



DuPont Motorsports Post-Race Report
TUMS QuikPak 500
Martinsville Speedway
October 19, 2008

Gordon Finishes Fourth at Martinsville; Moves to Seventh in the Standings

Jeff Gordon and Team DuPont scored their 11th top-five finish of the 2008 season in the TUMS QuikPak 500 at Martinsville Speedway on Sunday. Gordon, who started the 500-lap event eighth, finished fourth and moved up a position to seventh in the standings, 275 markers behind Hendrick Motorsports teammate and race-winner Jimmie Johnson.

The race started just past 1:30 p.m. EDT and the four-time NASCAR Cup Series champion wasted no time maneuvering through the field. When the day's first caution flag flew on lap 28, Gordon was up to second.

"I'm tight in the middle when I pick up the throttle," Gordon radioed his crew during the caution. "But I'm a little loose off."

Once the race restarted on lap 36, the driver of the No. 24 DuPont Chevrolet passed Johnson for the lead. Gordon held the lead for 20 laps before Johnson regained the top spot.

A caution flag flew on lap 60 and crew chief Steve Letarte called Gordon to pit road for four tires, fuel and a chassis adjustment. Several teams elected not to pit, and Gordon restarted the race on lap 65 in 16th.

Although he raced his way up to eighth, Gordon once again was forced to restart outside the top-10 when he stopped for service during a lap-115 caution while other drivers remained on the track. And, once again, he drove his way to the front.

"Those adjustments made on the last stop were an improvement," Gordon said on lap 161 after racing up to third place. By lap 242, he was atop scoreboard again – but fighting the handling on his Chevrolet Impala SS.

"I have no drive off," Gordon said on lap 295. "I'm real loose off now." He began losing positions during the long green-flag run and was down to seventh before a caution flag waved on lap 382.

Gordon pitted for tires and more chassis adjustments during the ensuing caution, but the changes did not help the loose condition on the long runs.

"The car starts off great," Gordon said while running sixth during the day's final caution on lap 460. "But then I lose all my grip off the turn."

Letarte made the call for right-side tires only during the caution in an attempt to gain much needed track position. While a fast stop by the No. 24 crew allowed Gordon to leave his pit stall quickly, he was forced to slow dramatically to avoid a collision with the No. 31 car driven by Jeff Burton. Gordon exited pit road fourth – a position he held until the checkered flag waved.

"I'm really proud of the how hard everyone on this DuPont team worked today," Gordon said following the race. "We had great pit stops and the car has been strong all weekend. We were great on short runs and I thought we had a real shot of maybe contending for the win.

"But those long runs just killed my drive off. I was just way too loose."

Next Sunday, the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series visits Atlanta Motor Speedway for the Pep Boys Auto 500. Coverage begins on ABC at 1 p.m. EDT while PRN Radio's coverage begins at 2 p.m. EDT.

(more)

Tums QuikPak 500 results (unofficial)

1. Jimmie Johnson
2. Dale Earnhardt, Jr.
3. Carl Edwards
- 4. Jeff Gordon**
5. Denny Hamlin
6. Casey Mears
7. Kevin Harvick
8. Matt Kenseth
9. Clint Bowyer
10. Martin Truex, Jr.

Point standings (unofficial)

1. Jimmie Johnson
2. Greg Biffle (-149)
3. Jeff Burton (-152)
4. Carl Edwards (-198)
5. Clint Bowyer (-242)
6. Kevin Harvick (-256)
- 7. Jeff Gordon (-275)**
8. Tony Stewart (-338)
9. Dale Earnhardt, Jr. (-379)
10. Matt Kenseth (-408)
11. Denny Hamlin (-420)
12. Kyle Busch (-445)