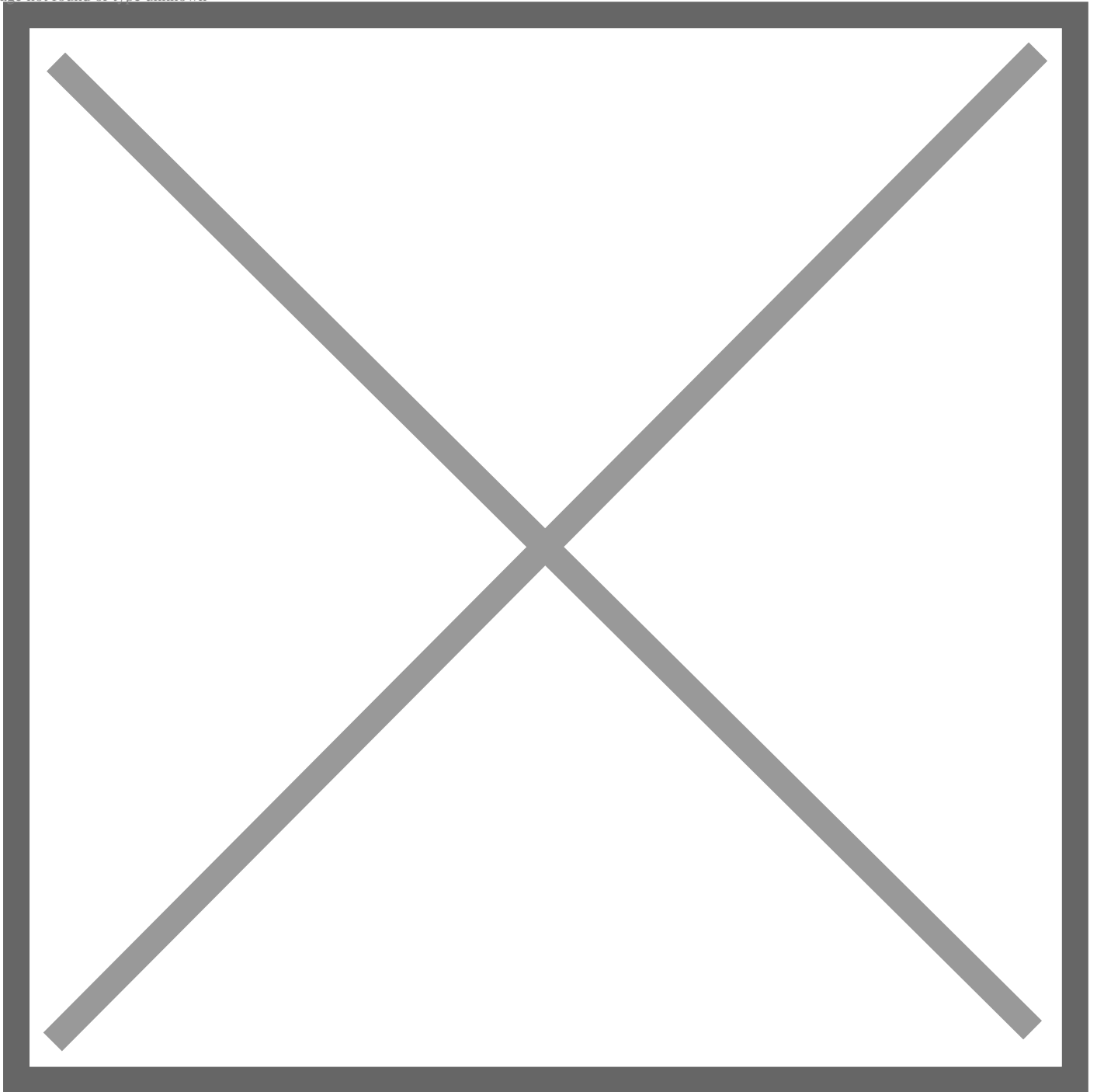


Supra Writes its Name in the NASCAR Record Books

February 25, 2019

Image not found or type unknown



Just two races into the NASCAR season, the Toyota Supra wasted no time leaving its mark as Christopher Bell proved the legendary sports car is a championship contender after winning the NASCAR Xfinity Series race at Atlanta Motor Speedway on Saturday. Later in the day, Kyle Busch also drove a Tundra to victory lane to claim his 52nd career NASCAR Gander Outdoors Truck Series win – a new series all-time record.

Busch also made his 500th Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series start on Sunday where Toyota drivers earned three top-10 results. In Arizona, defending NHRA Funny Car World Champion J.R. Todd finished runner-up.

NASCAR

Martin Truex Jr. was hunting for his first Atlanta Motor Speedway victory on Sunday afternoon. He ran within the top-10 all race and even led four laps (of 325), however he could not run down eventual race winner Brad Keselowski in the closing laps.

“Really proud of the team,” said Truex after the checkered flag flew. “Man, I could taste that one. I really wanted that first Atlanta win. The 17 (Ricky Stenhouse Jr., who was a lap down) rode there in front of us forever running the bottom. I kept telling him I needed the bottom and these cars are just so bad in dirty air that he was holding me up really bad. Once I got around him, I got to the 2 (Brad Keselowski) in two laps, so just needed one more. We had the best car. We probably should have won that one.”

Also earning top-10 finishes at the 1.5-mile oval were Busch in sixth – his 271st top-10 in his 500th Cup race – and Erik Jones was seventh.

Bell dominated Saturday’s NASCAR Xfinity Series race with the Supra, earning its first NASCAR triumph in just its second showing. Bell led 142 laps (of 163) after starting from third.

“That’s really, really big,” said Bell about the Supra’s historical first win. “It all just boils down to the fact that you don’t get to be a first-time winner very often. There’s a very good possibility Kyle (Busch) is going to win one of the next three (races) and I beat him to victory lane. I’m all smiles right now.”

Brandon Jones also earned his second-straight top-five of the year with a fourth-place finish at Atlanta. Jeffrey Earnhardt earned a NASCAR national series career-best result of sixth-place.

In Truck Series action, it was not a matter of if, but when would Busch set the new all-time series win record. Since last summer, he’d been tied with Ron Hornaday Jr. at 51 wins a piece. Busch is limited in the number of supporting races he’s allowed to run as a full-time Cup Series driver, so every time he climbs into a Tundra, all eyes are on him.

He led 92 laps (of 130) en route to his record-setting victory which now gives him the all-time win lead in two NASCAR Series – Trucks and Xfinity.

“It certainly means a lot,” said Busch. “It took getting Billy Ballew back on my truck to be able to get me a win here, so we might have to make that an annual recurrence. I can’t say enough about my guys. Everybody here at Kyle Busch Motorsports, they do a phenomenal job.”

The race was fighting the clock and mother nature as rain rolled through Georgia and halted action for almost 17 minutes. Before the red flag, Harrison Burton was running in second behind Busch but fell to eighth by the checkered flag. Daytona winner Austin Hill finished seventh and Todd Gilliland was ninth.

NHRA

Toyota Camry driver Todd advanced to his seventh final round appearance in the last nine NHRA events before eventually falling to Matt Hagan in Sunday's Funny Car finals at the NHRA Arizona Nationals at Wild Horse Pass Motorsports Park in suburban Phoenix.

In Top Fuel, Antron Brown advanced to the semifinals, while Doug Kalitta sits second in the point standings after reaching the second round.

What's Next

NASCAR heads west to Nevada for another triple-header weekend at Las Vegas Motor Speedway, March 1-3. The NASCAR Gander Outdoors Truck Series race on Friday (March 1) at 9:00 p.m. ET on Fox Sports 1. The NASCAR Xfinity Series competes Saturday at 4:00 p.m. ET on FS1 while the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series is Sunday at 3:30 p.m. ET on FOX. NHRA takes a few weeks off before competing at the Gator Nationals in Gainesville, Florida March 15-17.