

## **Top-Five Finish for Bowyer at Daytona** Fourth in points heading to California

**Race/Date:** Daytona 500 – Feb. 15, 2009  
**Location:** Daytona International Speedway  
**Start Position:** 22nd  
**Finish Position:** Fourth

**Daytona Beach, FL.** – Clint Bowyer patiently waited to make his move until the closing stages of Sunday's Daytona 500. Unfortunately for the driver of the Cheerios/Hamburger Helper Chevrolet, a heavy rain began to fall 48 laps from the finish, bringing the race to a close before completing the scheduled distance.

Bowyer took the green flag from the 22<sup>nd</sup>-position, which he earned via his finish in the second Gatorade Duel 150 qualifying race. He wouldn't stay there long, as positions shuffled with the completion of each lap. Bowyer advanced to the eighth position by the time the first caution of the event flew at lap eight, when the No. 8 of Aric Almirola spun in Turn 3. Bowyer came to the attention of the Helping Hands pit crew one lap later and after being serviced with four new Goodyear tires and a chassis adjustment, the Emporia, Kan., native rejoined the field in the 29<sup>th</sup> position for the lap 10 restart.

With three-wide racing going on around him, Bowyer elected to drop to the back of the pack to avoid being caught in the inevitable "big one." As the wild racing began to settle down, Bowyer slowly began working his way towards the front of the field.

"I'm just trying to be careful," Bowyer reported over the team radio. "I don't want to get caught up in any of that stuff going on up there."

The two-time Sprint Cup Series winner reported that the handling of the Cheerios/Hamburger Helper Chevrolet was exactly as he liked it, and that no changes were needed. Crew chief Shane Wilson obliged, opting for standard four-tire stops when the No. 33 hit pit road on each ensuing stop.

As the race neared the halfway point, Wilson reported that rain was rapidly approaching the speedway. Feeling that the race would not reach the scheduled distance, Bowyer began making a charge to the front of the field. Bowyer found it difficult to find a drafting partner that could keep up with him, but managed to work the draft up to the 10<sup>th</sup> position on lap 116.

The No. 12 car of David Stremme experienced a tire failure two laps later, forcing NASCAR to throw the yellow flag for debris. The caution period allowed Bowyer to come to pit road for the final time, with Wilson making the call to take on four tires and fuel. When the field resumed green flag racing at lap 123, Bowyer was scored in the 16<sup>th</sup> position.

Two turns later, a major incident occurred on the backstretch directly in front of the Cheerios/Hamburger Helper Chevrolet, but Bowyer was able to make it through the incident without suffering any damage.

Bowyer restarted in the ninth position, but worked his way to the fourth spot in just three laps. Bowyer got to the rear bumper of teammate Kevin Harvick's Chevrolet and as the two appeared to be ready to challenge for the lead, Almirola spun once again to bring out the day's final caution flag. As the field circled the track behind the Chevrolet Camaro pace car, heavy rains began to fall. NASCAR called the drivers to pit road, and shortly after decided to call the race as the rain showed no sign of stopping.

Bowyer's Richard Childress Racing teammates Harvick, Casey Mears and Jeff Burton finished second, 15th and 28th, respectively.

Next weekend, NASCAR's senior circuit heads west to Fontana, Calif. for the Auto Club 500. The race will be televised live on FOX Sun., Feb. 22, beginning at 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. It can also be heard live on the Motor Racing Network and Sirius/XM Satellite Radio.