

Bowyer, Cheerios/Hamburger Helper Team Finish 22nd at Texas

Race: Samsung 500
Date: April 5, 2009
Location: Texas Motor Speedway
Start Position: 19th
Finish Position: 22nd
Points Position: Fourth (lost two positions)

Fort Worth, Texas – Clint Bowyer fought an ill-handling Cheerios/Hamburger Helper Chevrolet at Texas Motor Speedway on Sunday. While the finish was not what Bowyer and crew were looking for, their never-give-up attitude afforded the No. 33 team a 22nd-place finish at the end of the Samsung 500.

The Emporia, Kan., native fell two spots, to fourth, in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series point standings and now sits 187 markers behind leader and eventual race winner Jeff Gordon. Bowyer's total is just 25 off that of second-place point man and defending NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Champion Jimmie Johnson.

Bowyer recorded a time of 28.606 (188.772 mph) in Friday afternoon's qualifying session to earn the 19th starting position. He joined Richard Childress Racing teammates Jeff Burton and Kevin Harvick inside the top-20 starters for Sunday's race.

Bowyer fought a loose-handling Impala SS in the opening portion of the 500-mile event. Despite his struggles, the two-time NSCS winner managed to hold his position inside the top 20 for the majority of the first quarter of the event.

When the first caution flag of the event flew at lap 97 for debris on the track, Bowyer followed the rest of the leaders to pit road for service. The Helping Hands pit crew performed their service of four tires, fuel, wedge and track bar adjustments in 14.7 seconds. Despite having to spend additional time in their pit stall to make changes, the crew's fast work gained Bowyer four positions when he rejoined the field in the 19th position for the lap-102 restart.

As the laps clicked off and the track conditions changed, the No. 33 team's struggles seemed to intensify. Extended green-flag runs resulted in Bowyer losing valuable track position and, ultimately, placed him one lap down to the race leaders.

Throughout much of the remaining laps, Bowyer found himself in position for the Lucky Dog free pass, but the lack of a caution period would not allow him to cash in on the opportunity. Late in the event, while racing Sam Hornish, Jr., for position, Hornish lost control of his No. 77 car and spun into Bowyer, resulting in driver-side door damage to Bowyer's Cheerios/Hamburger Helper Chevrolet.

Bowyer continued to fight for positions in the closing laps of the event, but a combination of handling issues and damage limited Bowyer's ability to advance his position leaving him 22nd in the final rundown.

Bowyer's RCR teammates Burton, Casey Mears and Harvick finished ninth, 21st and 27th, respectively.

Gordon picked up his 84th NSCS win and first at TMS. He was followed to the checkers by Jimmie Johnson, Greg Biffle, Tony Stewart and Matt Kenseth. Team Chevy placed six drivers inside the top10 and continues to lead the Manufacturers' Cup Standings.

The NASCAR Sprint Cup Series drivers and teams have their second weekend off of 2009 this weekend before heading to Phoenix International Raceway for the April 18 Subway Fresh Fit 500. The first night race of the 2009 season will be televised live on FOX Sat., April 18 beginning at 8 p.m. ET. The Motor Racing Network and Sirius XM Satellite Radio will also provide live lap-by-lap coverage. Qualifying will be televised on SPEED Friday, April 17, beginning at 7 p.m. ET.