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**GORDON COULD GET BONUS WITH FONTANA WIN**

**FONTANA, Calif.** (February 16, 2010) – Last year, Jeff Gordon and Team DuPont collected eight second-place finishes in 36 events. At Auto Club Speedway – site of this Sunday’s Auto Club 500 – and Michigan International Speedway, Gordon posted a “perfect” 2.0 average finish due to four runner-up finishes on the only 2.0-mile tracks on the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series schedule.

But a “bonus” could await Gordon if he improves on those finishes in 2010.

After race No. 26 at Richmond, points are reset for the 12 “Chase for the NASCAR Sprint Cup” drivers with 10 bonus points awarded for each win accrued through that event. And that makes a victory in February valuable in September.

“I think our eight second-place finishes in 2009 is where our motivation and direction came from for this year,” Gordon said. “We looked at those finishes and analyzed what it would have taken to get us into Victory Lane and secure the much needed bonus points. Ten points per win sure add up quickly once the Chase starts.

“Then we looked at what we could have done to be better in those final 10 races. It’s a little bit of communication, it’s a little bit of how we work during the race and over the race weekend, it’s the car and paying attention to track changes and weather changes, and it’s fine-tuning the pit crew. We looked at every area. We weren’t off by a ton, but we know we can do better.

“If we’re really going to be a factor in the championship, we have to win more races.”

(more)

Winning is something Gordon is familiar with at the California track. In 19 starts, he has three wins, two poles and 10 top-five finishes. But while he wants to improve on his second-place finish of a year ago, the four-time NASCAR Cup Series champion wants to continually improve throughout the season, as well.

"I'm hoping we can run better and get better as the season goes on," said Gordon, who finished 26th in the season-opening Daytona 500 after being involved in a last-lap crash. "I certainly feel that we have that capability.

"Last year, I think we were the best team during the first 10 races, but we flattened out. We're looking at the championship differently this year. We want to start the season off right, but we want to build and get better as the season goes along.

"And show our strengths at the right time – not only for winning races, but battling for the championship."

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