

# Three Triumphs by Toyota Drivers

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**PLANO, Texas (July 29, 2019)** – Toyota drivers collected victories over the weekend – including two stock car triumphs in Pennsylvania and a midget car trophy in Illinois.

## **NASCAR**

Denny Hamlin took his third trip of the season to victory lane in Sunday's Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series race at Pennsylvania's Pocono Raceway. In a race decided in overtime, Hamlin's team gambled on fuel strategy to bring home his fifth Pocono triumph – the most among active drivers at the 2.5-mile triangular track.

“You just want to know that you're a race winner,” said Hamlin. “You want to know that you can contend for wins. Yeah, you're looking for momentum, but you're just looking for wins week in, week out. I tell you, we really fought for it last week and came up short. Feels good to redeem ourselves this week and have such a strong car.”

This was the fifth straight Pocono victory by a Camry driver.

Hamlin's Camry teammates Erik Jones (second) and Martin Truex Jr. (third) followed him to the checkered flag to give Toyota their seventh top-three sweep in the manufacturer's history. Jones' runner-up result enabled him to move up one spot in the driver point standings and within reach of earning a Playoff spot based solely on points.

Christopher Bell finished runner-up in Saturday's NASCAR Xfinity Series race at Iowa Speedway. It was his seventh result of second or better this year.

“That was tough,” said Bell. “To be able to hold him (Chase Briscoe) off as long as I did, and not win the race stings. This Rheem Supra was super, super fast today. He won the race and we had a great race car, so there's nothing to hang our hat on.”

After starting first, leading a race-high 234 laps (of 250), and winning both of the race's stages, Bell eventually fell to race winner, Chase Briscoe, who had fresher tires and took the lead in the closing laps.

In just their sixth start, H2 Motorsports, with driver Shane Lee, scored their first-ever top-10 result as Lee crossed the line in seventh.

Three young Toyota racers finished in the top five in Saturday's NASCAR Gander Outdoors Truck Series race at Pocono Raceway. Tyler Ankrum (second), Harrison Burton (third) and Christian Eckes (fourth) finished behind race winner, Ross Chastain.

This ties Burton's career-best finish, which he has now earned six times in his short Truck Series career, including four third-place appearances this season.

“I just ran out of time there in the end,” said Burton. “It's frustrating. There are guys that had good strategy. We were cutting it close on fuel. I knew they were riding around there a little bit. I thought maybe I could get to them, so I was driving as hard as I could there at the end, but it just didn't come our way.”

## **NHRA**

Antron Brown advanced to the NHRA Top Fuel semifinals to lead Toyota at the Sonoma Nationals. With his first-round victory, Brown became just the sixth driver in NHRA history to reach 500 round wins in Top Fuel.

“It's pretty cool to have your name in the company of the drivers that have accomplished that,” relayed Brown. “It doesn't get any better. Just to be up there with all the people that I've looked up to and raced against. It feels good to be a part of that crew. But my career's not over by a long shot. I still have a lot of fight in me.”

The three-time World Champion has now moved up into a tie for second in the Top Fuel point standings.

## **ARCA**

Christian Eckes earned his second ARCA Menards Series victory of the season in Friday's race at Pocono. It was the 12th victory by a Toyota driver this season. With the win, Eckes also closed in on points leader and Toyota teammate, Michael Self.

"We need to be perfect from here on out," said Eckes. "We were perfect here today and we need to be perfect every week from here on out. I've won at three of the five tracks and my crew chief, Kevin Reed, has won at all five of them so I am confident we can make a run at it."

Prior to the green flag, Toyota secured its third-consecutive manufacturer's title in the series on the strength of 11 wins in the first 14 events. The manufacturer has four ARCA titles overall.

## **NKNPSE/NKNPSW**

Toyota drivers swept six of the top-seven positions – second through seventh – in the NASCAR K&N Pro Series East and West combined event that was won by Sam Mayer at Iowa Speedway on Friday.

## **POWRi**

Tyler Thomas led a one-two-three Toyota finish on Friday night in Belleville, Illinois, and followed up with a second-place showing on Saturday as the top finishing Toyota at Macon Speedway. Jesse Colwell continues to lead the championship, with fellow Toyota driver, Zach Daum, in second.

## **What's Next**

The Truck Series kicks things off at the dirt track of Eldora Speedway on Thursday, August 1 at 9 p.m. EDT on Fox Sports 1.

The NASCAR Cup Series and Xfinity Series go road racing at New York's Watkins Glen International. The Cup Series race takes place on Sunday, August 4 at 3 p.m. EDT on NBCSN while the Xfinity Series competes Saturday, August 3 at 3 p.m. EDT on NBC.

NHRA closes out its West Coast swing just outside of Seattle, Washington, at Pacific Raceways where the finals will air on FOX on Sunday, August 4 at 4 p.m. EDT.