

# Busch and Crampton Win Big in NASCAR and NHRA

March 18, 2019



Kyle Busch drove the No. 18 Toyota Camry to his 200<sup>th</sup> NASCAR national series win on Sunday afternoon, visiting victory lane at California's Auto Club Speedway in the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series (MENCs).

Across the country, Toyota driver Richie Crampton won his second-consecutive Gatornationals in Florida, becoming the seventh Top Fuel driver in NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series history to win back-to-back titles at the historic Gainesville Raceway.

## **NASCAR**

Fifteen years after entering full-time NASCAR competition, Busch tallied 200 NASCAR national series wins with a MENCs victory at Auto Club Speedway.

"To get 200 (wins) here today at Auto Club Speedway is pretty cool," Busch said. "I mean, to bookend number one and 200 here at the same place, it's pretty crazy. Just being able to win, it's what it's about."

The all-time winningest driver in Toyota Racing history, Busch has captured 179 of those 200 victories in a

Toyota, including 49 MENCs, 83 NASCAR Xfinity Series (NXS) and 47 NASCAR Gander Outdoors Truck Series (NGOTS) race wins.

Busch swept both stages of the race before a pit road speeding penalty during the Stage 2 break sent him to the back of the field on the restart. The Camry driver rallied to the front, however, leading a combined 134 laps (of 200) to capture his second MENCs win of 2019. He remains the only driver to finish in the top 10 in all five MENCs events this season.

Denny Hamlin (seventh) and Martin Truex Jr. (eighth) also finished in the top 10.

A day earlier, Busch fell just short of the 200 wins mark, finishing runner-up in the NXS race at the two-mile California track.

Busch led 98 laps (of 150) before an uncontrolled tire on pit road sent him to the tail end of the field. With 32 laps remaining in the event, Busch attempted to race back to the front and ultimately finished in the second position.

“Obviously we were able to rebound, but when you have a fast guy out front and a fast guy in second, they run the same times and they stay the same distance apart,” Busch said. “We just weren’t quick enough there at the end to chase them down.”

Fellow Supra drivers Christopher Bell (third) and Brandon Jones (seventh) also scored top-10 finishes.

## **NHRA**

In Gainesville, Florida, Crampton won his second-straight Gatornationals on Sunday with a holeshot effort in Top Fuel. It was his ninth career-series win in 11 final round appearances as Toyota drivers have now won five of the last nine Gatornationals.

Crampton had a 0.016 advantage on the tree and was able to hold on for the win with a margin of victory of just 0.0032 seconds or approximately 18 inches.

“We live and die on our reaction times,” Crampton said. “Coming into the race today, I knew I needed to be on it. The field we have in Top Fuel now is the cream of the crop. You’re winning and losing everything on the starting line and I’m focusing on that. I’m pretty proud of what we accomplished today.”

While Crampton was victorious, it was his Toyota teammate, Doug Kalitta, who retook the series points lead after advancing to the Top Fuel semifinals. He now holds a 42-point advantage over second.

## **IMSA**

In IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship competition, the AIM VASSER SULLIVAN No. 12 Lexus RC F GT3 was the top Lexus entry, finishing ninth in the Twelve Hours of Sebring on Saturday with co-drivers Townsend Bell, Frankie Montecalvo and Aaron Telitz competing in the GTD class.

## **What’s Next**

The MENCs heads back to the East Coast where drivers will compete at Martinsville Speedway during a joint weekend with the NGOTS on March 23 and 24. Tundra drivers return to action on Saturday at 2 p.m. EDT on FOX with the MENCs race on Sunday at 2 p.m. EDT on FS1.

In midget racing action, NXS championship contender Bell returns to Oklahoma for the POWRi Lucas Oil

National Midget League's four-race Turnpike Challenge from March 21 to 24. The challenge kicks off at Creek County Speedway on Thursday.