



DuPont Motorsports Post-Race Report
Tums Fast Relief 500
Martinsville Speedway
October 25, 2009

Gordon Remains Third in Standings After Fifth-Place Finish at Martinsville

Jeff Gordon led three times for 36 laps en route to a fifth-place finish in the Tums Fast Relief 500 at Martinsville Speedway on Sunday. The four-time NASCAR Cup Series champion remains third in the standings after recording his fifth top-six finish in six "Chase for the NASCAR Sprint Cup" events in 2009. He trails leader points Jimmie Johnson by 150 with four races to go.

Gordon, who qualified second, was leading when a caution waved at lap 43. Although the driver of the No. 24 DuPont/National Guard Chevrolet won the race off pit road after a two-tire stop, many drivers behind him had four new tires -- and four new tires would quickly prove to be advantageous.

After losing the lead on lap 59, Gordon fell to seventh before a caution waved on lap 88. After a quick four-tire stop by the No. 24 crew, Gordon restarted fifth. By lap 163, he had moved up to third while battling a "tight in the middle and dead sideways on exit" condition.

The crew performed another fast four-tire stop with chassis adjustments during a caution period on lap 178, but Gordon was forced to restart 23rd behind 17 drivers that elected not to pit during the yellow-flag period. Traffic was tight on the 0.526-mile track, but the seven-time Martinsville winner had moved up to seventh when another caution waved at the lap-300 mark.

But Gordon would find the going much more difficult on the ensuing restart. After getting trapped in the outside lane and unable to maneuver into the "preferred" lower line, Gordon fell to 17th by lap 313. He carefully worked his way through traffic, though, and was up to fourth with less than 50 laps to go.

On lap 470, he bypassed Juan Pablo Montoya for third. After a caution slowed the field with less than 15 to go, Montoya was able to gain the position back with 10 laps to go.

The day's final caution waved at lap 495 setting up a green-white-checked finish. During the two-lap sprint to the checkered flag, Kyle Busch was able to wrestle fourth-place away from Gordon.

"We needed long runs with the DuPont/NationalGuard.com Chevrolet today," said Gordon after the race won by Denny Hamlin. "We were really strong on the long runs, and the short runs at the end really hurt us.

"We were able to get by Juan Pablo (Montoya) and I thought we might have been able to get to (second-place finisher) Jimmie (Johnson), too, but who knows. The short runs there at the end certainly didn't do us any favors."

Next Sunday, the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series visits Talladega Superspeedway for the Amp Energy 500. ABC's live coverage begins at 12 noon ET while MRN Radio's live broadcast begins at 12:15 p.m. ET.

Tums Fast Relief 500 results (unofficial)

1. Denny Hamlin
2. Jimmie Johnson
3. Juan Pablo Montoya
4. Kyle Busch
- 5. Jeff Gordon**
6. Jamie McMurray
7. Ryan Newman
8. Mark Martin
9. Tony Stewart
10. Kevin Harvick

Point standings (unofficial)

1. Jimmie Johnson
2. Mark Martin (-118)
- 3. Jeff Gordon (-150)**
4. Tony Stewart (-192)
5. Juan Pablo Montoya (-200)
6. Kurt Busch (-240)
7. Ryan Newman (-312)
8. Greg Biffle (-350)
9. Denny Hamlin (-352)
10. Carl Edwards (-413)
11. Kasey Kahne (-439)
12. Brian Vickers (-530)