

Bowyer Closes Out 2009 with 11th-Place Finish at Homestead

Race/Date: Ford 400 – November 22, 2009
Location: Homestead-Miami Speedway – Homestead, Fla.
Start Position: 10th
Finish Position: 11th
Points Position: 15th (Maintained position)

HOMESTEAD, Fla. – Clint Bowyer and the Cheerios/Hamburger Helper team capped off their 2009 season with an 11th-place finish in Sunday's NASCAR Sprint Cup Series finale at Homestead-Miami Speedway.

Bowyer's 22nd top-15 finish of the season allowed him to finish 15th in the 2009 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series point standings. All told, Bowyer's 2009 records show four top-five and 16 top-10 finishes.

Bowyer kicked off the weekend by recording the third-fastest time in Friday's opening practice session and, later that afternoon, recorded a lap of 31.425 seconds at an average speed of 171.838 mph in time trials to place him 10th on the starting grid for Sunday's race.

From the drop of the green flag, the Emporia, Kan., native wasted little time advancing toward the front of the field. Despite fighting a loose-handling condition, Bowyer worked his way to fifth in the opening five laps. He would maintain his position until green-flag pit stops began at lap 50, when quick work by the Helping Hands pit crew allowed their driver to assume the race lead when the cycle of stops completed.

Bowyer's presence on-point was limited, as his Richard Childress Racing teammate Kevin Harvick passed him for the position just one lap later. Bowyer continued to make his presence known, holding his place inside the top-five for the majority of the first half of the race, despite making contact with the Turn 4 wall.

As the race entered the middle stages, a rash of cautions broke out, slowing the pace of the event. Suffering from the effects of the body damage and the setting sun, Bowyer's efforts were bolstered by consistently fast pit stops.

With the conclusion of the 267-lap event nearing, Bowyer once again made contact with the outside retaining wall, further complicating his handling woes. Despite the odds, Bowyer showed his adversity by hanging on to take the checkered flag 11th.

Denny Hamlin picked up his fourth win of the 2009 season, beating Bowyer's RCR teammate Jeff Burton to the checkered flag by 2.632 seconds. Harvick, Kurt Busch and 2009 champion Jimmie Johnson rounded out the top-five finishers.

Bowyer's other RCR teammate Casey Mears finished 19th.