



DuPont Motorsports Post-Race Report
Dickies 500
Texas Motor Speedway
November 8, 2009

Gordon Cuts Into Points Lead with 13th-Place Finish in Texas

"We had the same issues we've always had here," Jeff Gordon said following a 13th-place finish in the Dickies 500 at Texas Motor Speedway on Sunday. "With Jimmie (Johnson) having his own set of issues, I was hoping to better capitalize on the situation."

Gordon, who started from the pole, led the field to the green flag just past 3 p.m. EST. Less than a minute later, he led the field by the damaged Chevrolet of points leader Johnson.

But while Johnson's No. 48 team was busy repairing the damage in the garage area, Gordon and the No. 24 DuPont team were having difficulties of their own. The four-time NASCAR Cup Series champion battled "no grip" between the Goodyear tires on his Chevrolet and the Texas asphalt, falling to 18th as the race approached the halfway mark. A timely caution, though, on lap 165 allowed the 82-time winner to remain on the lead lap.

"I'm loose getting into the corner, I'm tight in the middle and I'm 'dead' loose off," Gordon reported to crew chief Steve Letarte. During a four-tire stop on lap 168, Letarte called for major chassis adjustments on the Impala SS.

After restarting 17th on lap 172, Gordon narrowly avoided disaster -- the wrecking cars of Carl Edwards and Juan Pablo Montoya -- two laps later. Although Gordon slid to a stop on the banking, he avoided contact with the wall and other cars.

But the struggle continued on the track. Gordon was running 18th when the day's final caution waved on lap 205 -- 129 laps from the end. Letarte called for more major adjustments during the ensuing caution period, and additional changes during a four-tire, green-flag stop on lap 265. In an effort to gain as many positions -- and points -- as possible, Letarte called for "gas only" on their final stop with nine laps remaining in the 500-mile event. The quick stop allowed Gordon to spend a minimal amount of time on pit road and record a 13th-place finish. Kurt Busch conserved enough fuel to grab the victory.

"We won here in the spring, but this was more of a 'normal' race for us here," said Gordon, who remained third in the standings and now trails leader Johnson by 112. "This is not one of my best tracks, and it seems like we have the same issues almost every race at Texas.

"With Jimmie's accident, I was hoping we would be able to capitalize. We made up some ground, but I view it as a missed opportunity."

Two races remain in the season with next Sunday's event -- the Checker O'Reilly Auto Parts 500 presented by Pennzoil -- at Phoenix International Raceway scheduled to take the green flag just past 3 p.m. EST. ABC and MRN Radio will broadcast the race live.

Dickies 500 results (unofficial)

1. Kurt Busch
2. Denny Hamlin
3. Matt Kenseth
4. Mark Martin
5. Kevin Harvick
6. Tony Stewart
7. Clint Bowyer
8. Greg Biffle
9. Jeff Burton
10. A.J. Allmendinger

13. Jeff Gordon

Point standings (unofficial)

1. Jimmie Johnson
2. Mark Martin (-73)
- 3. Jeff Gordon (-112)**
4. Kurt Busch (-171)
5. Tony Stewart (-178)
6. Juan Pablo Montoya (-236)
7. Greg Biffle (-247)
8. Denny Hamlin (-322)
9. Ryan Newman (-324)
10. Kasey Kahne (-399)
11. Carl Edwards (-440)
12. Brian Vickers (-520)