

Successful Racing Weekend for Toyota Across the Country

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PLANO, Texas (September 16, 2019) – Five Toyota drivers claimed wins this weekend as Martin Truex Jr., Austin Hill, Richie Crampton, Ty Gibbs and Logan Seavey each added another victory to outstanding season-long performances.

NASCAR

Martin Truex Jr. scored his series-leading fifth NASCAR Cup Series win of the season on Sunday evening at Las Vegas Motor Speedway.

Truex started from 24th, but moved inside the top 10 before the end of the first stage. He recovered from a problematic pit stop and drove from 18th to win the second stage. However, it would not be easy from there, as Truex was passed for the lead shortly after the beginning of the final stage.

Before the final pit stop, Truex started to gain on then-leader, Kevin Harvick. He told his crew chief, Cole Pearn, that if he tightened him up, he would have a shot at the win. Pearn did just that and Truex drove by Harvick with 20 laps to go to score the victory.

“Biggest thing is just more Playoff points,” said Truex. “These next two weeks, we can try to get even more of those. That’s huge. Any Playoff points you get are going to help you get to Homestead. This package has been so tricky to figure out, you never know. Cole Pearn (crew chief) and the guys worked really hard this week to come here with something different. We took a bit of a gamble, but it worked out.”

It was the 14th win of the year for Joe Gibbs Racing and Toyota in 27 events this season.

Christopher Bell had a dominant Supra in Saturday evening’s NASCAR Xfinity Series race at Las Vegas Motor Speedway as he led 154 of 200 laps and won both stages. However, Bell was forced to settle for second after race-winner, Tyler Reddick, stretched his fuel mileage for the final 70 laps.

“It’s the second time this year that we got beat by circumstances,” said Bell. “At Iowa, we put on our tires when we needed to, and some guys banked on a yellow coming out later and they got it and they beat us. In Vegas, they just kind of did the opposite of us and won the race. Very, very disappointing. Obviously, I’m really happy with how our Rheem Supra was – it was really fast. That’s a good sign.”

Teammate, Brandon Jones, tied his season-best third-place finish, and Riley Herbst earned his third top-10 result in his ninth career start. Both Bell and Jones begin their Playoff runs at Richmond Raceway next Friday.

On Friday, Austin Hill drove from the back of the field to the lead with 12 laps to go to earn his third NASCAR Gander Outdoors Truck Series win of the season at Las Vegas Motor Speedway. Hill scored his first Playoff win to clinch his spot in the Round of 6 and the second overall season in the next round.

“This is the hardest one I’ve had to win,” said Hill. “We were going to stay out that last caution and we stayed out and everybody else pitted. We came down pit road, restarted at the tail end of the longest line and it stayed green. I had to drive all the way through the field and this truck was unbelievable. HRE (Hattori Racing Enterprises), Scott (Zipadelli, crew chief) and the boys gave me a heck of a piece. We wouldn’t have won this race without them. We’re two-for-two with this truck so we’re going to try to go three-for-three with it.”

Christian Eckes scored a career-best third-place finish in his ninth career start, while Kyle Busch Motorsports placed three trucks inside the top-10 finishers. Tyler Ankrum finished 11th and will join Hill in the Round of 6 as he claimed the last spot in the Playoff field by two points.

NHRA

In the first race of the NHRA Countdown to the Championship, Kalitta Motorsports was the team to beat in Top Fuel as both Doug Kalitta and Richie Crampton advanced to the final round. It was the first time Kalitta Motorsports teammates swept the final round since 2017, but this time, Crampton drove to victory. It was Crampton's first win at Maple Grove Raceway, second win of the season and 10th of his career. He moved up to fifth in the standings, while Kalitta took back the points lead with five races remaining in the the season.

"It's a huge win for us. I'm so lucky to be a part of this team," said Crampton. "I hated to race my teammate, Doug Kalitta, in the final and win, but it was a great day for the whole team. We had three real strong runs to close out qualifying (including a 3.689), so we knew we had a car that could contend. Then we had another strong run in round one and made another solid pass in the second round. In the finals, we had a pretty good light and made a really good pass to beat a great driver and team. It's just so important to get round wins and try to run for a championship. We've shown we have a car capable of competing for a championship. Now we just need to keep digging in these last five races."

In Funny Car, reigning champion, J.R. Todd, had a strong start to the Countdown to the Championship as he advanced to the semi-finals.

FORMULA DRIFT

On a day that Toyota clinched its sixth-straight Formula DRIFT manufacturer's championship, both Fredric Aasbø and Ryan Tuerck bounced back from tough qualifying rounds to score top-10 finishes at Texas Motor Speedway. Aasbø remains in the running for the driver's championship as he sits 19 points outside of the championship lead with one race remaining at Irwindale Speedway in October.

ARCA

Ty Gibbs dominated at Salem Speedway on Saturday evening – scoring the pole and leading all but four laps – to earn his second-career ARCA Menards Series win. With a second-place result, Christian Eckes closed to within five points of the championship points lead with two races to go after teammate, Michael Self, suffered mechanical problems.

POWRi

Logan Seavey earned his 10th win of the season on Saturday evening at Macon Speedway in Illinois to become the second driver in series history to record double-digit wins in a single season. Seavey took the lead on lap nine of the 30-lap feature and never looked back. Teammate, Jesse Colwell, continues to lead the season-long standings after a sixth-place finish.

What's Next

The NASCAR Cup Series and the NASCAR Xfinity Series head to their second stop of the season at Richmond Raceway. The Xfinity Series starts its Playoff run on Friday, September 20 at 7:30 p.m. EDT, while the Cup Series closes the weekend on Saturday evening, September 21 at 7:30 p.m. EDT. Both races are on NBCSN.

The NASCAR K&N Pro Series East has their second-to-last race of the season at New Hampshire Motor Speedway on Saturday. The tape-delay coverage airs on NBCSN on Wednesday, September 25 at 6 p.m. EDT.