

Gordon Looks to Make One Last Great Talladega Memory in CampingWorld.com 500, Oct. 25

When Jeff Gordon shuts down his engine for the final time at Talladega Superspeedway after the CampingWorld.com 500 on Oct. 25, he will have plenty of memorable moments -- both on and off the track -- to look back on and celebrate.

Gordon currently has six NASCAR Sprint Cup Series wins at TSS to his credit, tying him for second on the track's all-time winners list with Dale Earnhardt Jr. In the CampingWorld.com 500, he will not only be trying to move into sole possession of second place on that list behind Dale Earnhardt Sr.'s 10 career TSS wins, he will also be trying to keep alive his hopes of winning a fifth career championship by surviving the riveting Contender Round of the 2015 Chase for the NASCAR Sprint Cup.

With another triumph at NASCAR's Most Competitive Track, the driver of the No. 24 Chevrolet would be guaranteed to be one of the eight drivers to advance to the Chase's Eliminator Round, keeping his "Drive for Five" alive and well.

"I've had some great memories at Talladega, some big wins," Gordon said. "I learned from Dale Earnhardt Sr. about racing on restrictor plate tracks, watching him at Talladega do things that I didn't think were possible. A few years later I took that knowledge, utilized it and got some wins there. It's something I'm very proud of, especially one in particular."

The victory he referenced came in the spring race of 2004 when a late caution

came out as he and Dale Earnhardt Jr. battled it out for the win. It appeared that Dale Jr. would make a late-race pass on Gordon, but when the caution flew, that wasn't the case. Enforcing a rule it had implemented in late 2003 that prohibited racing back to the flag when the yellow came out, NASCAR froze the field. At that exact point, Dale Jr., while in the process of making the pass, didn't when the caution came out, keeping Gordon out front.

What followed was pure chaos as spectators pelted the track and Gordon's car with beverage cans along with other debris as he took his victory lap.

"The caution came out at the perfect time when I was racing Dale Jr.," Gordon said. "Of course the fans all thought he was ahead of me. You're in Junior Nation in Talladega, and you don't want it to be a controversial call against Dale Earnhardt Jr. They (NASCAR) went back and said we were the winner, and the place erupted and went crazy."

Some of Gordon's other memorable TSS moments include:

- Making his TSS debut in a NASCAR XFINITY Series race in July 1992. He started 28th and finished a respectable 11th that day driving for owner Bill Davis.
- Visiting Victory Lane at Talladega for the first time in July 1996. Though the race was shortened due to inclement weather, it didn't dampen the day for Gordon, who recorded the sixth of his 10 wins that season.
- Recording his 50th career victory by charging from the 36th starting spot in the spring 2000 race. Despite starting deep in the field, Gordon sliced his way through the front to take the lead with six laps to go and held on for the milestone victory.
- Annihilating the field in the spring 2005 race to record his fourth career TSS victory. After leading 139 of the 188 laps, Gordon said "This is the most dominating performance we've ever had on a plate track. Talladega is not a handling track. It's pure speed and, man, this car had it."



• Sweeping both races in 2007, including a win in the spring race that wasn't short of historical importance. Gordon's win on April 29, 2007 was his 77th, moving past Dale Earnhardt Sr. for sixth on NASCAR's all-time win list. Ironically, this occurred on what would have been Earnhardt's 56th birthday and once again, unhappy fans of "The Intimidator," showered the track with beverage cans and debris.

"I know there are a lot of fans out there that probably didn't want us to win this race today but nobody had more respect for Dale Earnhardt than I did, and everything I learned from him I applied it out there on the race track today," Gordon said afterwards. "It was a great victory."

Later that year, his victory in the 2007 fall race provided an unforgettable family moment. His daughter, Ella, who had been born just the previous June, made her first trip to Gatorade Victory Lane with her father.

Don't miss Gordon's final TSS on-track performance. Talladega's weekend kicks off on Friday (Oct. 23) with practice sessions for both the Fred's 250 Powered by Coca-Cola and the CampingWorld.com 500. Saturday's (Oct. 24) slate includes

qualifying for both races, as well as the drop of the green flag for the Fred's 250 Powered by Coca-Cola NASCAR Camping World Truck Series™ race (starting at noon CDT) which will feature veterans like Matt Crafton and Johnny Sauter as they try to hold off hard-charging young guns like Erik Jones and Tyler Reddick. The green flag will drop on the CampingWorld.com 500 at 1:30 p.m. CDT.

Courtesy of Talladega SS



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