



DuPont Motorsports Post-Race Report
LifeLock 400
Michigan International Speedway
June 15, 2008

Gordon Now Ninth in Standings After 18th-Place Finish at Michigan

Mired in traffic facing a two-lap shootout in the LifeLock 400 at Michigan International Speedway on Sunday, Jeff Gordon stopped for new tires and a splash of fuel during a caution flag on lap 198. After restarting 21st, the driver of the No. 24 DuPont Chevrolet passed three cars before the race ended one lap later due to a caution. Hendrick Motorsports teammate Dale Earnhardt, Jr., won the event to secure his first victory in more than two years, while Gordon fell one position to ninth in the standings following the race.

Gordon, who started eighth, was running ninth when the leaders began making green flag pit stops on lap 37.

"I'm sliding the back end (of the car) getting into the corner and sliding the back end off the corner," Gordon radioed the crew. "But the car is tight and won't change directions in the middle."

Crew chief Steve Letarte called for an air pressure change to the four new tires changed during the lap-39 pit stop, and Gordon returned to the track in ninth. The changes helped -- for a little bit.

"It's a lot better, especially during the first 10 laps of the run," Gordon radioed Letarte. "But I need the car to turn sooner."

Letarte called for a wedge adjustment during the next green flag stop at lap 79 with Gordon running ninth. When a caution waved 12 laps later, Gordon explained the difficult situation ahead for the No. 24 team.

"I'm still tight in the middle, but I have no 'drive' off the corner," Gordon said when a caution waved on lap 91. "It's going to be tough to fix."

The No. 24 crew made additional chassis adjustments during their quick four-tire pit stop on lap 92, and Gordon exited pit road seventh. Although the race restarted on lap 96, another caution waved only five laps later setting off a chain of events that effectively ruined Gordon's top-10 run.

During the caution period, the top-seven drivers -- including Gordon -- remained on the track while the drivers behind Gordon stopped for new tires. On the restart, the four-time NASCAR Cup Series champion began losing positions quickly to the drivers with new tires. By lap 121, Gordon was down to 20th.

After stopping for four new tires, chassis adjustments and fuel on lap 135, Gordon was up to 15th when pit stops were completed. He remained there until a caution waved on lap 151.

While many of the leaders elected to stay on the track, Gordon pitted three times during the caution period to "top off" the fuel cell. While fuel calculations showed Gordon could not make it to the end, they were planning to gamble.

"I need you to save me some fuel," Letarte explained to Gordon, who restarted 24th.

Stuck in traffic and saving fuel, Gordon was able to move up to 19th before a caution waved on lap 197 -- three laps short of the scheduled distance. With one attempt at a green-white-checkered finish awaiting, Letarte called Gordon onto pit road for new tires and a splash of fuel. Gordon restarted 21st and passed three cars before a caution waved one lap later, ending the race.

"I had a feeling we were in trouble at about the halfway mark," Gordon said. "We were hanging in the top 10, and then that caution came out after we had only run a few laps. When I saw everybody peel off onto pit road behind me while we stayed out on track, I thought that might hurt us. And it did."

"When we finally stopped for tires, we had lost all of our track position. And it was just too hard to pass back in the 'dirty' air."

Next Sunday, the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series visits Infineon Raceway for the Toyota/SaveMart 350. TNT -- scheduled to run a feature during their pre-race show about Gordon's visit and DuPont's involvement in rebuilding Greensburg, KS -- begins their live coverage at 3:30 p.m. EDT. PRN Radio will broadcast the race live beginning at 5 p.m. EDT.

(more)

LifeLock 400 results (unofficial)

1. Dale Earnhardt, Jr.
2. Kasey Kahne
3. Matt Kenseth
4. Brian Vickers
5. Tony Stewart
6. Jimmie Johnson
7. Carl Edwards
8. David Ragan
9. Elliott Sadler
10. Jamie McMurray

18. Jeff Gordon

Point standings (unofficial)

1. Kyle Busch
2. Jeff Burton
3. Dale Earnhardt, Jr.
4. Carl Edwards
5. Jimmie Johnson
6. Denny Hamlin
7. Kasey Kahne
8. Greg Biffle
- 9. Jeff Gordon**
10. Kevin Harvick