). Qualifying will follow on Saturday, September 15th, at 1:40 PM (EDT).

The GEICO 400 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race is on Sunday, September 16th, and it will be televised live on ESPN beginning at 1:00 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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