

Toyota Drivers Advance in the Cup and XFINITY Series Playoffs

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NASCAR

Martin Truex Jr. has left no doubt of his championship intentions as the Camry driver captured his sixth victory of the season at Charlotte Motor Speedway on Sunday, guaranteeing him a spot in the third round of the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series Playoffs.

Toyota drivers have now won all four Playoff races as Martin Truex Jr. (first in points), Denny Hamlin (fifth), Kyle Busch (sixth) and Matt Kenseth (ninth) continue to compete for the championship.

“It’s just amazing to be a part of this team, to be on the roll we’re on, have the confidence we have, have the partners we have,” Truex said. “I just feel like everything is just lining up the way we need it to. We’re definitely working hard. We’re definitely enjoying it. Our guys work so hard, it’s unbelievable. Everybody is all in 100 percent.”

Truex held off fellow Toyota contender Denny Hamlin in a green-white-checkered finish to take home his sixth win of the season after pacing the field for 91 (of 337 laps). Polesitter Hamlin led 45 circuits and finished fourth while fellow Playoff contenders Matt Kenseth and Kyle Busch finished eleventh and 29th, respectively. Busch led 22 laps, competing in the top 10 before an on-track incident on Lap 135 put him six laps down. Rookie Daniel Suárez also brought home a top-10 finish in sixth.

The Cup Series Playoffs continue next weekend at Talladega Superspeedway on Sunday, Oct. 15.

Matt Tifft advanced to the second round of the NASCAR XFINITY Series Playoffs, taking home a ninth-place finish in Saturday’s race at Charlotte Motor Speedway. The Camry driver is eighth in the Playoff standings following top-10 finishes in all three races in round one.

“It’s a great feeling to be in the next round,” Tifft said following the race. “We’ve had a great first round and we’ve come back from a lot of adversity. We’ve just got to keep rolling. Our 19 crew is doing really good right now, so I’m happy with what we’ve been able to overcome lately.”

Cup Series regular Suárez was the top-finishing Toyota at Charlotte, securing an eighth-place result after leading 111 of 200 laps at the 1.5-mile track. Erik Jones finished 30th after leading seven laps and winning the first stage.

The XFINITY Series will take a week off before heading to Kansas Speedway on Saturday, Oct. 21.

Rally

Ryann Millen and co-pilot Rhiannon Gelsomino continued their winning ways at the Prescott Rally on Saturday, earning the overall victory following first-place finishes in Friday and Saturday’s races. The duo held a lead of more than six minutes over the next closest competitor.

Millen and Gelsomino previously captured the American Rally Association’s 2WD class championship earlier this year, going undefeated in all six events.

IMSA

In the final IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship race of the season, both Lexus RC F GT3 entries captured top-10 finishes for 3GT Racing in Saturday’s 10-hour endurance race at Road Atlanta.

The No. 15 Lexus recorded an eighth-place result with Austin Cindric, Jack Hawksworth and Scott Pruett behind the wheel. The trio led the GTD class for five laps while teammates Robert Alon, Sage Karam and Ian James

paced the GTD class for a combined 18 laps in the No. 14 Lexus, finishing 10th at the 2.54-mile road course.