

Wreck Has Eddie MacDonald Finish 38th At Iowa

Eddie MacDonald's hopes for a top ten finish in the Camping World US Cellular 200 at Iowa Speedway ended with a wreck on lap 67. The crew was able to get the Grimm Construction Chevrolet back on the track but many laps down.

After disappointing practice sessions, MacDonald qualified 20th for the two hundred lap event. The Rowley, Mass. driver said, "The car was a lot better in qualifying than it was earlier this morning in practice. We thought we would be better than this but we had a little learning to do. We'll see how it goes in the race and hope to stay out of trouble. We have a new car at a track we have never seen before and it is a lot different than what we expected. With the bumps in the tunnel turn we had to change the car around to get over those bumps a little better."

Even though the team had a successful testing session at Loudon earlier in the week, the new coil-binding set-up presented problems at the fast, high-banked 7/8ths of a mile oval. Crew chief Rollie LaChance said before the race, "We are learning this car. It is a brand new car and the first time we practiced with it was at Loudon. We are playing around with the coil-bind set-up. But it is what we've got so we threw a bunch of stuff at it and we learned a lot in practice. Now Eddie can drive it in deep but we have a lot of trouble with the tunnel turn bumps. We just need to stay up front, stay out of trouble a let the front guys come back to us and have a good run."

Team owner Rob Grimm was pleased with the qualifying effort saying, "We are real happy to be in the show. Rollie and the crew pulled together, made a bunch of changes, and Eddie really drove the car to make all the difference. The best part of this team is our people. We are starting to get good equipment but the people are what make the team."

The strategy to run easy and take what was given worked when by lap 12 MacDonald drove the car into the 15th spot and was able to hold that position until the #81 made the pass on lap 45. Despite slipping back to 18th by lap 52, the Grimm Chevy restarted in tenth place after a lap 55 caution. With a number of the leaders stopping for tires, LaChance knew what would happen next saying, "I knew the guys who stopped early would be kind of roughshod coming back through the pack and unfortunately it was us that got it. We just wanted to let them go. We had a window we wanted to get into to make the changes. We had a good plan and I think we could have finished in the top ten."

That was not to be the case when on lap 67, the #35 moved under MacDonald while the 08 made it three-wide on the back straightaway. MacDonald's #75 made contact with the 08 sending him into the wall. The crew made the needed repairs behind the wall but returned to the track 32 laps down. More repairs were needed relegating MacDonald to the 38th position.

MacDonald said after the race, "We were pretty happy with the car. We just didn't get to run it as much as we wanted. We were hoping to come in to make our adjustments. I thought we would be really good but we never had the chance. That was the most unfortunate part. The crew really worked hard all weekend and Rob Grimm is giving us what we need so we will continue to get better every race."

Even though the race did not pan out as planned, Grimm was optimistic saying, "We looked good early. The crew did a fantastic job getting us back out there after the wreck. Everybody pitched in, got it back out there and we finished. We gained a few positions that will be important for the points at the end of the year."

The crew will next be preparing for the NASCAR Camping World Series Strutmasters.com 150 at the South Boston Speedway on May 31.