

Team Toyota's Denny Hamlin Keeps Raising the Bar

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As one of the best-known drivers on the track today, Denny Hamlin continues to break NASCAR® records. Now in his 17th season with Team Toyota, Hamlin knows that getting to the top of the podium is all about learning to handle the pressure.

“On a normal day, say it’s 90 degrees outside, take that temperature and add 40 or 50 degrees to it, and that’s what it’s like in the car,” Hamlin said. “But if I have my suit on and I’m on the racetrack, I don’t feel the heat. You’re so focused on the job at hand, you don’t think about the heat.”

This attitude has helped the Virginia native remain a constant figure in the victory lane throughout his NASCAR career. With 53 Cup Series wins under his belt, Hamlin is a three-time winner of both the Daytona 500 and Southern 500, and he won the Coca-Cola 600 in 2022.

When he isn’t behind the wheel of the No. 11 Toyota Camry XSE, Hamlin stays busy as the co-owner of 23XI Racing and as the father of two daughters. The 43-year-old, who now lives outside of Charlotte, NC, drives a Toyota Sequoia TRD Pro off the track.

“With as busy as our schedule is, it is important to have something I enjoy driving,” he said. “I have that with the Sequoia, along with great comfortability for myself and my daughters. Combine that with Toyota’s incredible track record of reliability, and I know that I’m in the perfect car that allows me to get the things done that I need to do.”

A Record-Breaking Win

About halfway through the 2023 NASCAR season, Hamlin continued his record-setting summer with a win at the Pocono Raceway in Long Pond, Pennsylvania. On the triangular track known to race fans as the “Tricky Triangle,” the driver won his 50th career Cup Series race. The achievement put Hamlin in an exclusive club of only 14 other drivers who have hit the milestone in NASCAR’s 76-year history.

“It just means so much,” Hamlin said. “I’ve got to thank the partners — they are the ones that make this possible. My team has done a phenomenal job on pit road; the strategy guys in the war room, the guys on the top of the pit box, Chris Gabehart (crew chief) and his team, they are the ones that got me those wins.”

The win also cemented Hamlin as the winningest driver at Pocono Raceway, as he scored his seventh victory at the 2.5-mile track. Additionally, Hamlin’s first place at Pocono earned Toyota its 600th victory in NASCAR’s top three series. Toyota drivers swept the top three spots, with Tyler Reddick in second and Martin Truex Jr. third.

“To think we have celebrated 600 Toyota wins in NASCAR is incredibly rewarding to me and the entire Toyota family,” said David Wilson, president of Toyota Racing Development (TRD). “There are so many people that have worked countless hours, days and years to help us achieve this accomplishment, and this wouldn’t be possible without all of our outstanding team partners and talented drivers behind the wheel of Camrys, Supras and Tundras.”

Expanding the Toyota Family

On the track, Hamlin has long competed in the No. 11 Toyota Camry for Joe Gibbs Racing — Toyota’s winningest organization. Joe Gibbs has achieved 354 race victories since partnering with Toyota in 2008. In 2023, a Hamlin win led to yet another milestone. At Kansas Speedway, Hamlin passed Kyle Larson on the final lap to secure the Joe Gibbs team its 400th NASCAR win.

In 2020, Toyota announced its support of the new NASCAR Cup Series team 23XI Racing, which is co-owned by Hamlin and NBA legend Michael Jordan. The partnership includes support from TRD, which builds the team’s engines and provides technology, data and technical assistance, and agreement from Joe Gibbs Racing.

As is the case with many other Toyota teams, communication and collaboration between each garage is encouraged to help improve performance across the Toyota family.

“Toyota has been a big part of my NASCAR career,” Hamlin said. “We’ve achieved multiple milestones together, including back-to-back Daytona 500 victories. I know how they support their teams, and when I decided to move to team ownership, I knew that I wanted Toyota to be alongside our team.”