

Gordon Tips Hat To Busch, The New 'Wonder Boy'

After he took the checkered flag in Sunday's Subway 500 NASCAR Sprint Cup event, one of the first things Jeff Gordon shouted when he keyed his radio was "we beat Kyle Busch!"

That tip of the hat – in the middle of celebrating his first win in nearly two years – showed Gordon's respect for the kind of domination Busch has been laying on the competition lately.

Gordon's win Sunday broke a personal 66-race victory drought and prevented Busch from sweeping the weekend at Phoenix International Raceway. A strong second in the Cup event Sunday, Busch won the Camping World Truck Series race at PIR Friday night and followed it up with a stunning Nationwide win Saturday in which he led every one of the 200 laps.

Butt kicking.

Gordon knows a little something about that.

Gordon – amazingly in his 20th Cup season – won 50 of his now 83 career NASCAR Sprint Cup trophies from 1995-2000. He was 'Wonder Boy' back then, the Kyle Busch of the day.

The wins kept coming at a solid pace until 2008 when Gordon posted an 'o'fer for the first time in 14 Cup seasons. His epic marks of 275 top-five's and 379 top-10's in 619 career Cup starts show that while Gordon hasn't won as much in recent years, he hasn't been riding around either.

Along with five career Nationwide wins, Gordon has been to Victory Lane 88 times in NASCAR competition.

Hall of Famer – first ballot, no question.

Busch is today's Wonder Boy, Jeff Gordon on steroids, a 5.0 version with the nickname of 'Rowdy.'

Busch already has 88 NASCAR wins in just nine years of competition. His Cup total of 19 wins pales to Gordon's 83, but Busch has 44 Nationwide wins in just 204 starts and his Truck Series mark of 25 wins, 50 top-five's and 67 top-10's in just 87 races is mindboggling.

Basically, Bush has averaged 11 wins a year for the last eight seasons – as many total

wins as Gordon in less than half the time.

Don't look now, but these totals are going to continue to grow for a couple of reasons.

First, Busch is just a kid - he will turn 26 in May. He's got lots of laps left and he wants to race all the time. Doesn't matter where or when, he loves to race.

Second, the style of NASCAR racing we are seeing these days – especially in Sprint Cup - is so crazy on edge and Busch seems to be the most comfortable racing that way. He's flat out all the time. There are no other agendas – winning is the only thing for Busch.

Sometimes, going for it all the time gets Busch in trouble - like on Sunday when he pinballed off the wall into Carl Edwards sending him to the also-ran category at Phoenix. Before you fry Busch in oil and cornmeal for that, remember he wasn't the only one getting personal at PIR. Guys were driving crazy from the drop of the green Sunday resulting in a 13-car 'Big One' on Lap 67. Several other big wrecks also thinned the herd yesterday.

Bottom line - everyone is on tilt trying to get to the front regardless of what part of the race and what track they are racing on. Whatever the distance, it's a sprint.

It's a perfect format for someone as wide open as Busch.

Ultimately, Gordon summed up the feeling in the garage area when he gave the shout out to Busch on the cool down lap Sunday. He's the guy everyone is shooting to beat – and sometimes avoid - these days.

Now they are also chasing him for the championship as

CLOSE FINISHES

Busch left Phoenix with the Sprint Cup division points lead. Next up, the series heads to Las Vegas this weekend – Busch's hometown.

Stay tuned. This is just starting to get interesting.

2011 GMP Schedule

-Saturday, March 19
Georgia Electric Vehicle Rally

-Saturday, March 26
Pre-Season Open Practice

-Saturday, April 23
GMP Pro Late Models - Season-Opening Race Event! - Georgia Racing Hall Of Fame Night

-Friday-Saturday, June 3-4
American Cancer Society Relay For Life

-Saturday, June 11
NASCAR K&N Pro Series Returns To GMP

-Thursday, July 14
Opening Ceremonies - Dizzy Dean Baseball World Series of Speed

-Saturday, July 16
Pro All Star Series (PASS) Late Model Race
GMP World Series of Speed

-Saturday, August 13
GMP Back To School Racing Classic - Pro Late Models

-Saturday, September 17
CRA Super Series/Second-Annual
George Elliott Memorial Event

-Saturday-Sunday, October 1-2
2nd Annual Georgia Bluesfest

-Thursday-Sunday, November 10-13
28th-Annual World Crown 300



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