

## **Robby Gordon Phoenix Recap**

**Charlotte, N.C.** (November 15, 2009) – With the 2009 season nearing the end, the No. 7 Jim Beam team hoped for a strong finish at Phoenix International Raceway to help gain momentum heading into the 2010 season. The Checker O'Reilly Auto Parts 500 was the final appearance of Jim Beam on the hood of Gordon's No. 7 Camry and the end of a five-year partnership between the two companies.

The unique design of Phoenix International Raceway makes it extremely difficult to set up a race car that handles well throughout the entire 1-mile oval. In hopes of perfecting the car, the team started the No. 7 Jim Beam Camry with a set up that varied from what they had used in practice earlier in the weekend. Unfortunately, the Jim Beam team fell victim to this challenge as Gordon called into the crew to report handling difficulties within the opening laps.

By the end of the first run, Gordon was still reporting a loose condition on both the entry and exit of the corner with a tight condition through the center of the turn. With the leader quickly approaching, crew chief Doug Richert decided to short pit and called Gordon down pit road on Lap 69. The early stop allowed the team to put fresh tires on the No. 7 Jim Beam Camry, which helped Gordon make faster laps than the leader and ultimately placed him securely on the lead lap.

The long green flag run that started the race continued until Lap 115 when the caution finally came out for debris in Turn 2. Shortly after Lap 100 several cars, including the No. 7 Jim Beam Camry, had gone a lap down to the leaders, so the Lap 115 caution gave the team a chance to strategize to get Gordon back on the lead lap. The team decided to stay out under the caution to receive the wave-around and return to the lead lap of competition.

The Jim Beam team made their strategy call on the saying "cautions breed cautions," and just as expected there was a caution on the restart on Lap 120. Unfortunately, Gordon was caught up in the chain reaction accident that occurred when some cars didn't take off on the restart. The incident left the Jim Beam Camry with significant damage to the right front, including a fender rub and a bent splitter.

The No. 7 Jim Beam team spent subsequent caution periods fixing the damage that was sustained in the Lap 120 caution and making adjustments to aid the handling of Gordon's Camry. By the time the checkered flag fell, the No. 7 Jim Beam Camry was scored in the 22<sup>nd</sup> position.

"Jim Beam has been a great partner to the Robby Gordon Motorsports organization since its formation back in 2005," said Gordon. "I really hoped that we would be able to bring home a stronger finish than 22<sup>nd</sup> for their last race to show our appreciation for everything they have done. Unfortunately, we got caught up in an untimely accident when we were trying to make up some track position. Regardless, I think that the team did a great job working to repair the opportunity. We even got the Lucky Dog at one point with a wrecked race car. We preserved and ended up finishing 22<sup>nd</sup>, which isn't terrible considering we had significant right front damage."

Prior to racing in the season finale at Homestead-Miami Speedway, Robby Gordon will travel to the Baja Peninsula to race the No. 77 Monster Energy / Toyo Tires Trophy Truck in the Tecate SCORE Baja 1000, November 19-22. The Baja 1000 marks the fifth and final competition in the 2009 Tecate SCORE International Off-

Road Championship, which Gordon is currently leading for both the Trophy Truck division and the Overall SCORE Desert Series. While Gordon works to clinch the SCORE Championship, the Robby Gordon Motorsports team will work to prepare and perfect their Camry with the help of Matt Crafton. Crafton is set to practice and qualify the No. 7 MAPEI / Menards Camry, turning the wheel back over to Gordon for the 400-mile race on Sunday afternoon.

The NASCAR Sprint Cup Series will travel to Homestead-Miami Speedway for the final race of the 2009 season. The Ford 400 will be broadcast live on ABC beginning at 2:30 p.m. EST on Sunday, November 22. MRN and Sirius XM Satellite Radio will carry live radio coverage of the event beginning at 2:45 p.m. EST. Qualifying for the 400-mile race will be broadcast on ESPN2 beginning at 3:00 p.m. EST on Friday, November 20, 2009.