



DuPont Motorsports Post-Race Report
Sunoco Red Cross Pennsylvania 500
Pocono Raceway
August 3, 2009

"Insane" Restarts and Late-Race Track Position Lead to Eighth-Place Finish at Pocono for Gordon

"That was definitely the best car we've had here in a while," Jeff Gordon told the media after an eighth-place finish in the rain-delayed Sunoco Red Cross Pennsylvania 500 at Pocono Raceway on Monday. "Track position and insane restarts toward the end of the race just didn't go our way, though."

Gordon, who started third in the 200-lap event, was running in that position after a caution period at lap 61. But he lost a number of positions during the double-file restart on lap 66.

"I'm really tight through turn 3 in traffic," the driver of the No. 24 DuPont Chevrolet reported to the crew while running seventh on lap 67. Crew chief Steve Letarte called for chassis adjustments during a green-flag pit stop on lap 85, and he called Gordon back onto pit road during a caution period only 13 laps later. After stopping for right-side tires and fuel, Gordon returned to the track in 11th and lined up behind several drivers that did not pit.

The race restarted on lap 101, and the four-time NASCAR Cup Series champion made a daring three-wide maneuver into turn 1. When the field exited the corner, Gordon was up to seventh. By lap 120, he was running fifth.

Gordon remained in the top five as he approached his final stop, and that stop occurred during a caution with 35 laps to go. Four tires were changed on the No. 24 Chevrolet, but differing strategies by other teams -- including "gas only" and right-side tires only -- meant Gordon was forced to restart 18th on lap 170.

On the restart, he quickly bypassed four cars. When another caution waved at lap 174, Gordon was already in the top 10. But the event's final two restarts were not as rewarding to the 82-time winner. During the double-file restart on lap 179, Gordon dropped two positions before the day's final caution waved that same lap.

He was 12th on lap 187 when the field received the green flag for the final time, but Gordon was scored 14th the next time by. But he picked off six positions in the final 12 laps to finish eighth. Denny Hamlin won the event -- his first of the year.

"We had a great car and we were passing good cars all day," said Gordon, who remained third in the standings and is now 199 markers behind points leader Tony Stewart. "I can't even explain how insane the restarts were out there.

"When you have guys with old tires that have stayed out racing against guys with new right-side rubber or four new tires, it just shakes it up so much. Guys are trying to hang on to positions while others are fighting hard to pass them. I saw guys rubbing, banging, smoking sideways three-and-four-wide -- it was nuts.

"I'm really excited about how we performed this week, and I'm really looking forward to next weekend."

Next Sunday, Gordon and the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series will visit Watkins Glen International for the Heluva Good! Sour Cream Dips at The Glen. ESPN's live broadcast begins at 1 p.m. EDT while MRN Radio's broadcast begins at 1:15 p.m. EDT.

Sunoco Red Cross Pennsylvania 500 results
(unofficial)

1. Denny Hamlin
2. Juan Montoya
3. Clint Bowyer
4. Sam Hornish, Jr.
5. Kasey Kahne
6. Brian Vickers
7. Mark Martin
- 8. Jeff Gordon**
9. Kurt Busch
10. Tony Stewart

Point standings (unofficial)

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