

Toyota Home Race with NASCAR Playoffs Coming to Texas

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With just Toyota's NASCAR drivers scheduled to compete during the upcoming race weekend, the NASCAR tripleheader weekend will serve as a home event for Toyota drivers after they visited their manufacturer's North America headquarters in Texas prior to the race weekend.

NASCAR

All three NASCAR national series will compete at Texas Motor Speedway this weekend where Toyota drivers have combined for 32 wins across all series. The Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series visits the track as Toyota drivers have won six-of-seven Playoff races so far in the postseason.

Camry driver Kyle Busch is now locked into the Championship 4 after a victory last weekend at Martinsville Speedway, while Martin Truex Jr. ranks first in points and fellow Toyota driver Denny Hamlin sits seventh entering Texas, one of Toyota's winningest tracks. In the Cup Series, Toyota drivers have won five times at Texas, including two victories by Hamlin in 2010.

"Our number one goal continues to be to win," said Hamlin. "At this point, that's our only guaranteed shot of making it into the Championship 4 [for the season finale]. We have had success in the past at Texas and

hopefully we can repeat that this weekend.”

Busch also has two Toyota wins at Texas (2013-1, 2016-1), and enters the Toyota home race with momentum after claiming three-of-his-five 2017 wins in the Playoffs.

“Anytime anyone automatically punches their ticket through, that gives them a breather and an opportunity to work on Homestead and what you need to focus on for that race,” said Busch. “We’ll just keep racing hard and try and keep winning the next two weeks even though the pressure is off and see what we can do at Homestead.”

The Texas race is the third-to-last event of 2017, giving Cup drivers two more races to win or finish high enough in points to qualify for the Championship 4, the field of four drivers eligible to compete for the driver’s championship in the season finale in Homestead-Miami Speedway in November.

The NASCAR Cup Series races at Texas on Sunday, Nov. 5 at 2:00 p.m. ET with live coverage on NBCSN.

In the NASCAR XFINITY Series, Camry driver Matt Tifft is contending to qualify for the Championship 4 and comes to Texas’s 1.5-mile track ranked fifth in the standings – just five points behind the fourth-place driver.

“It is going to be important that we keep our focus going into Texas,” said Tifft, who has two best finishes of ninth in three races at Texas. “We came away with a solid finish last race, but we need to make sure that we are getting stage points and getting up to the front faster.”

Tifft is the only Camry driver competing in the XFINITIY Series Playoffs.

In the XFINITY Series, Camry drivers have 10 wins at Texas, including a victory by Cup Series rookie Erik Jones earlier this year. Jones will pilot the No. 20 Camry for Joe Gibbs Racing at Texas, while Christopher Bell will make his sixth-career XFINITY start after winning his first race in his fifth Series start.

The XFINITY Series competes at Texas on Saturday, Nov. 4 at 8:30 p.m. ET with the action televised live on NBCSN.

Racing in the state where the Toyota Tundra and Toyota Tacoma are built, Tundra drivers have amassed 17 victories on the Texas track, including two by Playoff contender Matt Crafton (2014-1 and 2015-1) and a triumph earlier this year by points leader Christopher Bell.

In addition to Bell and Crafton, Tundra driver Ben Rhodes ranks fourth in the Round of 8 playoff standings and is in contention to qualify for the Truck Series’ Championship 4.

The Truck Series race will be held on Friday, Nov. 3 at 8:00 p.m. ET with the race broadcasted live on FS1.

While the NASCAR national series compete in Texas, Toyota drivers will contend for the NASCAR K&N Pro Series West championship at California’s Kern County Speedway on Saturday.

Todd Gilliland has an 11-point lead over fellow Toyota title contender Chris Eggleston entering the season finale in Bakersfield, California. Gilliland, the 2016 West champion, has two-career wins at Kern in two starts at the track after starting each event from the pole. A third win at the California track would secure another title for the third generation NASCAR driver.

The Pro Series West race at Kern will take place on Saturday, Nov. 4 and the race will be tape delayed for broadcast on NBCSN on Friday, Nov. 10 at 3:30 p.m. ET.

Prior to competing at Texas, more than 40 Toyota and Lexus Racing drivers from NASCAR and other racing series visited Toyota Motor North America (TMNA) headquarters in Plano for Motorsports Day on Thursday, Nov. 2.