



DuPont Motorsports Post-Race Report
Daytona 500
Daytona International Speedway
February 16, 2008

Broken Suspension Part Ruins Strong Daytona 500 Run for Team DuPont

Jeff Gordon led three times during the Daytona 500 at Daytona International Speedway on Sunday, but a broken suspension part sent the No. 24 DuPont Chevrolet behind the wall for repairs with less than 50 laps remaining in NASCAR's Super Bowl. Although the repair was completed in less than nine laps, Gordon was relegated to a 39th-place finish in the season-opening event. Ryan Newman won the 200-lap event.

Gordon, who started eighth, maneuvered into the lead by lap 17.

"The car is pretty good," he radioed to the crew. "It hasn't been tight, yet, but I can tell it's going that way the longer we run."

During the first pit stop on lap 37, crew chief Steve Letarte called for a minor air pressure change during the four-tire stop. Gordon returned to the track in third, and remained in the lead draft of only three cars until his second stop at lap 74.

Once again, Letarte called for an adjustment to help the handling. Although the day's first caution waved only five laps later, Gordon told the team the car was "comfortable" and "sporty."

After restarting fourth on lap 84, Gordon once again battled with the leaders for much of the run. But his day began to turn sour on lap 110.

"I'm definitely wearing the right front tire more on this run," Gordon radioed the crew as he began to lose positions. His next scheduled stop for fuel and four tires occurred 10 laps later, and Gordon immediately knew something was wrong when he returned to the track.

"Guys, we are in trouble," Gordon said over the team radio while running 18th. "We are way too tight and I can't keep it on the bottom of the track."

"I feel like I should just go to the rear of this pack to save my tires."

The second caution of the event waved at lap 150, and the problem was diagnosed during the ensuing pit stop. Letarte asked Gordon to drive to the garage area where the left front upper A-arm bracket -- which had sheared in half -- was welded back together.

He returned to the track in 40th and was able to gain one position and three valuable championship points before the checkered flag waved.

"It's disappointing to have that part break, but I was really happy with the car," Gordon said after the race. "Not many guys led this event during the first 100 laps and we were able to drive up through the field and stay in that small lead draft. We were just cruising and I was able to stay in the top three with no problem."

"I knew something was wrong because it became real tight even though we were making adjustments to loosen it up."

Gordon and Team DuPont will look to rebound next Sunday in the Auto Club 500 at California Speedway. Fox will broadcast the race live beginning at 3:30 p.m. EST while MRN Radio's live coverage begins at 4 p.m. EST.

Daytona 500 results (unofficial)

1. Ryan Newman
2. Kurt Busch
3. Tony Stewart
4. Kyle Busch
5. Reed Sorenson
6. Elliott Sadler
7. Kasey Kahne
8. Robby Gordon
9. Dale Earnhardt, Jr.
10. Greg Biffle

39. Jeff Gordon

Point standings (unofficial)

1. Ryan Newman
2. Kurt Busch
3. Tony Stewart
4. Kyle Busch
5. Reed Sorenson
6. Kasey Kahne
7. Elliott Sadler
8. Dale Earnhardt, Jr.
9. Robby Gordon
10. Greg Biffle

39. Jeff Gordon