

Toyota Drivers Victorious Across Multiple Series

October 21, 2019



PLANO, Texas (October 21, 2019) – Toyota drivers won in NASCAR, ARCA, Formula DRIFT, USAC and POWRi over the weekend to extend their championship runs, and Christian Eckes captured the ARCA Menards Series title with a victory on Friday.

NASCAR

Denny Hamlin earned his fifth win of the season in Sunday’s Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series elimination race at Kansas Speedway. The win is the 16th of the season for Toyota and Joe Gibbs Racing (JGR), tying the most Cup Series wins in a single season for Toyota (2016 and 2017) and the most ever for JGR in the same year.

Hamlin led a race-high 153 laps (of 277) on Sunday, holding onto the lead with multiple late-race cautions that sent the race into overtime.

“I knew track position was the biggest factor for us,” said Hamlin. “I love where we are at, no doubt about it. I cannot wait to get to Martinsville. This week was just supposed to be a fun week for us, kind of check things out and make sure that we are good once we get down the road as we get to other tracks and I’m pretty happy about where we are at.”

Hamlin, along with fellow JGR drivers, Kyle Busch and Martin Truex Jr., advanced in the Playoffs to the Round of 8, which begins at Martinsville Speedway on Sunday. Busch finished third at Kansas, while Truex (sixth) and Erik Jones (seventh) rounded out the top 10 for Toyota.

Brandon Jones earned his first career NASCAR Xfinity Series (NXS) win on Saturday afternoon at Kansas Speedway. Jones led the final 10 laps of the race en route to victory lane in his Toyota Supra.

“This is incredible,” said Jones. “I knew this was going to happen – that we were going to come here and have an amazing run like we did today. It’s only because of my guys. They have fought with me for a long time, and this feels way better because it has been tough to get to this point.”

Christopher Bell was involved in a late-race accident while racing for the lead and finished 12th. Bell continues to lead the championship standings with three NXS races remaining this season.

ARCA

Eckes captured his first ARCA Menards Series championship after winning the season-finale event at Kansas Speedway on Friday evening. Eckes led the final 43 (of 100) laps, holding off his Venturini Motorsports teammate, Michael Self, who led the first 57 laps, for the win and championship.

“This is huge,” said Eckes. “Not really knowing what I’m going to do next year, hopefully, this is a little bit of an added bonus. We fought really hard all year, not just this race. Our ability to bounce back from things is incredible. Kevin Reed (crew chief) and all of these guys do an excellent job, and we’ve done this so many times over the year – come back from starting last or missing a race. It’s great to be a champion, and I’m really looking forward to celebrating it.”

NHRA

Antron Brown advanced to the second round in Top Fuel, while both J.R. Todd and Shawn Langdon matched that feat in Funny Car to lead Toyota at the Texas Motorplex.

“All of our guys have been working so hard,” said Brown. “Our Matco Tools Toyota is starting to respond to what (crew chiefs) Mark Oswald and Brad Mason are wanting it to do. They have a new tuning combination they’re working on and we’re just going to get better and stronger.”

Doug Kalitta currently remains second in the Top Fuel point standings, just 33 points behind first with two races remaining in the Countdown to the Championship playoffs.

FORMULA DRIFT

Ken Gushi won the season-finale Formula DRIFT event at Irwindale Speedway on Saturday night. The Toyota 86 driver battled through multiple rounds to claim his first win since 2005. After making it through the first round, Fredric Aasbø was eliminated in the Round of 16 and finished runner-up in the championship standings to champion, James Deane.

USAC/POWRi

Toyota-powered drivers swept a pair of midget car features on Saturday. In USAC, Jason McDougal held off Kevin Thomas Jr. and Kyle Cummins as Toyota drivers swept the top-three finishing positions at Tri-City Speedway. In the POWRi series, Jesse Colwell stormed from the back of the field to win at I-30 Speedway,

leading Daison Pursley across the finish line in a Toyota one-two showing. With the victory, Colwell can clinch the series title this weekend in Oklahoma.

What's Next

The Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series and NASCAR Gander Outdoors Truck Series race at Virginia's Martinsville Speedway this weekend. The Truck Series opens the weekend on Saturday, October 26 at 1:30 p.m. EDT on FS1 while the NASCAR Cup Series will race on Sunday, October 27 at 3:00 p.m EDT on NBCSN.

The NASCAR K&N Pro Series West returns to action at Kern County Raceway Park in Bakersfield, California, on Saturday, October 26.

POWRi closes out its season at Oklahoma's Creek County Speedway on October 25 and 26.