



PLATINUM SERIES



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He is known to millions of NASCAR followers as *Wonder Boy* or the driver of the 24 car.

At 43, Jeff Gordon is in the final year of his incredible racing career that includes Sprint Champion (4 times), Daytona 500 Winner (3 times) and numerous other honors. He is the current iron man leader with over 750 consecutive races under his belt. He was also the first driver to accumulate earnings that have topped 100 million dollars and was named by *Foxsports.com* as the fifth-best NASCAR driver of all time.

Born and raised in Vallejo, California, Gordon also owns a thriving winery business that is called Jeff Gordon Cellars.

"The fact that Vallejo is directly below Napa Valley made it easy for my family to take rides when I was young," Gordon recalled during a recent interview. "I fondly remember the beautiful wineries and vineyards. They made a lasting impact on me and when I finally began drinking wine, my early experience was solidified."

Gordon also pointed to a specific happening during a meal in London a number of years ago that influenced his entry into the wine industry.

"During the meal, a bottle of older Batard Montrachet was actually decanted in front of me. It was the first time I saw a bottle of white wine decanted and it actually showed me what a great wine could be. The combination of food and wine ambiance really stuck with me. I guess I knew then that I would one day be in the wine business."

Jeff Gordon Cellars made its official debut in late 2005 with around 250 cases of its Carneros Chardonnay. Since that time, the winery has produced a number of additional varietals, each around 250 cases.

"We are not interested in mass production of any wine," Gordon added. "What appeals to us is extremely high quality and by keeping the production small, we can be assured the quality always remains high."

Gordon credits Calistoga winemaker August 'Joe' Briggs and his nephew Jesse Inman for making Jeff Gordon Cellars the success that it is. A long time winemaker, Briggs has stints with the likes of La Crema

and Keenan to his credit. He also tutored his nephew on the finer points of winemaking. When August Biggs Wines was created, Jesse worked in a number of roles. In 2006, Jesse was named assistant winemaker.

When Gordon approached Biggs and Inman about consulting on Jeff Gordon Cellars, a lasting friendship was born. Today, Biggs remains in a consulting role while Jesse Inman serves as the actual winemaker for Jeff Gordon Cellars.

"I play as much of a role in the winery as my schedule permits," Gordon informed. "I feel I have developed a good palate for wine. I always lean toward a smooth finish and good feel on the palate for all our wines. But, the reality of it all is that Jesse and Joe make a good many of the critical decisions."

Gordon also takes great pride in being able to provide and pour the wine for sponsor events and for dinners he enjoys with close friends. He never ceases to be amazed when the wine elicits comments such as "We didn't expect the wine to be this good."

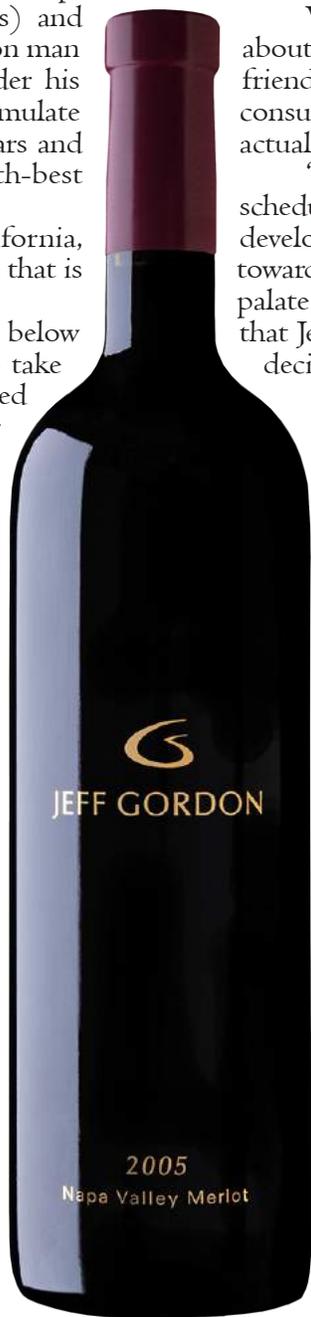
Another happy note was the fact that Gordon was able to name two of the vintages after his children in the years they were born. The Jeff Gordon Cellars 2007's are called *Ella Sofia* and the 2010's bear the name Leo on their labels.

While accolades and industry plaudits have come in bunches for the wines of Jeff Gordon Cellars, its owner has resisted the option of growing larger. He has also stopped short of buying or planting his own vineyards.

Jeff Gordon Cellars has few distributor outlets and prefers to sell its wines directly to the consumer. "It gives more flexibility in the marketplace but that flexibility comes a bit of a cost to our wines' price points," Gordon explained. "We have been told that our wines are extremely well priced for the quality we are producing. It is our aim to continue in this manner."

Among the NASCAR participants, only driver Danica Patrick (who owns her own 80-acre Cabernet vineyard on Howell Mountain) has entered the wine business.

Once his retirement become official, Jeff Gordon intends to devote a great deal more of his time to the project. The fact that Jeff Gordon will be more active is good for both Gordon and the wine industry itself.



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Dear *Platinum Series* Members,

I am very excited to introduce the Jeff Gordon Collection of Wines to you through the Gold Medal Wine Club. Many of you may know me from racing, but I am also a fine wine enthusiast and a proud Northern California vintner. Working with two outstanding guys – winemakers August 'Joe' Briggs and his nephew Jesse Inman – we have been producing some amazing Napa and Sonoma varietals since 2004. My goal has been to craft world-class wines modeled after the characteristics that I enjoy from each respective varietal, focusing on quality rather than quantity.

I am proud to present to you my 2005 Napa Valley Merlot from our Library Collection. We produced two vintages back in 2004 and 2005. You know, I think Merlot is sometimes underrated, but I've always loved it. We purposely held back some cases of the 2005 vintage to allow for extensive bottle aging, and the result is an amazingly rich, opulent wine that has become so complex and delicious. I feel like it is just now hitting its stride.

My wife Ingrid and I enjoy this wine with our closest family and friends, and we sincerely hope you find it as wonderful as we do.

Cheers to you and yours,

Jeff Gordon

Visit us online at www.JeffGordonWine.com



TASTING NOTES

BEST MERLOT

– *Sommelier Challenge,*
International Wine Competition

GOLD MEDAL

– *International Women's Wine Competition*

249 Cases Produced

Jeff Gordon's 2005 Merlot comes from the Solari Vineyards, located at the northern end of the Napa Valley, close to Calistoga in the foothills of Mount St. Helena. This vineyard was planted in the foothills' well-drained, rocky soils – perfect conditions for producing high quality Merlot. Deep scarlet in color with rich purple hues, the Jeff Gordon 2005 Merlot offers aromas of dark fruits with hints of baked clay and vanilla spice. On the palate, flavors of dried cranberry, earth and cedar intertwine with rich, mouth coating, velvety tannins that are bracketed by firm acidity, giving this wine great structure and balance. Jeff Gordon's 2005 Merlot has a wonderfully plush and lingering finish. Aged in oak. Enjoy now until 2016.



REORDERS

Jeff Gordon 2005 Napa Valley Merlot

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