



DuPont Motorsports Post-Race Report
Daytona 500
Daytona International Speedway
February 14, 2010

Last-Lap Wreck Ruins Daytona 500 and No. 24 DuPont Chevrolet

"It was bumper cars at 195 miles per hour" and, unfortunately, Jeff Gordon was involved in a last-lap crash that resulted in a 26th-place finish for the driver of the No. 24 DuPont Chevrolet in the Daytona 500 on Sunday. Jamie McMurray won "The Great American Race" -- his fourth career victory.

Gordon, who was involved in accident during his Gatorade Duel qualifying race on Thursday, was forced to start the 500-mile race on Sunday in a backup car -- and from the rear of the field. He patiently worked his way through traffic at the beginning of the event and was up to 20th just past the 50-lap mark.

Gaining positions was a team effort. During a lap-65 caution period, the No. 24 pit crew gained four valuable positions for the four-time NASCAR Cup Series champion after a lightning fast four-tire stop. And the momentum carried over to the track with Gordon working his way into the lead by lap 98.

But the track may have not been able to handle the quick DuPont Chevrolet. A caution waved on lap 119, and the race was red-flagged for more than 90 minutes to repair a section of the track that had come apart. After repairs were complete, the race continued with Gordon running in the top five. But that didn't mean it was smooth-sailing -- he narrowly avoided the spinning car of A.J. Allmendinger on lap 143.

The quick-fix repair to turn 2 was not enough, though, and the track's issues returned. Not knowing if the race would be halted early, Gordon began making daring two-and-three-wide moves in an effort to earn the top spot. But his competitors shuffled him from second to 12th before a caution waved on lap 159. Once again, the race was red-flagged to repair the track with just over 40 laps to go.

When repairs were complete, crew chief Steve Letarte called Gordon onto pit road for two new tires on lap 163. The move allowed Gordon to gain seven spots and restart fifth on lap 168. And, with less than 15 laps to go, Gordon was up to third.

But he was shuffled back to eighth just before a caution waved on lap 193 of 200. Letarte once again called Gordon onto pit road for new right-side tires, and Gordon restarted 13th on lap 198. But the final few restarts were littered with cautions, and the driver of the No. 24 DuPont Chevrolet was unable to use the new rubber to his advantage. When he was able to, Gordon stuck the nose of the No. 24 Impala into the middle lane to try to improve his position -- a move that worked until he was involved in an accident with several cars in the final corner.

"Man, I just couldn't get into the correct lane at the end," Gordon said after the race. "If I was in the bottom lane, the top lane was moving. If I was in the top, the bottom moved.

"The car was really good all day and we were just 'going for it' at the end of the race. But it was bumper cars at 195 miles per hour."

With Gordon driving a wrecked car underneath the checkered flag.

Next Sunday, the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series visits Auto Club Speedway for the Auto Club 500. FOX and MRN Radio will broadcast the race live beginning at 2 p.m. EST.

Daytona 500 results (unofficial)

1. Jamie McMurray
2. Dale Earnhardt, Jr.
3. Greg Biffle
4. Clint Bowyer
5. David Reutimann
6. Martin Truex
7. Kevin Harvick
8. Matt Kenseth
9. Carl Edwards
10. Juan Pablo Montoya

26. Jeff Gordon

Point standings (unofficial)

1. Jamie McMurray
2. Dale Earnhardt, Jr.
3. Greg Biffle
4. Clint Bowyer
5. Kevin Harvick
6. David Reutimann
7. Martin Truex
8. Matt Kenseth
9. Juan Pablo Montoya
10. Carl Edwards

26. Jeff Gordon