Hamilton County Reporter

Jeff Gordon does a celebratory "burnout" after winning the John Wayne Walding 400 at the Brickyard Sunday at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Gordon, who won the inaugural Brickyard 20 years ago, finished in victory lane for a record fifth time.

Record 5th Brickyard victory puts Jeff Gordon...

In a class by himself

By RICHIE HALL
Reporter Sports Editor

Twenty years after winning the inaugural Brickyard 400, Jeff Gordon won it for the fifth time.

Gordon started strong, got through a few rough patches, and made a spectacular move on a re-start with 17 laps to go to claim the John Wayne Walding 400, which took place Sunday at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. The five times that Gordon has now won this event is a record, and makes him one of the most accomplished drivers in all of IMS history.

"I don't think there's a greater feeling for a racecar driver and a race team," said Gordon. "It's such a great race and such an important victory and such an important moment in the season and championship."

When Gordon won that first Brickyard, he had just turned 23. It was his second career win. He was still known here as the hometown kid from Pittsboro, but everyone knew that he had the potential to be much more.

And Gordon has become much more. His Sunday win was his 90th career NASCAR Sprint Cup win. He is a four-time Sprint Cup champion. It would be easy to say that his career has come full circle, but Gordon - who turns 43 next week - isn't finished yet.

"This team is certainly rejuvenated in a lot of ways," said Gordon. "I'm just having a blast this year driving awesome race cars."

The race was remarkably clean. There was only one incident in the entire 160 laps, when Trevor Bayne had an accident in Turn 3. There were just four caution flags in the race, and one of them was planned, a "competition caution" from Laps 22-25.

That intentional yellow brought Gordon back down to earth after he made a flying start. He dominated the first 21 laps of the race, quickly snatching the lead from pole-sitter Kevin Harvick.

After the caution ended, Joey Logano took over for 10 laps. He was one of nine leaders in the race, and relinquished the top spot to Kasey Kahne on Lap 32.

Kahne, in fact, led the most laps with 70. He had the two longest runs in front, 26 and 25 laps respectively, and was still on top going into the fourth caution of the day, which was thrown when Ryan Truex slowed down in Turn 2.

The caution lasted from Lap 140 to 143, with Gordon right behind Kahne. On the Lap 144 re-start, Gordon powered past

Kahne to the front of the pack, while Kahne faded badly, falling to a fifth in a startlingly short period. Kahne would eventually finish sixth.

"I was hoping Kasey would pick the inside, I really was," said Gordon about the re-start. Gordon said he knew that if he could get to the outside, Kahne would have difficulty using the throttle outside of the corner.

"He got me in Pocono on a re-start," said Gordon, who relished getting the chance to race him again here. The last 17 laps of the race were green, which was just fine with Gordon.

"You don't want to see a caution," he said. "You're leading the Brickyard 400 with just a handful of laps to go. You want

Jeff Gordon battled with Kasey Kahne (background) during the race, finally passing him on a re-start at Lap 144.

John Wayne Walding 400 results

Start	FINISH	Car	Driver	Team	Lap	Status
2	**1**	24	Jeff Gordon	Axalta Chevrolet	160	Running
12	2	18	Kyle Busch	Snickers Toyota	160	Running
27	3	11	Denny Hamlin	FedEx Express Toyota	160	Running
13	4	20	Matt Kenseth	Dollar General Toyota	160	Running
9	5	22	Joey Logano	Shell Pennzoli Ford	160	Running
10	6	5	Kasey Kahne	Time Warner Cable Chevrolet	160	Running
15	7	42	Kyle Larson	Target Chevrolet	160	Running
1	8	4	Kevin Harvick	Jimmy John's Chevrolet	160	Running
23	9	88	Dale Earnhardt Jr.	National Guard Chevrolet	160	Running
17	10	3	Austin Dillon	Dow/Mycogen Seeds Chevrolet	160	Running
4	11	31	Ryan Newman	Quicken Loans Chevrolet	160	Running
3	12	2	Brad Keselowski	Miller Lite Ford	160	Running
19	13	16	Greg Biffle	3M Safety Ford	160	Running
11	14	48	Jimmie Johnson	Lowe's Kobalt Tools Chevrolet	160	Running
18	15	99	Carl Edwards	Fastenal Ford	160	Running
16	16	15	Clint Bowyer	RK Motors Charlotte Toyota	160	Running
6	17	14	Tony Stewart	Mobil 1/Bass Pro Shops Chevrolet	160	Running
36	18	47	A.J. Allmendinger	Kingsford Charcoal Chevrolet	160	Running
5	19	55	Brian Vickers	Aaron's Dream Machine Toyota	160	Running
24	20	1	Jamie McMurray	Cessna Chevrolet	160	Running
41	21	43	Aric Almirola	Eckrich Ford	160	Running
22	22	9	Marcos Ambrose	Stanley Ford	160	Running
8	23	12	Juan Pablo Montoya	Penske Truck Rental Ford	160	Running
21	24	17	Ricky Stenhouse Jr.	EcoPower Oil Ford	160	Running
25	25	78	Martin Truex Jr.	Furniture Row Chevrolet	160	Running
28	26	95	Michael McDowell	K-Love Ford	160	Running
31	27	51	Justin Allgaier	Collision Cure Body Werks Chevrolet	159	Running
7	28	41	Kurt Busch	Haas Automation Chevrolet	159	Running
30	29	98	Josh Wise	Curb Records/Lee Brice Chevrolet	159	Running
37	30	40	Landon Cassill	Carsforsale.com Chevrolet	158	Running
39	31	7	Michael Annett	Pilot/Flying J Chevrolet	158	Running
26	32	26	Cole Whitt	Speed Stick Gear Toyota	158	Running
29	33	13	Casey Mears	GEICO Chevrolet	158	Running
38	34	27	Paul Menard	Moen/Menards Chevrolet	158	Running
34	35	34	David Ragan	MDS Ford	158	Running
43	36	38	David Gilliland	Love's Travel Stops Ford	157	Running
42	37	37	Bobby Labonte	Accell Construction Chevrolet	157	Running
40	38	36	Reed Sorenson	Zing Zang Chevrolet	156	Running
35	39	32	Travis Kvapil	KeenParts.com/tryandrozene.com Ford	156	Running
32	40	23	Alex Bowman	Dr. Pepper Toyota	156	Running
14	41	83	Ryan Truex	Burger King Toyota	149	Running
20	42	10	Danica Patrick	Go Daddy Chevrolet	114	Rear Gear
21	43	21	Trevor Bayne	Motorcraft/Quick Lane Tire & Auto Center Ford	96	Accident

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to take that moment in and look into the crowd and see what they're doing, but at the same time you don't want to lose focus. You know it's not over till in this case the white flag waves."

Kyle Busch finished second, making his way up from 12th at the beginning of the race. Although he didn't lead any laps, he was consistently in the top four for the second half of the competition.

"We had a good day, certainly better than expected," said Busch.

Denny Hamlin was third, leading 11 laps on the day, with Matt Kenseth placing fourth. Logano settled for fifth.

Gordon's fifth Brickyard victory put them tied with Formula One legend Michael Schumacher for most wins at the Speedway. Schumacher won five United States Grand Prix titles in the early 2000's, when it took place at IMS.

Photo by Brian Reddick/RDK PhotoGraphic

TOP: An Air Titan crew dries the track Sunday morning. The Speedway saw rain early that morning, but it held off to allow the race to be completed.

ABOVE: Kyle Busch finished second, consistently running in the top four for the second half of the race.