



DuPont Motorsports Post Race Report
LifeLock 400 – Kansas Speedway
September 30, 2007

Team DuPont Finishes Fifth at Kansas; Gordon Now Second in Standings

Jeff Gordon finished fifth in the LifeLock 400 at Kansas Speedway on Sunday and now trails teammate Jimmie Johnson by six after the third of 10 Chase for the NASCAR NEXTEL Cup races. And Gordon was thrilled with it because it could have been so much worse.

Gordon, who started fourth, was running second when a caution waved on lap 60. After a quick four-tire stop by the No. 24 DuPont team, Gordon exited pit road with the lead. He paced the field until lap 67 but began to fight the handling on his No. 24 Chevrolet.

"I'm loose in, tight through the middle and loose off," Gordon explained to crew chief Steve Letarte via the team radio. "I have 'no grip.'"

By lap 85, the four-time NASCAR Cup Series champion had fallen to fifth because he was "tight, tight, tight."

With rain threatening the area and a race declared official if 50 percent or more of the race is completed (in Sunday's race, that mark was lap 134), teams were paying close attention to the approaching weather. But Gordon was forced to stop for fuel just past the halfway mark on lap 142 and returned to the track one lap down in 31st position. Unfortunately, the rain hit two laps later before all scheduled pit stops were completed, and the race was red flagged at lap 148.

During the lengthy rain delay, Gordon was able to study the running order and the points. If the race could not be resumed, he would have trailed new points leader Tony Stewart by over 100.

But the rain did stop and the track was dried. At 6:08 p.m., the drivers re-fired the engines in their cars and NASCAR informed the teams the race would be shortened to 225 laps due to impending darkness.

During that caution period, the leaders were forced to make their stop for fuel. When they returned to the track, they lined up behind Gordon -- placing Gordon on the lead lap but almost a full lap behind.

On the restart, Gordon caught a lucky break when he narrowly missed the spinning car of Ken Schrader. Stewart was not so lucky as the leader suffered fender damage in the accident.

After pulling up to the rear of the field, Gordon restarted 27th on lap 165. On lap 175, Gordon passed the backsliding Stewart for 18th. One turn later, Chase contenders Stewart and Carl Edwards were involved in an accident that ended their race.

During the caution, Gordon stopped for four new tires. NASCAR also notified the teams the race would be shortened a further 15 laps. The checkered flag would now wave on lap 210.

With four new tires, Gordon restarted 21st on lap 183. He picked off 11 cars in 10 laps to break into the top 10 on lap 192. Eight laps later, he was up to fifth.

Although he closed in on the bumper of fourth place with three laps remaining, a caution at lap 207 ended his chances of gaining more positions before the end of the race. Normally, the race would end with a two-lap dash to the checkered flag after the caution, but NASCAR elected to end the race without a "green-white-checkered" finish due to darkness with Greg Biffle taking his first victory of the season.

"What a turn of events," Gordon said after the race. "What a crazy race it was today. At one time we were really strong and we fell back a little bit. And then we fell way back, all the way to 30th after the pit stop when the rain hit.

"To be able to bring this DuPont Chevrolet from that far back -- from one lap down to getting our lap back -- and then to come all the way back to a top-five is incredible. I couldn't be happier. What a great job by the entire team.

"We had to make some adjustments on the car there after the rain delay and they really paid off. We were able to really slice our way through traffic there at the end. It was awesome.

"I think NASCAR recognized what is going on in the Chase and what a disaster that was going to be (if they did not attempt to dry the track). I think that as long as there is daylight, they are going to attempt to race. From where I was sitting, there was only one call and that was to go back racing.

"Certainly, we are glad that they did."

Next Sunday, the NASCAR NEXTEL Cup Series visits Talladega Superspeedway for the UAW-Ford 500 -- the first time the Car of Tomorrow will be used at a restrictor-plate track. ABC and MRN Radio will broadcast the race live beginning at 1 p.m. EDT.

LifeLock 400 results (unofficial)

1. Greg Biffle
2. Clint Bowyer
3. Jimmie Johnson
4. Casey Mears
- 5. Jeff Gordon**
6. Kevin Harvick
7. Reed Sorenson
8. Elliott Sadler
9. Kasey Kahne
10. Dale Earnhardt, Jr.

Point standings (unofficial)

1. Jimmie Johnson
- 2. Jeff Gordon (-6)**
3. Clint Bowyer (-14)
4. Tony Stewart (-117)
5. Kevin Harvick (-126)
6. Kyle Busch (-136)
7. Carl Edwards (-142)
8. Martin Truex, Jr. (-158)
9. Kurt Busch (-177)
10. Jeff Burton (-186)
11. Matt Kenseth (-219)
12. Denny Hamlin (-248)