

## **Untimely Cautions, Pair of Incidents Relegate Bowyer to 36<sup>th</sup> Place Finish in Weather-Plagued Coca-Cola 600**

Race: Coca-Cola 600  
Date: May 25, 2009  
Location: Lowe's Motor Speedway  
Start Position: 24th  
Finish Position: 36th  
Points Position: 17th (Lost four positions)

**CONCORD, N.C.** – Clint Bowyer was involved in two incidents during the weather-plagued Coca-Cola 600 at Lowe's Motor Speedway, relegating the driver of the Cheerios/Hamburger Helper Chevrolet to a 36th-place finish.

The less-than-favorable finish dropped the No. 33 team four spots in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series point standings to 17th, 109 markers behind 12th-place point-man Mark Martin and 153 behind Richard Childress Racing teammate Jeff Burton in eighth.

Bowyer toured the 1.5-mile quad-oval in 29.004 seconds at an average speed of 186.181 mph in Thursday evening's qualifying session, placing him 24th in the starting lineup for NASCAR's longest race. Intermittent rain showers on Sunday evening forced NASCAR to delay the start of the 600-mile event to Monday. Continued rain showers on Memorial Day resulted in several caution and red flag periods, bringing the event to a conclusion just past the halfway point.

The two-time NSCS winner struggled with a loose-handling condition in the opening segment of the event and lost several positions as he tried to get acclimated with his Cheerios/Hamburger Helper Chevrolet.

The race was red-flagged at lap 74 as rain brought the field to a stop. When racing resumed 57 minutes later at lap 79, Dale Earnhardt, Jr. struggled with getting up to speed, resulting in Bowyer rear-ending the Earnhardt's Chevrolet. The Emporia, Kansas native suffered damage to the nose of his Chevrolet that would hinder his efforts over the following laps.

As the field continued under green-flag conditions, Bowyer's handling conditions worsened because of the damage. As the race neared the three o'clock hour and President Obama's "National Moment of Remembrance," NASCAR placed the field under the red flag once again as crew members lined pit road to honor the men and women of the United States military.

Upon the completion of the remembrance, the field was placed under caution, allowing the field to come to pit road. Crew chief Shane Wilson ordered major changes, including air pressure and wedge and track bar adjustments to the Cheerios/Hamburger Helper Chevrolet as Bowyer came to the attention of the Helping Hands pit crew. Paul Menard, who was pitting in the stall just behind Bowyer, also chose to make a pit stop at the same time. When Bowyer attempted to enter his pit stall, the front-tire carrier of Menard's crew swung wide as he came around the front of Menard's car, causing the tire he was carrying to make heavy contact with the left-front fender of Bowyer's No. 33 Impala SS. This resulted in damage to the No. 33 that would require additional trips to pit road for repairs.

With another rain shower soaking the track, the field was placed under the red flag at lap 177. After a 20-minute delay, green-flag racing resumed and Bowyer's Chevrolet appeared to respond to the changes made on the most recent pit stop. The 29-year-old driver advanced to the 32nd position before rain showers would force NASCAR to throw another caution flag, opening pit road at lap 227.

Most teams elected to come to pit road for attention, but some chose to stay on track in a gamble for a better finishing position if the race did not resume. Wilson and Bowyer agreed to pit for four tires, fuel and chassis adjustments in an attempt to continue their forward progress. After rain showers continued to fall over Lowe's Motor Speedway, NASCAR elected to end the race short of its scheduled distance, resulting in a 37th-place finish for Bowyer & Co.

Bowyer's Richard Childress Racing teammates Jeff Burton, Casey Mears and Kevin Harvick finished 25th, 33rd and 41st, respectively.

David Reutimann picked up the win when he stayed on the track while his competitors chose to pit during the final caution period. Ryan Newman, Robby Gordon, Carl Edwards and Brian Vickers rounded out the top-five finishers.

Next week, the Sprint Cup Series heads to Dover, Delaware for the first of two visits to the concrete oval. Live coverage of the *Autism Speaks 400* presented by Helluva Good! Sour Cream Dips & Cheese will take the green flag Sunday, May 31 beginning at 1:30 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time. The race will be televised live on FOX and broadcast on the Motor Racing Network and Sirius XM Satellite Radio. Qualifying for the 13<sup>th</sup> points-paying race on the 2009 schedule will be telecast live on SPEED Friday, May 29 beginning at 3 p.m. EDT.