



Matt Crafton Battles Tight Condition, Finishes Eighth in Rain-Delayed Event at Pocono Raceway

Pocono Raceway Recap – Good Sam RV Emergency Road Service 125

LONG POND, Pa. (August 7, 2011) – In the record-breaking 354th NASCAR Camping World Truck Series race for ThorSport Racing, Matt Crafton earned an eighth-place finish in a two day event at Pocono Raceway. After rain forced an overnight delay after 18 of 50 scheduled laps, Crafton battled a tight handling racecar, but soldiered on to earn his eighth top-10 finish of 2011.

Taking the green flag from the 13th position, Crafton maneuvered his way through the field, taking over the seventh spot before the completion of the first circuit around the “Tricky Triangle.” Crafton relayed to the No. 88 crew that the Menards/Ideal Door machine was “not bad,” and he held his position until the first caution flag of the day waved on lap four for debris. With rain clouds looming, green-flag racing resumed on lap six, but the yellow flag flew again just one lap later for a three-truck wreck on the frontstretch.

Still too early to pit, Crafton and crew opted to keep the No. 88 on the track and restarted the race on lap nine. Crafton slipped to 12th by lap 12, radioing to his team that the truck was now really tight off the center. At the same time, rain started to sprinkle on the 2.5-mile track, and NASCAR brought out the caution for weather on lap 15. With pit road open, Crafton rolled the No. 88 down pit road for a quick splash of fuel, emerging ninth after some competitors opted for two or four-tire stops. Racing would not resume, however, as the skies opened up over Pocono Raceway. The trucks ran a few more laps at caution pace before the red flag was displayed. After parking the trucks on pit road, teams remained in a holding pattern for the rest of the afternoon until the race was eventually called for the night, set to resume the following morning.

Following a long, wet break in the action, engines were re-fired and pit road was opened before the green flag waved on lap 22. Prior to taking the green, Crafton brought the No. 88 in for four tires and fuel. With some competitors choosing not to pit, Crafton restarted 19th. The action quickly went three-wide, and Crafton progressed to 12th by lap 29. Three laps later, the racing was slowed due to a caution for debris, and Crafton opted to remain on track for position, allowing him to restart fifth.

Unfortunately, the No. 88 Menards/Ideal Door was handling “really, really tight,” after the restart, and Crafton slipped to 15th by lap 41. When the yellow flag waved on lap 43, Crafton and crew chief Bud Haefele concurred that the only way the team would have a chance at winning the race was to adjust on the truck. Crafton brought the ThorSport Racing machine down pit road, and his crew provided him with four tires, fuel, an air-pressure adjustment and a chassis adjustment.

The field went green on lap 46 with Crafton in 20th place. With only four laps of regulation racing remaining, Crafton wasted no time heading to the front of the pack. Claiming that the truck was so much better that it was like “night and day” from the previous run, Crafton was able to zoom into ninth before the final caution flag of the day waved just before the field was going to take the white flag, setting up a green-white-checkered finish. Crafton was able to pick up one more spot in the closing laps, crossing the finish line in eighth place. Crafton remains sixth in the point standings, 42 markers out of first.

“We had a really great truck there at the end,” said Crafton following the race. “We were tight for a lot of the race, but we didn’t want to give up track position because more rain was always a possibility. You hate to give up a ton of spots when the skies can open up and end the race early. But at the end, we knew we just had to go for it, and we really needed those adjustments. Those final adjustments were exactly what we needed, I think that if we had a few more laps, we could have competed for the win.”

The NASCAR Camping World Truck Series enjoys an off-weekend before heading to Michigan International Raceway on Saturday, August 20th.

RACE RECAP:

August 6 & 7, 2011

Pocono Raceway

Race: 14 of 25

Started: 13th

Finished: 8th

Driver’s Point Standings: 6th (-42)

Up Next On The Truck Series Schedule:

Date: August 20, 2011

Track: Michigan International Speedway

Event Name: VFW 200

Broadcast: SPEED at 12:30 p.m.

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