

Clint Bowyer Scores First Top-Five Finish at Martinsville

Race: Goody's Fast Pain Relief 500

Date: March 29, 2009

Location: Martinsville (Va.) Speedway

Start Position: Third

Finish Position: Fifth

Points Position: Second (Gained one position)

Martinsville, Va. – Clint Bowyer headed to Martinsville Speedway on a streak of three consecutive top-10 finishes at the .526-mile oval, including two finishes that tied his career best of ninth. Bowyer improved that on Sunday, as he consistently ran with the race leaders on his way to a fifth-place finish. It marked the first time the fourth-year driver has finished inside the top five at Martinsville.

The Emporia, Kan., native advanced one spot, to second, in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series point standings and now sits 89 markers behind leader Jeff Gordon.

Steady rain on Friday afternoon forced NASCAR to set the field according to the rule book, placing Bowyer's BB&T Chevrolet third on the starting grid. The two-time NSCS winner ran inside the top five for the first 138 laps of the event. When the caution flag was displayed at lap 139 for an incident involving Robby Gordon's No. 7 car, Bowyer followed the leaders to pit road where crew chief Shane Wilson called for a routine stop consisting of four tires and fuel. A dropped lug nut cost the BB&T crew additional time on pit road, resulting in Bowyer dropping to the 12th position for the lap 143 restart.

Just past the halfway point of the event, Bowyer resumed his position inside the top five at lap 264 by consistently recording the fastest lap times over the following green flag run. Bowyer never looked back, as he ran no lower than fifth for the remainder of the race.

Wilson made minor adjustments to the BB&T Chevrolet over the course of the event to keep up with the changing track conditions. Happy with the handling conditions, Bowyer requested only minor changes over the 500 laps of competition to improve the handling of his Richard Childress Racing-prepared Chevrolet.

In the closing laps of the event, Bowyer waged a spirited battle with Jeff Gordon and Tony Stewart for position. Bowyer crossed the finish line in fifth when the checkered flag flew.

Bowyer's RCR teammates Kevin Harvick, Jeff Burton and Casey Mears finished 11th, 15th and 21st, respectively.

Jimmie Johnson beat Denny Hamlin to the finish line by .774 seconds. Jeff Gordon and Tony Stewart finished third and fourth. Team Chevy placed seven drivers inside the top-10.

Next weekend, the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series heads to Texas Motor Speedway for the Samsung 500. The race will be televised live on FOX Sun., April 5 beginning at 1:30 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time. The Performance Racing Network and Sirius XM Satellite Radio will also provide live lap-by-lap coverage. Qualifying for the seventh of 36 points-paying races will be televised live on SPEED Fri., April 3 at 4:30 p.m. EDT. PRN and Sirius XM Satellite Radio will carry qualifying updates live.