

Kyle Busch Secures Toyota's First NSCS Championship

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HOMESTEAD, Fla. (Nov. 23, 2015) – Camry driver Kyle Busch captured the 2015 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series (NSCS) driver’s championship – the first for Toyota since entering the series in 2007 – when he finished first in Sunday’s season finale at Homestead-Miami Speedway.

Busch earned his first-career Sprint Cup Series title by one point over second-place driver Kevin Harvick in his Joe Gibbs Racing No. 18 M&M’s Crispy Camry by finishing highest among the championship contenders in the final round of the Chase for the NASCAR Sprint Cup championship. The 30-year-old Las Vegas native overcame multiple injuries sustained in the season-opening race weekend at Daytona International Speedway in February – which sidelined him for the first 11 NSCS races – and returned to racing in May to climb his way back into the Chase and ultimately capturing the 2015 championship.

“This is just so unbelievable, so amazing and means so much right here, right now and probably will for a long, long time to come,” said Busch from the championship stage. “The opportunity that the amount of people that have poured their life and soul into everything that Kyle Busch does and is about – from M&M’s to Toyota to Snickers and Twix and Skittles, Joe Gibbs (team owner) and his family and all of Joe Gibbs Racing, everyone that gave me such a fast race car here tonight to drive. It was so much fun. This is just a dream come true and my family, my wife, my son – to have him this year and to have everything we’ve gone through this year to be in this moment – I don’t know what else to say, but this is so special.”

In just 25 races this year, Busch won five races at Sonoma Raceway (June 28), Kentucky Speedway (July 11), New Hampshire Motor Speedway (July 19), Indianapolis Motor Speedway (July 26) and Homestead-Miami Speedway (Nov. 22). He also recorded 12 top-five results, 16 top-10 finishes and 735 laps led to capture the sport’s top honors.

Since becoming a Toyota driver in 2008, Busch has been an integral part of the manufacturer’s NASCAR success, having won more races than any other driver across the three NASCAR national series. Busch is responsible for 133 of Toyota’s 332 NASCAR triumphs, having collected the most wins in each series in a Camry or Tundra race vehicle with 30 NSCS, 65 NASCAR XFINITY Series (NXS) and 38 NASCAR Camping World Truck Series (NCWTS) victories to his credit. He also claimed the inaugural NSCS Camry victory when he took the checkered flag at Atlanta Motor Speedway in March 2008.

The 2015 NSCS driver’s championship is the top prize by a Toyota driver in NASCAR since joining series competition in 2007. Other Toyota championships include one NXS driver’s title (Busch, 2009) and six NCWTS driver’s championships with Todd Bodine (2006 and 2010), Johnny Benson (2008), Matt Crafton (2013 and 2014) and this year’s champion Erik Jones (2015). Toyota drivers have also earned 11 NASCAR manufacturer’s trophies with three NXS (2008-2010) and eight NCWTS (2006-2010, 2013-2015).

“We are extremely proud of Kyle Busch and Joe Gibbs Racing on winning the Sprint Cup Series driver’s championship,” said Ed Laukes, vice president of marketing, performance and guest experience for Toyota Motor Sales (TMS), U.S.A. “It’s an incredible accomplishment for Kyle, to overcome the adversity he faced this year and come back with the focus and determination he has had to win races, qualify for the Chase and then earn the ultimate prize, his first Sprint Cup Series championship.

“Winning this NASCAR championship has been a huge aspiration for Toyota since joining NASCAR in 2004. We are honored to finally be on this stage and join Kyle and Joe Gibbs for our first Sprint Cup Series title,” continued Laukes. “The consistency and hard work by our team partners and TRD team members has enabled Toyota to enjoy successes across multiple racing platforms and we are dedicated through unwavering support of all NASCAR series.”

Camry drivers won 14 events, 11 pole positions and led 2,596 laps in 2015, with Matt Kenseth (five), Carl Edwards (two) and Denny Hamlin (two) also visiting victory lane this season. For the first time, five Toyota drivers competed in this year's NSCS Chase for the championship playoff with the four JGR drivers joining Michael Waltrip Racing's Clint Bowyer in the 10-race runoff where Busch ascended to the series crown.

Toyota has earned a total of 79 victories since joining the NSCS in 2007.

NASCAR kicks off next year with the Daytona 500 on Sunday, Feb. 21 where the Camry will serve as pace car for the season-opening events at Daytona International Speedway.