

Off-Road Success and Sporty Debut for Toyota Racing Over Weekend

August 14, 2017



NASCAR

Toyota NASCAR drivers recorded a pair of runner-up results at Michigan International Speedway over the weekend, while Chris Eggleston won in NASCAR K&N Pro Series West (NKNPSW) action to tighten a point's race between Toyota teammates.

Martin Truex Jr. finished second with the top-Toyota entry in Sunday's Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series (MENCS) contest at Michigan International Speedway, while Michigan native Erik Jones finished third to tie the best result of his rookie Cup season.

After leading 57 laps (of 202) and winning the race's second stage, Truex was first and positioned to contend for the win as the Cup race extended into overtime, but Kyle Larson jumped to the lead on the final restart and the Camry driver finished second.

"I just tried to do something a little different there with (Kyle) Larson behind me, but when he hit me I went and I spun the tires," Truex, of the final restart in overtime, explained. "Just spun them a bit and he got a run and I just went into one and spun the tires because they were so cold.

“I’m proud of everybody on the team,” Truex continued. “They did a great job today and we had a really fast race car again. Proud of that and I hate I didn’t get it done for those guys and all our fans out there, but all in all it’s a good day. Michigan has just been tough. We’ve been fast here. We just can’t get that ‘W,’ but we’re fast here and we’ll learn from it.”

Byron, Michigan-native Jones led five laps en route to his third-place result, while Camry drivers Kyle Busch (10th) and Denny Hamlin (16th) led 14 and 16 laps, respectively.

In Saturday’s NASCAR Camping World Truck Series (NCWTS) race at the two-mile track, Tundra drivers Christopher Bell, Kyle Busch and Ryan Truex finished second, third and fourth, respectively, in an event won by former Tundra driver Darrell Wallace Jr.

“It didn’t seem like me or Kyle (Busch) could really do anything without someone pushing behind us,” Bell said after the race. “When I took the lead there off of (Turn) 2, I felt like I was in pretty good shape. Instead of Bubba (Darrell Wallace Jr.) helping me, he took the lead himself. It’s really cool to see him come away and win like that. It was a really fun race – just bummed and frustrated that we didn’t get it done.”

Busch led a race-high 47 laps (of 100) en-route to his third-place finish, but a cut tire forced him to the rear of the field before coming back for the top-five finish.

Two-time Truck Series champion and pole sitter Matt Crafton led 10 laps in his Tundra before finishing sixth.

The NASCAR XFINITY Series (NXS) competed at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course where Matt Tifft recorded a career-best finish of third in his home state on Saturday.

The Ohio native dealt with a stuck tachometer from the start of the 75-lap race, but overcame the issue to tally his sixth top-10 result of 2017.

Tifft was joined in the top-five by James Davison, who finished fourth in his first race in a Joe Gibbs Racing Camry. The fourth-place finish came in just the 30-year-old Australian’s second-career XFINITY race after competing in IndyCar, IMSA and GRAND-AM, among other series in his career.

Toyota’s Chris Eggleston led every lap to win his fourth NKNPSW race of the year at Washington’s Evergreen Speedway on Sunday to tighten the championship points battle to just six marks.

Eggleston faced an overtime challenge from Will Rodgers, but held position to triumph in the 154-lap race. The victory helped close the gap on his Toyota teammate Todd Gilliland (eighth), who now has a six-point advantage in the standings with four races remaining on the schedule.

The MENCS, NXS and NCWTS race at Tennessee’s Bristol Motor Speedway this week with Truck Series action beginning the race week on Wednesday, Aug. 16.

PWC

Veteran road racer Craig Stanton piloted the TMG 86 Cup Car to TCA class finishes of third and fourth in Saturday’s Pirelli World Challenge (PWC) action at Utah Motorsports Campus, marking the debut for the TMG-built Toyota 86 in North America.

After starting fourth, Stanton moved up to second before finishing third in class in the day’s first TC/TCA/TCB

class race to give the TMG 86 Cup Car a podium finish in its North American debut. The former GRAND-AM champion then finished fourth in the afternoon's second race.

"I'm so proud to [podium] for the culture and the lineage of 86 and Toyota and all that goes along with the Toyota 86," Stanton said after finishing third. "It's not just a cool car, but it's a cool lineage and a community. Just so many people that I don't even know that have wished me luck and congratulated me. The podium is so sweet."

The TMG 86 Cup Car is a Toyota 86 prepped for customer racing by Toyota Motorsports GmbH in Germany that competes in the GT86 Cup, part of the VLN racing series in Germany, as well as other series. The PWC entry by DG-Spec Racing marked the North American debut for the TMG 86 in a one-race effort to promote the Toyota 86 and TMG 86 Cup Car as a customer racing option for PWC and in other efforts.

Stanton and DG-Spec previously won the 2016 One Lap of America in a Sienna R-Tuned and the racer also worked with Toyota to help former NASCAR driver Carl Edwards set the land speed record for an SUV in the Land Speed Cruiser at 230.02 mph in 2017.

The TMG 86 Cup Car is not currently scheduled to compete in any additional events.

USAC

Toyota's Tanner Thorson finished second, while teammate Spencer Bayston was third in the opening race of the USAC National Midget Series' 'Pennsylvania Midget Week' at Susquehanna Speedway on Sunday.

The 18-year-old Bayston leads the championship hunt with seven races remaining this season.

Pennsylvania Midget Week continues at Path Valley Speedway Park on Monday Aug. 14, followed by two additional nights of racing this week.

TORC

CJ Greaves used a last-lap pass to drive his Toyota Tundra to victory in TORC: The Off-Road Championship action at the RedBud MX race track in Michigan for his fifth PRO 4 victory of the 2017 season.

The Tundra win was the ninth in ten races this year for the father-and-son team of CJ and Johnny Graves. With the victory, CJ climbs back into a tie for the series point lead with his father with five races remaining this season.

TORC next races at Wisconsin's Crandon International Off-Road Raceway in September.