



DuPont Motorsports Post-Race Report
Crown Royal Presents the Russ Friedman 400
Richmond International Raceway
May 2, 2009

Gordon Again the Points Leader Following Eighth-Place Finish at Richmond

The handling on the No. 24 DuPont Chevrolet was just a little off during Saturday night's Crown Royal presents the Russ Friedman 400 at Richmond International Raceway, but Jeff Gordon was able to finish eighth and take over the points lead. Kyle Busch won the 400-lap event -- the 10th event of the 2009 season.

Gordon, who qualified on the outside pole, led early but was passed by Denny Hamlin on lap 73.

"I'm loose getting into the corner," Gordon told crew chief Steve Letarte. "But I'm tight in the middle because I can't use the brakes on entry."

Letarte called for chassis adjustments during a green-flag pit stop on lap 99. By lap 114 when a caution waved, Gordon was down to fifth.

"The track is changing," said Gordon, referring to the cooling track temperatures. In an effort to stay ahead of the changing track conditions, Letarte called Gordon onto pit road for chassis adjustments and new tires during each one of the six caution periods that occurred from lap 114 to 272. An incredibly fast stop by the DuPont crew during a lap 278-stop allowed Gordon to exit pit road in second place -- a gain of three positions. But that was Gordon's final stop of the night.

After restarting second on lap 290, Gordon inherited the lead on lap 308 when he stayed on the track during a caution period.

"The race typically has a lot of cautions during the last 100 laps," Letarte explained to Gordon. "I know we didn't give you the best car tonight, but we'll battle until the end and get the best finish possible."

The gamble to stay out on older tires appeared it might give Gordon a shot at victory. With 50 laps to go, the four-time NASCAR Series champion was still pacing the field due to numerous caution flags. But he lost the lead on lap 352 to Busch, and the older tires were no match against newer tires during the final 39 laps -- all run under green-flag conditions. Although he fell to eighth before the checkered flag waved, the team's seventh top-10 of the season moved Gordon atop the point standings.

"It was frustrating because we were so good at the beginning of the race," said Gordon. "We just couldn't adjust on the car like we needed to when the track began changing."

"It's important to be up there in the points so we can stay solidly in the Chase, but we've got to be racing for the wins."

"When we stayed out with about a hundred to go, we were pretty much stuck with that strategy the remainder of the event -- and that long run at the end just killed us. We were struggling, so we put ourselves in a position to see what clean air would do."

"It was a good try, but it just didn't work out."

Next Saturday night, the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series visits Darlington Raceway for the Southern 500 presented by godaddy.com. Fox begins their live coverage at 7 p.m. EDT while MRN Radio's live coverage begins at 6:30 p.m. EDT.

Crown Royal presents the Russ Friedman 400 results (unofficial)

1. Kyle Busch
2. Tony Stewart
3. Jeff Burton
4. Ryan Newman
5. Mark Martin
6. Sam Hornish
7. Jamie McMurray
- 8. Jeff Gordon**
9. Casey Mears
10. Juan Pablo Montoya

Point standings (unofficial)

- 1. Jeff Gordon**
2. Kurt Busch
3. Tony Stewart
4. Denny Hamlin
5. Kyle Busch
6. Jimmie Johnson
7. Jeff Burton
8. Clint Bowyer
9. Carl Edwards
10. Ryan Newman