

JEFF GORDON TO RUN FINAL FULL-TIME NASCAR SEASON IN 2015



CONCORD, N.C. (Jan. 22, 2015) - Jeff Gordon, the celebrated stock car champion whose crossover appeal helped take NASCAR into the mainstream, will compete in his 23rd and final full-time Sprint Cup Series season in 2015. He announced his decision this morning to the No. 24 Hendrick Motorsports team he has driven for since November 1992.

"As a race car driver, much of what I've done throughout my life has been based on following my instincts and trying to make good decisions," Gordon said. "I thought long and hard about my future this

past year and during the offseason, and I've decided 2015 will be the last time I compete for a championship. I won't use the 'R-word' because I plan to stay extremely busy in the years ahead, and there's always the possibility I'll compete in selected events, although I currently have no plans to do that.

"I don't foresee a day when I'll ever step away from racing. I'm a fan of all forms of motor sports, but particularly NASCAR. We have a tremendous product, and I'm passionate about the business and its future success. As an equity owner in Hendrick Motorsports, I'm a partner with Rick (Hendrick) and will remain heavily involved with the company for many years to come. It means so much to have the chance to continue working with the owner who took a chance on me and the incredible team that's stood behind me every step of the way.

"Racing has provided a tremendous amount of opportunity that's been extraordinarily rewarding and fulfilling in my life. The work we're doing with the Jeff Gordon Children's Foundation will continue to be extremely important to me. Outside the race car, my passion is pediatric cancer research, and my efforts will remain focused there when I'm no longer driving.

"I'll explore opportunities for the next phase of my career, but my primary focus now and throughout 2015 will be my performance in the No. 24 Chevrolet. I'm going to pour everything I have into this season and look forward to the challenge of competing for one last championship.

"To everyone at NASCAR, my teammates, sponsors, competitors, friends, family, members of the media and especially our incredible fans, all I can say is thank you."

Gordon, 43, has earned four career Cup championships, 92 points-paying race wins and 77 pole positions, all for longtime car owner Rick Hendrick. He is third in all-time victories behind only NASCAR Hall of Fame drivers Richard Petty (200) and David Pearson (105).

One of the most versatile drivers of his era in any auto racing discipline, Gordon's résumé includes three Daytona 500 victories and a record five Brickyard 400 wins. He is the sport's winningest road course driver with nine victories, stands alone as the all-time leader with 12 restrictor plate wins and has won at every track on the Sprint Cup circuit with the exception of Kentucky Speedway.

"There's simply no way to quantify Jeff's impact," said Hendrick, who first noticed Gordon during a race at Atlanta Motor Speedway in March 1992. "He's one of the biggest sports stars of a generation, and his contributions to the success and growth of NASCAR are unsurpassed. There's been no better ambassador for stock car racing and no greater representation of what a champion should be. I will never be able to properly express the respect and admiration I have for Jeff and how meaningful our relationship is to me. I'm so grateful for everything he's done for our company and my family, and I look forward to many more years together as friends and business partners."

Hendrick Motorsports will announce plans for its 2016 team alignment at a later date.