

Camry Driver Martin Truex Jr. Wins NASCAR Cup Series Driver's Championship

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HOMESTEAD, Fla. (Nov. 19, 2017) – Toyota Camry driver Martin Truex Jr. won the 2017 Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series (MENCS) driver's championship with a victory in the season finale at Homestead-Miami speedway Sunday evening. Truex led 78 laps in the finale to take the checkered flag on the 1.5-mile track to win his first MENCS title.

This is the second MENCS driver's championship for Toyota after Kyle Busch won the manufacturer's first Cup title in 2015. Busch, who was also part of the Championship 4 field contending for the title, finished second after leading 43 laps at Homestead to finish second in the MENCS championship point standings.

"I can't believe we got the lead; I can't believe we kept it," Truex said after the race. "We weren't the best car all day long. We fought it. Cole (Pearn, crew chief) had some great pit strategy and the caution came at the right time to get us the lead and they put it in my hands and I had to hang onto it.

"It's just overwhelming," Truex added. "To think about all the rough days and bad days, the days that we couldn't run 20th, to be here, I never thought this day would come and to be here is unbelievable."

Truex's victory also secured Toyota's second-straight MENCS manufacturer's championship as four Camry drivers captured 16 victories this season and four Toyotas advanced to the playoffs. The new 2018 Toyota Camry, which debuted during the 2017 season, led a series-best 5,757 laps — the most for Toyota in a single Cup season.

Earlier in the weekend Tundra driver Christopher Bell won the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series (NCWTS) driver's championship behind a second-place finish in the season finale at Homestead-Miami Speedway.

"Christopher (Bell) obviously has incredible talent, but he had a steep learning curve when he got to the Truck Series," said David Wilson, president of TRD, U.S.A (Toyota Racing Development). "It has been fun watching him learn, grow and develop over two seasons into a NASCAR champion. I think some of NASCAR's best racing is in the Truck Series and to be a champion in that series at 22 years old really speaks to the potential Christopher has demonstrated. We can't wait for Christopher's next chapter."

"To be standing here as a NASCAR champion is something I would say I dreamed of, but I didn't ever think it was a possibility, so I didn't ever really dream of it," said Bell from victory lane. "I'm just really speechless."

Toyota also captured the NCWTS manufacturer's championship at Homestead-Miami Speedway, marking the manufacturer's fifth-consecutive title and the 10th in 14 seasons competing with the Tundra.

Tundra drivers won 12-of-23 races in 2017, leading 2,041 laps – both more than 50 percent of the races and laps contested.

"Toyota is fortunate to have a great group of Camry and Tundra drivers, as well as tremendous team partners, that allow us to have success on the race track and win accolades like the Cup and Truck manufacturer's championships," said Keith Dahl, motorsports general manager for Toyota Motor North America (TMNA). "To be able to win the Cup title in the first season racing the new 2018 Toyota Camry is truly remarkable and displays the effort TRD and Caltex Design put into preparing this championship-winning Camry."

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