



DuPont Motorsports Post-Race Report
Sharpie 500
Bristol Motor Speedway
August 22, 2009

Gordon Clinches Spot in "Chase for the NASCAR Sprint Cup" with Bristol Finish

"I think something is wrong underneath the car," Jeff Gordon told the No. 24 DuPont crew just past the halfway mark of Saturday night's Sharpie 500 at Bristol Motor Speedway. "It's not the same car we started with."

After a 'dream' start to the 500-lap event, the race turned into a 'nightmare' for the No. 24 team after a pit stop on lap 256. Gordon battled handling issues on his No. 24 DuPont Chevrolet the remainder of the race but posted a 23rd-place finish to clinch one of the coveted spots in the "Chase for the NASCAR Sprint Cup." Kyle Busch won the event but is still outside the "Chase" cutoff with two races remaining before the 12-driver field is set.

When the green flag dropped at the high-banked short track, Gordon patiently worked his way up the leaderboard. He broke into the top 20 on lap 83 and was up to 10th by lap 189.

"I'm real tight in the middle and loose off," Gordon radioed the team on lap 223 while running ninth. "I need to roll the middle (of the corner) better."

During a caution period on lap 254, Gordon stopped for four new tires, chassis adjustments and fuel. But he began dropping positions immediately after the restart.

"We're in trouble," Gordon told the crew just prior to the 300-lap mark while running 21st. On lap 322, teammate and leader Jimmie Johnson passed Gordon to place him one lap down. When a caution finally waved on lap 355, it allowed crew chief Steve Letarte to "put the [chassis adjustments] back the way it was."

Unfortunately, the problem was more serious according to Gordon.

"Something has happened to the car," the four-time NASCAR Cup Series champion reported. "Something is broke because it's not the same car we started with." Gordon battled the conditions the remaining 100 laps and crossed under the checkered flag in 23rd.

"We were really moving forward early," Gordon said after the race. "After that one stop, though, we were extremely loose. Something felt wrong with the car at that point.

"After that, it never quite felt the same and we just had to battle to get the best finish we possibly could."

The NASCAR Sprint Cup Series will take next weekend off before returning to action on September 6 in the Pep Boys Auto 500 at Atlanta Motor Speedway. ESPN's live coverage begins at 7 p.m. EDT while PRN Radio's live coverage begins at 6:30 p.m. EDT.

Sharpie 500 results (unofficial)

1. Kyle Busch
2. Mark Martin
3. Marcos Ambrose
4. Greg Biffle
5. Denny Hamlin
6. Ryan Newman
7. Kurt Busch
8. Jimmie Johnson
9. Dale Earnhardt, Jr.
10. Matt Kenseth
- 23. Jeff Gordon**

Points standings (unofficial)

1. Tony Stewart
2. Jimmie Johnson
- 3. Jeff Gordon**
4. Denny Hamlin
5. Carl Edwards
6. Kurt Busch
7. Ryan Newman
8. Greg Biffle
9. Juan Pablo Montoya
10. Mark Martin