

Toyota Drivers Victorious in Late-Race Showdowns

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NASCAR

Kyle Busch held off a last lap charge at Chicagoland Speedway to capture his fifth Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series (MENCS) victory in 2018.

“(Kyle) Larson just threw a dart there in Turn 1 and 2 and tried to pull a slide job,” said Busch recounting the final lap. “I don’t think he was close enough. He didn’t get enough clear on me to be able to slide and when he got to me, he throttled up and drove us in the wall and going down the backstretch, I lost all of my momentum. I tried to side-draft him as much as I could to keep him alongside of me. He cleared me and I gave him what he gave me back into Turn 3 and 4 and I was able to come back and get ahead.”

Busch led 59 laps (of 267) to capture his second series win at the 1.5-mile track, making several adjustments with his team on his No. 18 Camry throughout the race to put it in winning contention.

The win was Toyota’s fourth-consecutive MENCs victory at the 1.5-mile track.

Martin Truex Jr. (fourth), Erik Jones (sixth) and Denny Hamlin (seventh) also scored in the top-10.

In the NASCAR Xfinity Series (NXS) at Chicagoland one night prior, Daniel Suárez (fourth) was the highest-finishing Toyota driver in a race won by Kyle Larson. Toyota drivers led a combined 45 laps (of 200) with series regulars Brandon Jones (11th) and Christopher Bell (12th) also finishing in the top-15.

A pass for the lead on the penultimate lap was enough for Tundra driver Brett Moffitt to capture his third NASCAR Camping World Truck Series (NCWTS) victory this season at Chicagoland.

“To be here in victory lane, it’s an honor and a blessing,” Moffitt said. “We didn’t start the race that good tonight. I gave the team one adjustment and we were great. It goes all the way from the bottom up in our shop and we have quality people, a quality pit crew. We’re all passionate and work really hard. That’s all that matters.”

Moffitt led 17 laps (of 150) on the way to his first victory at the 1.5-mile track and now sits third in the series standings.

Polesitter Noah Gragson won stage two before finishing fourth. Brandon Jones (fifth) also finished in the top five.

Sixteen-year-old drivers Derek Kraus and Hailie Deegan also represented Toyota in NASCAR competition this weekend and dueled each other in the final two laps of the NASCAR K&N Pro Series West race at Douglas County Speedway on Saturday night. Kraus held off Deegan to earn his third career-series victory, while Deegan posted a career-best runner-up finish in Oregon.

“Our NAPA Toyota was really good,” Kraus said. “We were able to get out front with a pretty big lead by the middle part of the race. Then we were really good on the restarts there at the end and that was the difference. We were able to avoid spinning our tires and pulled away.”

Kraus continues to sit third in the championship standings with two win and five top-five finishes this season, while teammate Cole Rouse is fourth and Deegan fifth.

ARCA

Toyota’s Michael Self made it 11-consecutive victories for the manufacturer in ARCA Racing Series competition after winning at Chicagoland on Thursday.

Self jumped to the lead on a late restart, taking the leaders three-wide and charging to the front of the field.

"It was pretty easy actually," said Self on going three-wide on the final restart with two laps remaining. "It's just another race when you're strapped in the seat. You can't let yourself get too excited about it. I knew we had fresher tires than the guys in front of me. I just had to stay calm and let it play out."

In addition to Self's win, Toyota drivers swept the top-six finishing positions as Sheldon Creed finished in the runner-up position and continues to lead the point standings.

POWRi

Tucker Klaasmeyer started from the pole and drove to his third win of the 2018 POWRi Lucas Oil National Midget League season at Macon Speedway in Illinois on Saturday night. Klaasmeyer held off a late charge to capture the 20th national midget feature win for a Toyota-powered driver this season.

"We were off for a couple weeks and I was hoping I wasn't rusty," Klaasmeyer said. "Macon was about as good as it ever is. We had a good heat race. It feels good to get number three."

Sunday's POWRi event at Lincoln Speedway was cancelled due to rain.

What's Next

Toyota's NASCAR drivers head to Daytona International Speedway where they will compete in two night races in the upcoming week. The Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series will race on Saturday, July 7 at 7 p.m. ET on NBC while the Xfinity Series will compete the night before on July 6 at 7:30 p.m. on NBCSN.

The ARCA Racing Series heads to Newton, Iowa for a race on July 7 at 8 p.m. on MAVTV and POWRi competition returns for a pair of races starting at Fairbury American Legion Speedway in Illinois on July 7 and ending at Angell Park Speedway in Sun Prairie Wisconsin on July 8.

NHRA caps the weekend at New England Dragway in Epping, New Hampshire on July 8, competing live on FS1 at 1 p.m.