



DuPont Motorsports Post-Race Report
LENOX Industrial Tools 301
New Hampshire Motor Speedway
June 29, 2008

Gordon Remains Sixth in Standings After 11th-Place Finish at New Hampshire

Jeff Gordon and the No. 24 DuPont Chevrolet team appeared set to post another top-five finish in Sunday's LENOX Industrial Tools 301 at New Hampshire Motor Speedway, but Mother Nature had different plans. A late rain ended the event 17 laps short of the scheduled distance with Gordon running 11th. Kurt Busch used a different fuel strategy to capture the win at the 1.058-mile track.

Gordon, who started 19th, was running 11th when the first round of scheduled green flag pit stops began on lap 62.

"I'm tight on initial throttle," Gordon explained to crew chief Steve Letarte. "But I'm loose late off."

Letarte called for chassis adjustments during the four-tire stop on lap 70, and Gordon returned to the track in 11th. When the day's first caution waved 14 laps later, the four-time NASCAR Cup champion was up to ninth.

Gordon continued his charge to the front once the race restarted. By lap 122, he was up to fifth. On lap 139 while fighting a tight condition on his No. 24 DuPont Chevrolet, Gordon bypassed Kevin Harvick for third position.

After stopping for four tires during a lap 140 caution period, Gordon restarted fourth. By lap 151, only Tony Stewart separated Gordon from the lead.

But he was unable to catch Stewart until the field was slowed for a caution on lap 203. During the caution period, Gordon stopped for four tires and a chassis adjustment while Letarte explained the weather situation.

"We can't make it the rest of the way on fuel," Letarte told Gordon. "But there's an approaching storm that could hit the area that we're monitoring on the radar."

"If that storm hits before the end of the race, it could get crazy because I'm sure some teams will try to be off-sequence."

Gordon restarted second behind Stewart on lap 210, but another caution waved only six laps later. The leaders stayed on the track, but many of the drivers running at the tail end of the lead lap stopped to "top off" their fuel cells.

When the race restarted at lap 221, Gordon quickly lost two positions to teammate Jimmie Johnson and Denny Hamlin due to "zero grip" between the tires on his No. 24 Chevrolet and the track surface. But he battled hard to remain fourth, and was running in that position when another caution waved at lap 271.

"I need you to pit," Letarte radioed Gordon. "We are low on fuel and there's rain in the area, but we have to stop for fuel."

Quick work by the No. 24 DuPont crew allowed Gordon to gain a position during the pit stop sequence, but eight teams stayed on the track during the caution period. Gordon restarted 11th, but rain quickly arrived and the race was declared over 17 laps short of the scheduled race distance.

"I've got to give credit to Steve Letarte and this DuPont team," Gordon said after the race. "We had a great car today, but the rain and fuel strategy just didn't play into our hands."

"We ran our way up to second place after starting 19th, so that was a lot of fun. But we couldn't afford to lose track position, so we stayed on the same pit sequence as many of the leaders. Some guys -- because they were so far back in the running order -- were able to gamble. And it paid off for them."

"It was just too big of a risk for us to take."

The NASCAR Sprint Cup Series visits Daytona International Speedway next Saturday night for the Coke Zero 400. TNT's live coverage -- which is scheduled to include a feature about Gordon's recent visit to Greensburg, Kansas, and DuPont's efforts in rebuilding the tornado-ravaged town -- begins at 6:30 p.m. EDT. MRN Radio's live coverage begins at 7:15 p.m. EDT.

(more)

LENOX Industrial Tools 301 results (unofficial)

1. Kurt Busch
2. Michael Waltrip
3. J. J. Yeley
4. Martin Truex, Jr.
5. Elliott Sadler
6. Reed Sorenson
7. Casey Mears
8. Denny Hamlin
9. Jimmie Johnson
10. Bobby Labonte
- 11. Jeff Gordon**

Point standings (unofficial)

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