



DuPont Motorsports Post-Race Report
Checker O'Reilly Auto Parts 500
Phoenix International Raceway
November 15, 2009

Gordon Remains Third in Standings Following Team DuPont's Ninth-Place Finish at Phoenix

Jeff Gordon finished ninth in Sunday's Checker O'Reilly Auto Parts 500 presented by Pennzoil at Phoenix International Raceway, but race winner Jimmie Johnson only needs to start the season finale next weekend at Homestead-Miami Speedway to eliminate the driver of the No. 24 DuPont Chevrolet from championship contention.

Gordon, who started 14th in the 312-lap race, was up to fifth when a round of green-flag pit stops began at lap 61.

"I'm tight in the middle of the corner at both ends (of the race track)," Gordon explained to crew chief Steve Letarte. "The car is not rolling the middle."

Letarte called for a minor chassis adjustment -- air pressure only -- during Gordon's first stop on lap 72. Another air pressure adjustment was the only change during a lap-116 yellow flag pit stop, but the track was in the midst of changing.

"I'm getting real tight now," Gordon said after falling to sixth just past the halfway mark. "I think the track is 'tightening' up." Letarte called for more changes during a caution flag stop on lap 164, and Gordon restarted eighth. But the adjustments did not help the handling of the DuPont Chevrolet in the middle of the corner.

"I'm real loose getting into the corner, but I'm still not turning the middle," Gordon radioed the crew on lap 200 while running eighth." Additional changes were made during Gordon's final stop on lap 241, and he was running 10th when those stops were completed. The four-time NASCAR Cup Series champion gained one position before the checkered flag waved and secured his 24th top-10 finish of the 2009 season.

"I thought we were going to be great once they dropped the green flag," said Gordon, who remained third in the standings and now trails Johnson by 169 points. "We were able to work our way into the top five and I thought it might be a good day for us. But the track changed and it affected us.

"It's a good result for our organization, though. With (teammates) Jimmie and Mark (Martin) 1-2 in the points, Hendrick Motorsports is guaranteed to win this year's championship."

And that will be decided next Sunday in the Ford 400. ABC's live coverage begins at 2:30 p.m. EST while MRN Radio's live coverage starts at 2:45 p.m. EST.

Checker O'Reilly Auto Parts 500 presented by Pennzoil results (unofficial)

1. Jimmie Johnson
2. Jeff Burton
3. Denny Hamlin
4. Mark Martin
5. Martin Truex, Jr.
6. Kurt Busch
7. Clint Bowyer
8. Juan Pablo Montoya
- 9. Jeff Gordon**
10. David Reutimann

Point standings (unofficial)

1. Jimmie Johnson
2. Mark Martin (-108)
- 3. Jeff Gordon (-169)**
4. Kurt Busch (-211)
5. Tony Stewart (-285)
6. Juan Pablo Montoya (-289)
7. Greg Biffle (-321)
8. Denny Hamlin (-352)
9. Ryan Newman (-411)
10. Kasey Kahne (-476)
11. Carl Edwards (-520)
12. Brian Vickers (-666)