For Immediate Release

Shifter Issues Plague Casey Mears and GEICO Racing Team at Charlotte

CONCORD, N.C. (October 14, 2012) – In the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series, things can change in a blink of an eye. Last week at Talladega Superspeedway, Casey Mears drove his way to the front of the field, leading laps and placing his No. 13 GEICO Ford in position for the win. Fast-forward seven days and Mears is plagued by shifter issues for the majority of Saturday night's 500-mile race at Charlotte Motor Speedway and relegated to a 29th-place finish.

On Thursday night, Mears took to the track for his qualifying effort. After clocking a lap of 28.417 seconds, the GEICO Ford was placed in the 27th starting position for Saturday night's event under the lights.

The green flag flew shortly after 7:30 p.m. ET and quickly Mears gained eight positions within the first two laps to move into the top-20. Three cautions slowed the pace during the first 40 laps and Mears brought his Ford to pit road for fresh tires, fuel, and adjustments to help with the handling.

The veteran driver looked to move forward but the Germain Racing Ford was tight on entry and exit, hindering his drive through the corner. A lengthy caution-free period ensued, forcing Mears to come to pit road for green flag stops.

On lap 165, Mears reported to Crew Chief Bootie Barker that the No. 13 GEICO Ford had all of sudden become extremely tight. Despite the handling condition, Mears' lap times remained consistent, allowing the team to make the decision to stay out and not pit. A timely caution came just a few laps later, giving Mears the opportunity to visit pit road for fresh tires and fuel.

While running inside the top-25, Mears' shifter handle came off, transforming a simple task into a challenging one. The GEICO Ford was stuck in fourth gear for restarts and leaving pit road, causing the Ford to not achieve maximum speed quickly. Another green flag run consumed the final 100 laps, giving the team little time to help fix the shifter issue. As the checkered flag flew on the 334-lap event, Mears crossed the finish line in the 29th position.

"It was a tough night for us," said Mears, after the race. "The GEICO Ford was definitely better than practice, but we still needed a little more. Our night went downhill when the shifter broke

just past halfway. The car was stuck in fourth gear so restarts and getting off pit road were tough. There are only a few more weeks left this season and I'm looking forward to finishing strong."

The GEICO Racing team will head to Kansas Speedway for an open test prior to the race on Sunday, October 21st. The Hollywood Casino 400 will begin at 1 p.m. ET and can be seen live on ESPN. MRN Radio and Sirius XM Radio will also have the live radio broadcast.

For an inside look at Casey Mears and the GEICO team, 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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