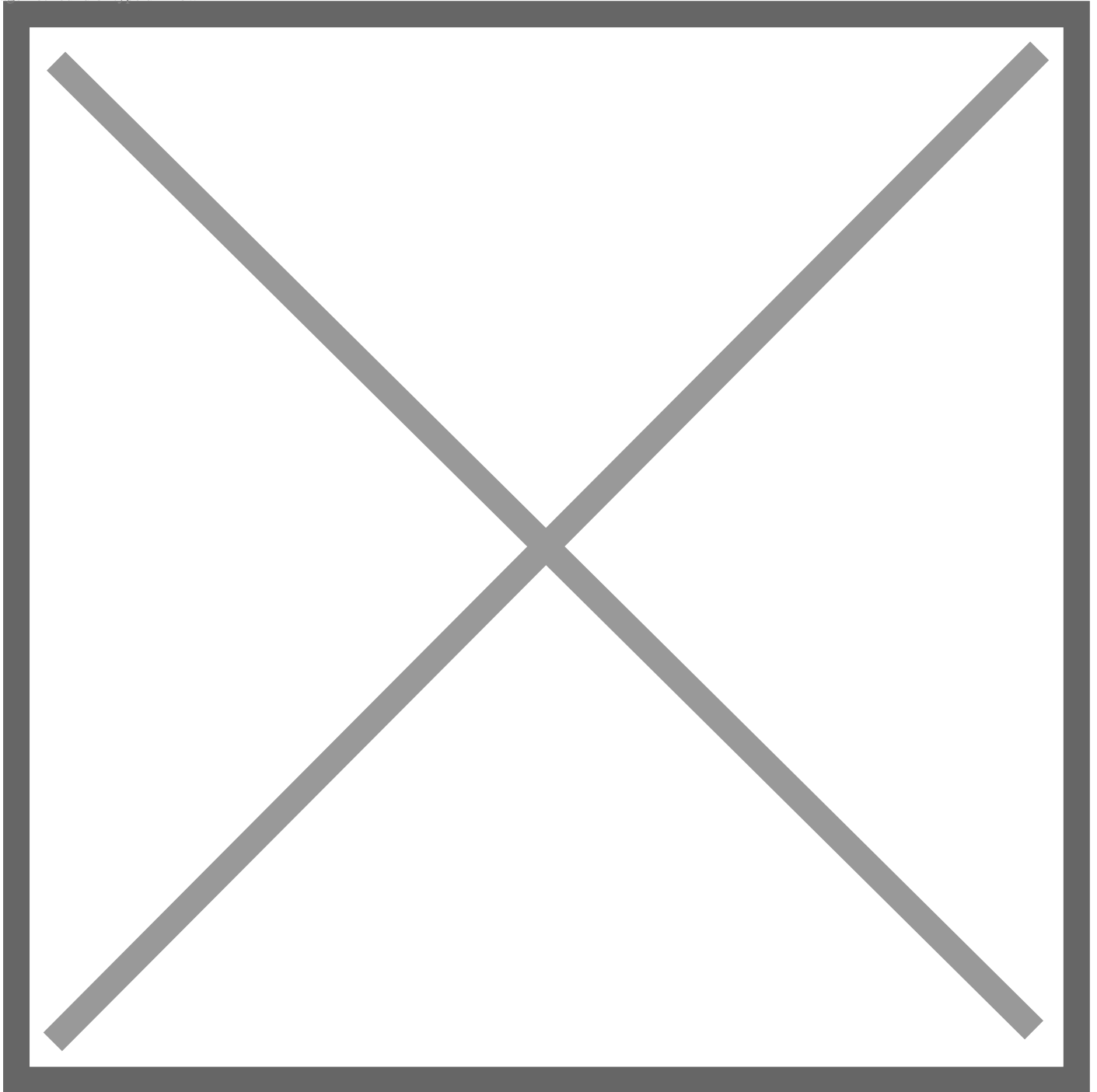


# Titles to be Decided in NASCAR, USAC

November 17, 2017

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## **NASCAR**

HOMESTEAD, Fla., Nov.17, 2017—A pair of Camry drivers are set to compete in the MENCS Championship 4, the field of four drivers competing to win the driver's championship. Kyle Busch and Martin Truex Jr. enter

the finale on the momentum of Toyota winning seven-of-nine Playoff races leading to Homestead.

“If I am the favorite, perfect, I like that,” Truex said, the regular season champion who won three Playoff races leading to this weekend’s finale. “I think it’s a better position to be in. I was the underdog before and finished fourth, so yeah, bring it on.”

“I feel we’re in a whole lot better spot as a team than we were the first time we had a shot at it (2015),” Truex continued. “I have a lot of confidence in our team right now and what we’re doing.”

Truex and Busch, the 2015 Cup Series champion, both won three races in the Playoffs, but for all four Championship 4 contenders – including competitors Brad Keselowski and Kevin Harvick – points no longer matter, meaning the highest finisher of the group in Sunday’s race wins the title.

“It’s all reset to zero—there are four of us who go for winner-take-all at Homestead,” Busch said. “Adam (Stevens, crew chief) and the guys had great race cars for me all season long, but we were able to turn those good cars into wins the second half of the year and we’re hoping for one more this weekend. That’s what it’s likely going to take to win the championship.”

In addition to deciding the championship, the race will also be the final event for Matt Kenseth with Joe Gibbs Racing as the veteran driver and 2003 Cup Series champion steps away from racing. Kenseth, who won last weekend in Phoenix, has the third-most career Cup wins in a Camry with 15.

“I’m honestly just approaching this weekend like I would any other race weekend,” Kenseth said. “The win last weekend was really neat and felt like a first win in a lot of ways, but I always go into every weekend just trying to put ourselves in the best position that we can. Homestead is a fun place to crown a champion every year and it’s always a place that puts on a great race.”

In addition to the driver’s title, Toyota currently leads the MENCS manufacturer’s championship standings by 31 points and needs a Camry to finish just 28th or better in Sunday’s race at Homestead-Miami Speedway to earn its second-consecutive OEM title.

If Toyota can capture both the driver’s and manufacturer’s championships, it would mark the second time Toyota has won each Cup Series title. Busch won his and Toyota’s first driver’s title in 2015 and Toyota won the manufacturer’s championship in 2016.

The NASCAR Cup Series competes at Homestead on Sunday, Nov. 19 with the racing broadcast live on NBC at 3:00 p.m. ET.

In the NXS, the No. 18 and No. 20 Joe Gibbs Racing Camrys are both eligible to win the XFINITY owner’s championship at Homestead on Saturday. Ryan Preece will make his third NXS start of the season in the No. 18 Camry after winning his first-career race with the team earlier this year at Iowa Speedway. Bell will drive the No. 20 Camry and won in the NXS at Kansas last month in just his fifth series start.

In addition to the No. 4 (Christopher Bell) and No. 88 (Matt Crafton) Tundras, KMB’s No. 51 Tundra driver by Myatt Snider is also competing for an NCWTS owner’s championship in south Florida.

The NXS will compete at Homestead on Saturday, Nov. 18 with television coverage on NBCSN at 3:30 p.m. ET.

While Toyota will clinch the Truck Series manufacturer's title when a Tundra takes the green flag in Homestead, two Tundra drivers will race to the checkers to decide the NCWTS driver's championship.

Up-and-comer Bell and two-time champion Crafton will both pilot Tundras in the Championship 4 for the NCWTS driver's title in Friday night's race at Homestead. While Bell has been the points leader and front runner most the season with a series-high five wins, the 22-year-old Tundra driver will now contest a one-race, winner-take-all championship with Crafton (2013-14 champion) and defending-champ Johnny Sauter, as well as 19-year-old Austin Cindric.

"To be able to make it to the Championship 4 two years in a row and have another shot to bring home a championship for Kyle Busch Motorsports (KBM) is something I'm really proud of," Bell said, who will move to the NASCAR XFINITY Series (NXS) in 2018. "It will be kind of a bittersweet weekend for me – it's the end of a long run at KBM. Winning a championship on Friday night for everyone at KBM, Toyota, Toyota Racing Development and JBL – all the people that have helped me be in the position I am – would be a great way to end this chapter of my career."

Bell advanced to the Championship 4 in 2016 and finished eighth in last year's season-finale, as did Crafton who took seventh, while Sauter claimed third place to win the title.

In the NCWTS manufacturer's championship standings, Toyota holds a 36-point advantage and will clinch its 10th title in 14 seasons when the first Tundra takes the green flag in Friday night's race.

The NCWTS runs Friday, Nov. 17 at Homestead and will be televised live on FS1 at 8:00 p.m. ET.

## **USAC**

Toyota driver Spencer Bayston will try to clinch his first USAC National Midget championship this weekend as the series heads to California's Bakersfield Speedway for the penultimate round of the championship.

Bayston currently holds a 66-point lead over fellow Toyota driver Brady Bacon.