

NASCAR Goes West Delivers Another Tundra Victory

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LAS VEGAS, March 5, 2018 – NASCAR kicked off the first-of-three race weekends in the annual NASCAR Goes West campaign, comprised of Las Vegas, Phoenix and Fontana, California where Toyota drivers picked up one victory and a pair of runner-up results at Las Vegas Motor Speedway over the weekend.

MENCS

Toyota drivers collected two top-five finishes at Las Vegas in the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series (MENCS) race on Sunday with Kyle Busch (second) and Martin Truex Jr. (fourth), but neither could out duel eventual race winner Kevin Harvick.

Busch's second-place finish moved him up six spots in the driver point standings to fifth, just one spot behind fellow Camry driver Truex who is in fourth after the first three races of the year.

“The M&M's Caramel Camry was good and Adam (Stevens, crew chief) and the guys did a great job this weekend,” Busch said, after the race. “We came here and prepared well. They did a good job through practice getting us a great race car. There was no catching that 4 (Kevin Harvick) – he was on rails today and lights out. I don't know what we need to do to catch up and get better like those guys, but certainly we have some work to do especially here at Vegas and some other places we go to maybe we'll get closer. It was a great day for us and we'll go to Phoenix.”

Later this year, NASCAR returns to Las Vegas to kick off the Playoffs, marking the first time the track will host two Cup weekends in the same season.

For Busch, there's gains to be made for the fall race. “Definitely take some notes,” he said. “This was a great run for us. Really fine tuning and figuring out what the race track needs in order to get better.”

Toyota NHRA driver Antron Brown – who often exceeds 330 mph in his Top Fuel dragster – served as pace car driver for Sunday's MENCS race, leading the field to the green in a Toyota Camry.

NXS

Camry driver Christopher Bell kicked off the NASCAR Xfinity Series (NXS) event in Las Vegas by capturing his second-consecutive pole position. The Oklahoma native also earned his second-straight top-five result of the season when he finished second on Saturday.

He battled eventual race winner Kyle Larson in the closing laps. Both drivers have roots in midget car racing and Bell has won the last three most prestigious events that the duo has competed in – the 2017 and 2018 Chili Bowl and 2017 Turkey Night.

Just one race before, Bell earned a third-place result in Atlanta and followed it up in Vegas with a second-place effort.

“Let's hope that means something for Phoenix,” Bell said while discussing the possibility of his current succession of finishes. “I had a really, really good Rheem Camry today and it was a lot of fun to race.”

Brandon Jones (seventh) also earned his second top-10 finish in a Camry this season.

NCWTS

Once again, Busch attempted the triple when he competed in all three NASCAR national series races in his hometown of Las Vegas. Though he came up short of winning all three races, he was victorious in Friday night's NASCAR Camping World Truck Series (NCWTS) race, lengthening his list of racing accomplishments.

Not only did Busch become the first driver to win all three NASCAR national series races at Las Vegas, he has now won at all active NCTWS tracks and he earned his 50th career series triumph, just one shy of the series all-time wins record of 51.

“We’ve raced and won all across the country, but I’ve just never been able to get back to Las Vegas to run a race,” Busch said whose only other NCWTS start at Las Vegas was in 1999. “This one’s pretty cool to be able to win in the hometown and finish my list of Truck Series facilities that I’ve raced at and I’ve won at.”