



DuPont Motorsports Post Race Report
3M Performance 400
Michigan International Speedway
August 21, 2007

Late Spin Relegates Team DuPont to 27th-Place Finish at Michigan

With a spot in the Chase for the NASCAR NEXTEL Cup already clinched and the seeding in it based on the number of victories after race No. 26, Jeff Gordon and Team DuPont can afford to gamble for a victory. In Tuesday's 3M Performance 400 (race No. 23) at Michigan International Speedway, that gamble left them "spinning their wheels."

Gordon, who started from the pole in the race delayed by a persistent rain on Sunday and Monday, was running second to eventual winner Kurt Busch with less than 50 laps to go. But as Gordon approached his final pit stop, NASCAR officials alerted the team of a loose piece of metal on the rear window of the No. 24 DuPont Chevrolet. That piece -- known as a "shark fin" -- needed to be securely fastened during the next pit stop.

That pit stop occurred under green flag conditions at lap 166. While the No. 24 team performed a flawless four-tire stop, the additional time needed to attach a new "shark fin" cost Gordon six spots in the running order.

With 25 laps to go in the 200-lap event, a caution waved with Gordon running seventh. During the ensuing caution, many of the leaders stopped for four new tires -- except for Busch and Gordon.

After restarting second on lap 180, Gordon fought a very loose condition. At one point, he even thought a tire might be losing air on the No. 24 Chevrolet.

"Be ready," Gordon radioed the crew. "I might have a tire going down."

The four-time NASCAR Cup Series champion began losing positions and, with 11 laps to go, spun off turn 4 after contact with Matt Kenseth while battling for fifth place. Gordon managed to avoid the wall, but his Monte Carlo became stuck in the rain-soaked infield grass.

With help from track personnel, Gordon was able to maneuver out of the grass but fell a lap down in the process. He ended the race one lap down in 27th position.

"It was my fault," Gordon said of the accident. "I was racing him (Kenseth) hoping that the car would tighten up and come back to me. I went in low and got a little loose.

"My car was just so loose at that point. I was drifting up the track and he got to my outside. I saw him coming and I was actually trying not to drift up the track. I knew he couldn't get out of the gas so I had to just try to turn left, and he got into me.

"It wasn't his fault.

"Being stuck out there and not being able to stay on the lead lap was frustrating. The grass was really wet and there's lots of mud out there. I knew I had to wait for a push."

Gordon, who still holds a 276-point lead in the standings, will look to capture his fifth victory of the season in the Sharpie 500 at Bristol Motor Speedway next Saturday night. ESPN and PRN Radio will begin their live broadcasts at 7 p.m. EDT.

3M Performance 400 results (unofficial)

1. Kurt Busch
2. Martin Truex, Jr.
3. Jimmie Johnson
4. Matt Kenseth
5. Denny Hamlin
6. Dave Blaney
7. Carl Edwards
8. Brian Vickers
9. Bobby Labonte
10. Tony Stewart

27. Jeff Gordon

Point standings (unofficial)

- 1. Jeff Gordon**
2. Denny Hamlin
3. Matt Kenseth
4. Tony Stewart
5. Carl Edwards
6. Jimmie Johnson
7. Jeff Burton
8. Kyle Busch
9. Clint Bowyer
10. Kevin Harvick