

Toyota Claims Race Wins and Runner-Ups Across the Board

May 14, 2018



Toyota Racing drivers finished second or better in every racing series entered over the weekend – including a pair of wins in both POWRi and NASCAR K&N Pro Series East competition, as well as a triumph in the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series.

NASCAR

Tundra driver Noah Gragson continued his recent run of success by capturing his first Truck Series victory of 2018 at Kansas Speedway on Friday night.

Gragson claimed the win by leading 128 laps (of 167) and won both race stages en route to the checkered flag.

“My Tundra handled perfectly all night,” said Gragson from victory lane. “There at the end, I thought I was going to come out the leader, but I didn’t and there were guys in front of me. Heck of a job by everyone at Safelite AutoGlass, Kyle Busch Motorsports, Switch, Toyota, TRD (Toyota Racing Development) and my mom and dad who make this possible.”

The 19 year old now has top-five results in six-of-10 starts across three NASCAR series in 2018 – the Truck Series, NASCAR K&N Pro Series East and NASCAR Xfinity Series, where Gragson has three top-10 finishes in his first three starts at that level. He ranks second in points in the Truck Series.

In addition to Gragson's finish, his team owner, Kyle Busch, claimed second, while Brandon Jones took ninth for Kyle Busch Motorsports.

In Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series action at Kansas, Camry driver Martin Truex Jr. had the top-finishing Toyota with a second-place result.

Truex led 13 laps (of 267) before finishing runner-up to winner Kevin Harvick on the 1.5-mile track.

“Like three or four [laps] to go, my car just got real tight and I chattered the right front [tire] off of Turn 4 and I was like, ‘Oh boy, that’s not good’,” said Truex. “Overall, just a hell of an effort by everybody on our team. We had to fight hard [after] we were awful at the start of the race. It’s been a good fun night – we definitely overachieved, so that’s always good.”

Camry drivers combined to tally four top-10s in Kansas, with Denny Hamlin (fifth), Erik Jones (seventh) and Busch (10th) all joining Truex in the top-10 overall.

With his finish, Truex moved up to eighth in the point standings, while Busch continues to lead the Cup Series in points.

In the NASCAR K&N Pro Series East, Toyota drivers swept a pair of races at Virginia's South Boston Speedway on Saturday.

Tyler Ankrum and Anthony Alfredo both claimed their first series victories to add to Toyota's winning streak in East competition, as Toyota drivers have now won all five events to start 2018.

Formula DRIFT

Fredric Aasbø guided the 2019 Toyota Corolla Hatchback to its third-straight podium finish to start the year at Road Atlanta on Sunday.

The ‘Norwegian Hammer’ claimed a runner-up result after he was bested in the final matchup by event-winner Kristaps Bluss.

“I am ecstatic to break the curse here at Road Atlanta and beat some heavy hitters,” said Aasbø, who earned mixed results on the road course located north of Atlanta in recent years. “I feel great and I am absolutely worn out.

“Kristaps (Bluss) and I have a history of going all out against each other,” continued the driver from Ski, Norway. “We end up with pushed in doors and scarred race cars. When you get a One More Time against the fastest car and most hungry driver in the sport, you know it's going to be an amazing battle.”

With his result, Aasbø extended his points lead and now has a 43-point advantage over his closest rival.

Aasbø now has finishes of first (Long Beach, California), second (Atlanta) and third (Orlando) to start the year after Papadakis Racing debuted the new Corolla Hatchback for the 2018 season with limited testing.

Toyota 86 driver Ken Gushi joined Aasbø in the Great 8 in Atlanta competition and finished eighth.

POWRi

Toyota-powered drivers extended their win streak to 10 in the POWRi Lucas Oil National Midget League with a pair of victories in Illinois over the weekend.

17-year-old Ryan Robinson won on Friday night at Jacksonville Speedway, while Logan Seavey finished off the sweep at Macon Speedway on Saturday. Toyota drivers have now won 15 of 17 national events this season.

What's Next

The Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series and NASCAR Camping World Truck Series both race at Charlotte Motor Speedway this weekend in events that will be broadcasted live on FS1. The Truck Series competes on the 1.5-mile track on Friday, May 18 at 8:30 p.m. ET before the Cup Series All-Star race takes place on Saturday, May 19 at 6:00 p.m.

In regional NASCAR action, the NASCAR K&N Pro Series West races at California's Orange Show Speedway on Saturday, May 19 in an event that airs on NBCSN on Thursday, May 24 at 6:00 p.m. ET.

The NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series competes at Kansas' Heartland Motorsports Park from Friday to Sunday, May 18-20 with televised coverage on FS1.

The ARCA Racing Series competes at Ohio's Toledo Speedway on Sunday, May 20 with coverage on MAVTV at 2:00 p.m. ET.

The Lucas Oil Off-Road Racing Series competes south of the border at Mexico's Estero Beach Resort on Saturday and Sunday, May 19-20 with streaming coverage available online.

The POWRi Lucas Oil National Midget League races twice in Illinois this weekend with events at Belle-Clair Speedway on Friday, May 18 and Southern Illinois Raceway on Saturday, May 19.