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## **DESPITE TOUGH NIGHT IN TEXAS, MEARS CLOSELY EYES TOP 20**

*GEICO team has completed every race of the 2013 season; Mears just three points out of 20th in point standings*

Fort Worth, TX (April 13, 2013) – Casey Mears and the GEICO Racing team stormed into the Lone Star State looking to continue the growth of their NASCAR Sprint Cup Series program. The team has captured the attention of fans and media members alike with their persistence, resilience and passion. They've consistently outpaced some of NASCAR's best and brightest and Texas offered Mears and company the opportunity to continue their trek through the 2013 NASCAR season.

The week began with a one-day test in which Mears and his #13 GEICO Ford Fusion sat eighth on the speed chart at the close of Thursday's test session. He quickly picked up where he left off when he hit the track for the weekend's opening practice session on Friday, landing 10th on the board when it came to a close. The only challenge Germain Racing faced on Friday was the qualifying draw, where numbers drawn from a hat dictate the qualifying order. Mears drew 17th, which would send him out amidst the balance of the hot Texas sunshine when qualifying got underway on Friday at 5:40 PM local time. Nose-to-nose with a slick racetrack, Mears and his #13 GEICO Fusion navigated the 1.5-mile superspeedway in just 28.038 seconds at a rate of speed of 192.596 miles per hour, placing him 24th on Saturday night's starting grid.

The race started in the bright sunshine on Saturday evening, but ultimately ended under the cover of darkness. Somewhere between that transition, Mears and his GEICO team gave fight to the toughest day of racing they've had this season. Starting 24th, Mears and his #13 GEICO Ford Fusion quickly dropped through the field, bottoming out in the 34th position on lap eight. The Bakersfield, CA, native immediately fell victim to an ill-handling racecar as he circled around the bumpy racing surface of Texas Motor Speedway. By lap 16, Mears was alerting his crew, "I cannot get into the corner at all." The event's first caution flag of the evening waved on lap 38 for debris on the frontstretch, allowing Mears the opportunity to bring his #13 GEICO Fusion down pit road for service. The Germain crew quickly provided Mears with four fresh tires, a full tank of fuel and adjustments.

The adjustments were of no avail and Mears would do battle against an angry racecar for the balance of the evening. On lap 107, he was heard over the team's radio frequency saying, "It's driving like I have a flat tire. Something's bad wrong here, it feels like something's broken." Despite the handling issues, crew chief Bootie Barker was successfully executing a strategy to get Mears back on the lead lap before the #13 GEICO Ford Fusion was forced to visit pit road under green with just 55 laps to go. The evening became further complicated when Jeff Burton and Marcos Ambrose brought out the caution flag just one lap later, sending Mears down two laps with little time to make it up.

The Germain Racing crew worked feverishly throughout the evening while Mears continued pedaling the #13 GEICO Fusion hard around the racetrack; neither willing to concede regardless of obstacles faced over the course of 500-miles of racing. When the checkered flag was displayed, the team was recorded as finishing 31st. More importantly, through seven races, Mears and his GEICO team have never failed to see a checkered flag, completing every race of the 2013 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series season, a stat not enjoyed by some of NASCAR's top teams. Texas would serve as the team's first tough race of the season, marking the strength of the team and the significant progress made from just a year ago. Although the 31st place finish was frustrating, it leaves Mears just three points out of the Top 20 in the Driver Point standings.

"It was a tough night for sure, but we all kept working hard trying to get our #13 GEICO Fusion where it needed it to be and even though we had a hard time we stayed focused," Mears said. "This is really the first bad race we've had, so it's important we put it behind us quickly. We're already focused on Kansas." He then lightly joked, "In racing, you're going to have very good days and very bad days, so I'm glad we now have the bad behind us."

The Germain Racing team will next journey to the Sunflower State for race number eight of the

2013 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series season.

Mears and the #13 GEICO Ford Fusion will hit the track at Kansas Speedway for the opening practice session on Friday, April 19th, at 1:00 PM (EDT). Qualifying will follow at 4:40 PM (EDT).

The STP 400 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race is on Sunday, April 21st, and it will be televised live on FOX 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](http://www.caseymearsracing.com)

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