



DuPont Motorsports Post-Race Report
Pepsi 500
Auto Club Speedway
August 31, 2008

Gordon Now 10th in Standings After 15th-place Finish at California

Following a 15th-place finish for Team DuPont in the Pepsi 500 at California Speedway on Sunday night, Jeff Gordon can clinch a spot in the "Chase for the NASCAR Sprint Cup" with a 23rd-place finish or better Saturday night in Richmond.

"We were just a little bit off with the setup tonight, but this DuPont team battled hard to get the best finish we could," Gordon said after the race dominated by his teammate Jimmie Johnson. "I'll feel like we'll be better in Richmond, but we just have to go there, make sure we perform and post a good finish."

Gordon, who qualified third for the 250-lap race, fought a "loose off" condition for much of the event.

"I've never experienced 'drive off' (the corner) like this in my entire life," the four-time NASCAR Cup Series champion informed the crew on lap 37 after falling to 12th. "I have zero grip in the rear of the car off the corners."

On lap 44, Gordon stooped for four tires and major chassis adjustments during a caution period, but no adjustments seemed to help his corner exit speed.

"Every change you made helped the car," Gordon told crew chief Steve Letarte on lap 53. "Except the drive off."

"The car just won't drive off the corner."

As the race approached the 100-lap mark, Gordon was running 14th while fighting the tough driving conditions.

"I'm dead loose right now," he told the crew. "It's like I wore the right rear tire out."

Letarte called for wedge adjustments during a lap 114 pit stop, and a spring rubber was added to the left rear spring during a lap 148 stop. But, mired in 18th, Gordon was having a difficult time in 'dirty' -- or turbulent -- air.

"Back in this air, it's doing everything," Gordon radioed the crew with less than 50 laps to go. "It starts out good, but it's tight and loose back in this traffic."

Gordon's last stop occurred on lap 219, and he exited pit road in 15th position. Although he lost three positions quickly, he was able to maneuver back up to 15th before the checkered flag waved.

"We were so loose off the corner during the early stages of the event," Gordon said after the race that started during the day and finished under cooling track conditions at night. "I was hoping the cooler temperatures would help the car."

"They didn't, but we fought hard to make sure we got the most out of the night."

"We're going to fight hard at Richmond to make sure we're in the Chase, and we're going to fight to the very last lap of the very last race this season."

Gordon takes a 102-point advantage over 13th-place David Ragan into the Chevy Rock & Roll 400 at Richmond International Raceway next Saturday night. ABC's live coverage begins at 7 p.m. EDT while MRN Radio's live coverage begins at 6:45 p.m. EDT.

(more)

Pepsi 500 results (unofficial)

1. Jimmie Johnson
2. Greg Biffle
3. Denny Hamlin
4. Kevin Harvick
5. Matt Kenseth
6. Carl Edwards
7. Kyle Busch
8. Kasey Kahne
9. David Reutimann
10. Clint Bowyer

15. Jeff Gordon

Point Standings (unofficial)

1. Kyle Busch
2. Carl Edwards
3. Jimmie Johnson
4. Dale Earnhardt, Jr.
5. Jeff Burton
6. Greg Biffle
7. Kevin Harvick
8. Tony Stewart
9. Matt Kenseth

10. Jeff Gordon