

# Record NASCAR Playoff Win for Toyota's Truex, while Bell and Millen Triumph in XFINITY and Rally

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## **NASCAR**

Camry driver Truex captured another Playoff victory in the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series race at Kansas Speedway on Sunday – marking Truex’s fourth-consecutive victory on 1.5-mile tracks, which sets a new NASCAR record.

Truex started from the pole position and led 91 laps (of 267), but had to overcome multiple setbacks to work his way back to first and take the checkered flag. The victory was his third win of the postseason and his seventh overall triumph in 2017, but also his sixth win on a 1.5-mile track this year – a NASCAR Cup Series single season record.

“Just couldn’t believe some of the things that were happening and thought there was no way that we were going to win the race,” Truex said from victory lane. “That first restart violation really caught me by surprise and that hurt, but that wasn’t the last blow we had to take. There was the loose wheel we had to pit for under green and getting a lap down and being able to stay out through that last stage and get that lap back was crucial. Without that, we didn’t have a shot.”

Once again on the lead lap, Truex used restarts to regain track position before pit road adjustments dialed in the team’s Camry and allowed Truex to race to the front.

The Toyota driver continues to rank first in the point standings and leads two additional Camry drivers – Kyle Busch (second) and Denny Hamlin (sixth) – into the third-and-final, three-race eliminator round of the Playoffs before the Championship 4 race for the title in November. Camry driver Matt Kenseth finished 37th after an accident and did not advance into the Round of 8.

In the NASCAR XFINITY Series event at Kansas, Christopher Bell captured his first-career XFINITY victory in just his fifth-career series start when he used a slide job to take the lead from fellow Joe Gibbs Racing driver Erik Jones in the closing laps.

Bell dove deep into the corner to push ahead of Jones and carried his momentum back up the banking into the high line. While Bell cleared for the lead, Jones was unable to slow his momentum from the top line and impacted Bell from behind. While both were able to drive away, Jones went from second to finishing 15th.

“It’s my first XFINITY win and I’m sorry that Erik (Jones) couldn’t finish the race, but I’m just stoked,” Bell said.

“It’s a dream come true to be able to win in the XFINITY Series,” Bell continued. “Driving for Joe Gibbs Racing is just something that I didn’t even think was a possibility as a kid growing up. I’m really thankful that Toyota and Toyota Racing Development stayed with me throughout the years and I was able to get them their first USAC National Midget Championship and from there they’ve had faith in me.”

In the NXS Playoff mix, Toyota’s Matt Tifft opened the Round of 8 with an eighth-place finish to jump to fifth in the series point standings. Despite starting from the rear of the pack, Tifft raced through the field to record his fifth-consecutive top-10 result.

“I think we’re five points behind the cut line,” Tifft said. “I know for the next few guys up there, we finished fourth out of the Playoff cars, but we didn’t do very well with the stage points so that’s the next big thing for Texas is to get the stage points back up for sure.”

The Cup and NASCAR Camping World Truck Series race at Virginia’s Martinsville Speedway from Friday to

Sunday, Oct. 27-29, while the XFINITY Series joins for a triple header race weekend at Texas Motor Speedway in November.

### **Rally**

Ryan Millen and Rhianon Gelsomino piloted the Rally RAV4 to a first-place showing in the 2WD class and third overall in the Lake Superior Performance Rally in Michigan on Saturday.

The two-day event was sanctioned by Rally America, one of three series the duo competed in during the 2017 season. The Toyota team took 2WD class victories in all six events of the inaugural American Rally Association season to claim the 2WD championship, and recently won the Prescott Rally in Arizona to garner the NASA Rally Sport National Championship for the third year in a row.

### **LOORRS**

Toyota's Eric Barron finished 10th in Lucas Oil Off-Road Racing Series action at Arizona's World Horse Pass Motorsports Park on Saturday.

### **USAC/POWRI**

The Jason Leffler Memorial race at Wayne County (Illinois) Speedway, a midget racing event featuring combined fields from both USAC and POWRI competitors, was cancelled due to inclement weather.