

Toyota Drivers Win Illinois Midget Week, Extend ARCA Streak

June 11, 2018



Logan Seavey captured the Illinois Midget Week championship, while Sheldon Creed extended Toyota's eight-race win streak in the ARCA Racing Series with a victory at Michigan International Speedway over the weekend.

NASCAR

Camry driver Kyle Busch claimed a fourth-place finish as the top-Toyota entry in Sunday's rain-delayed and shortened Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series race at Michigan International Speedway.

After starting from the back of the field following a pre-race inspection issue, Busch raced his way into the top five at the end of Stage 2. Upon the start of the final stage, rain on lap 133 ended the event, solidifying Busch's top-five finish while Denny Hamlin (12th) and Erik Jones (15th) also finished in the top 15.

"I thought we had third and then Kurt (Busch, brother) blew my doors off on the straightaway and we've just got to get better there and try to make it up and be able to put on a fight here later on this year," Busch said after the race.

Busch remains the MENCs point leader heading into the off-weekend, holding a 75-point advantage over second place. The top-five finish was Busch's 10th of the season through 15 races in 2018.

A day prior, Busch was also the highest-finishing Toyota entry, finishing sixth in Saturday's rain-shortened NASCAR Xfinity Series race at Michigan.

Following a three-hour delay due to rain, the race started with Busch taking the lead on the third lap, and staying out front throughout the remainder of the first stage. He restarted the second stage in the lead before falling back to finish sixth after the race ended under inclement conditions on lap 91.

"We had a really good car – car was really fast," Busch said. "Just want to thank M&M's and Maltesers for giving us a chance to run this race and kind of feel out this package, but just wasn't the result we were hoping for. Felt like our car was the fastest car – we could make the most moves – and too many cautions."

Busch's Joe Gibbs Racing teammate Christopher Bell spun early in the event, but battled back from two laps down to finish 11th. He leads all Toyota drivers in the point standings where he remains fifth.

In Fort Worth, Texas, the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series held its first standalone race of the season where rookie Todd Gilliland was the top-finishing Tundra driver in sixth.

Gilliland began the night celebrating his high school graduation during pre-race ceremonies before making his first appearance at the 1.5-mile track. He led a race-high 62 laps (of 167) to capture his third consecutive top-10 finish this season and best in the No. 4 Tundra in 2018.

"We had such a strong Mobil 1 Toyota Tundra tonight and that's what it's about – bringing fast trucks out here, giving me the opportunity," Gilliland said. "They gave me the truck I needed and now we just need to keep working together."

Toyota drivers led a combined 92 laps in the race with Gilliland's Kyle Busch Motorsports teammates Spencer Davis (ninth) and Noah Gragson (tenth) also finishing in the top 10.

In NASCAR K&N Pro Series West action, all three Bill McAnally Racing drivers had strong performances at Colorado National Speedway on Saturday night.

Derek Kraus led the contingent of Camrys with a fourth-place finish while Hailie Deegan (fifth) and Cole Rouse (sixth) finished just behind him.

Sixteen-year-old Kraus remains third in the championships standings.

NHRA

Doug Kalitta advanced to the Top Fuel final in NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series action in front of a packed house at Virginia Motorsports Park outside Richmond before eventually falling to winner Steve Torrence on Sunday afternoon.

"It wasn't the way we wanted to finish the day off, but all in all, it was a great day for the Mac Tools Toyota team," Kalitta said. "We had a great race with Steve (Torrence) in the finals, just fell a little bit short. The whole team's done a great job. We've been to the semi-finals and the finals the last two weeks, now we need to take the next step up."

Kalitta was one of four Toyota drivers to reach the semi-finals. He was joined by Antron Brown and Richie Crampton in Top Fuel, while J.R. Todd advanced to the Funny Car semi-finals. Todd has now advanced to the semi-finals or better in four of the last seven races, including victories at both Las Vegas and Houston.

ARCA

Toyota drivers remain undefeated in the ARCA Racing Series after Sheldon Creed posted his first career-series win at Michigan on Friday night. It was the eighth-consecutive win for Toyota.

"We have been so close to winning these things," Creed said after the race. "It feels so good to finally get it done."

Creed jumped to the lead on lap 37 (of 100) and never relinquished it, taking the checker flag and the championships points lead. Toyota teammates Riley Herbst (second) and Michael Self (third) capped a 1-2-3 finish for the manufacturer.

POWRi

Logan Seavey captured the POWRi Lucas Oil National Midget League's 2018 Illinois Midget Week championship after earning top-five finishes in each of the week's three races, including a victory on Friday at Jacksonville Speedway.

Seavey opened the week with a fifth-place finish at Belle-Clair Speedway on Wednesday, followed by a third-place finish at Fayette County Speedway on Thursday night.

"My Mobil 1 Toyota was fast all week," Seavey said. "The last couple weeks really show how hard the Keith Kunz Motorsports (KKM) team works. I can't thank them enough for all the long hours put in to prepare six to nine cars to go racing every day."

Toyota drivers earned four of the top-six finishing positions during Illinois Midget Week after Seavey's KKM teammate, Spencery Bayson, captured the USAC Indiana Midget Week title last week.

What's Next

Toyota Racing drivers will compete in six racing series in the upcoming week, while the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series will take the weekend off.

The NASCAR Xfinity Series and NASCAR Camping World Truck Series headline NASCAR action this week at Iowa Speedway on Saturday and Sunday, June 16-17. The Xfinity Series will compete on Sunday at 5:00 p.m. ET with live coverage on FS1, while the Camping World Truck Series competes on Saturday at 7:00 p.m.

The ARCA Racing Series heads to Madison International Speedway where drivers will compete on Friday, June 15 at 8:00 p.m. with live coverage on MAVTV.

In NASCAR regional series action, the the NASCAR K&N Pro Series East will race at New Jersey Motorsports Park on Saturday, June 16 with the action tape delayed for broadcast on NBCSN on Monday, June 18.

The NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series competes at Bristol Dragway from Friday to Sunday, June 15-17 with television coverage on FS1.

Lucas Oil Off Road Racing Series returns to action at Crandon International Raceway from Friday, June 15 to Sunday, June 17. The event will be televised on MAVTV at a later date.

