

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEARS AND GEICO TEAM SALVAGE CHALLENGING NIGHT AT RICHMOND; GEICO 400 UP NEXT

Richmond, VA (September 7, 2013) – As the 2013 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series season begins to wind down, things are heating up. Richmond, Virginia, served as the final opportunity for drivers on the 'bubble' to make their way into the Chase. Casey Mears and the #13 GEICO team were focused on their journey, as well, and aimed towards a different goal as their program continues to move towards the next level.

When practice got underway on Friday, Mears would end up 34th and 29th in the respective sessions. He would later find himself sandwiched on the starting grid between Ryan Newman and Carl Edwards after qualifying 25th. His lap saw him make quick work of the $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile racing facility and circle it in just 21.036 seconds, at a rate of speed of 128.351 miles per hour.

The Fall Richmond race is usually accompanied by either rain or extreme heat, but Saturday night found favor with the racing gods and temperatures sat comfortably in the 70's. A packed house was on-hand as the Saturday night lights saw the green flag turn an anxious NASCAR Sprint Cup Series field loose for 400-laps of racing. Mears and his #13 GEICO Ford Fusion

started 25th, but found themselves at odds with each other as the laps began to click off. Handling had the Bakersfield, CA, native frustrated and he dropped as low as 35th, but quickly worked his way back up to 23rd before making a scheduled green flag pit stop on lap 95. After the Germain Racing pit crew outfitted Mears with four fresh tires, fuel and much needed adjustments, the GEICO Ford returned to the race and began making progress. On lap 115, Mears alerted crew chief, Bootie Barker: "You helped everything on that last stop. It's a lot better."

When debris sent the caution flag waving on lap 135, Barker took the opportunity to update Mears on his status, as well as the team's strategy for making up lost ground. "The car's a lot better, Casey, and you're a lot faster now. We'll pit now and take the wavearound later when we have fresher tires." The race soon went back to green and Mears and his #13 GEICO Ford continued making progress and the driver's excitement was evident through his radio communication. On lap 207, Mears let his team know that things were coming together. "Whatever you guys did on that first stop really brought this thing to life. We're in the hunt; we're racing these guys."

Unfortunately, as the race began to wind down, Mears' labor of love turned into plain labor when his car betrayed him and returned to its old ways. On lap 305, he reported, "It feels like it did on the first run, but not quite as bad." He was running in 26th place and managed to continue to drive hard and maintain his position. By lap 325, however, it was presenting a more significant challenge and Mears became concerned. "This thing is terrible. Something's wrong; a bad set of tires or something."

Undaunted, Mears and his #13 GEICO Ford Fusion battled hard over the last 75 laps and managed to not lose any positions. When the checkered flag halted the Federated Auto Parts 400, Mears recorded a 26th place finish, salvaging an otherwise tough night.

“It was a challenging night, but we kept working on the car and our pit stop made it a lot better,” Mears said. “The #13 GEICO Ford turned around after that stop and we were able to make up a lot of ground. We were in good shape until the end there. Not quite sure what happened, but I’m glad we were able to at least get a decent finish. We’re looking forward to getting to Chicago next week for the GEICO 400. That race is special to us for the obvious reasons. I love how GEICO supports our sport and I’m looking forward to doing some appearances to help promote their signature race.”

Mears and the Germain Racing team next head to Chicago, IL, for the GEICO 400, a race long ago marked on their calendar.

Casey Mears and the #13 GEICO Ford Fusion will hit the track at Chicagoland Speedway for the weekend’s opening practice session on Friday, September 13th, at 1:00 PM (EDT). Qualifying will follow at 5:10 PM (EDT).

The GEICO 400 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race is on Sunday, September 15th, and it will be televised live on ESPN beginning at 2:00 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/casemearsracing

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