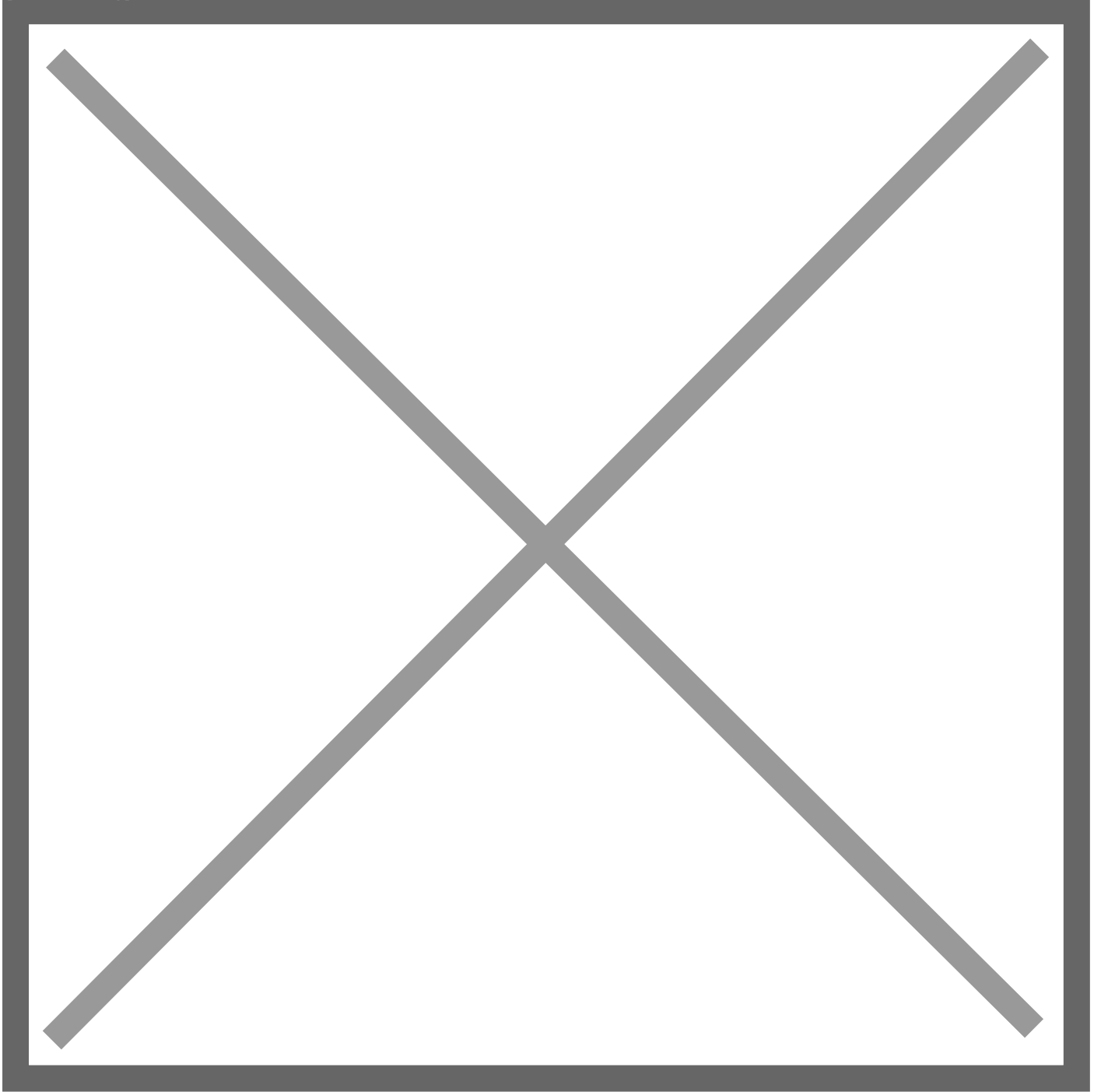


Denny Hamlin Delivers at Darlington

May 22, 2020

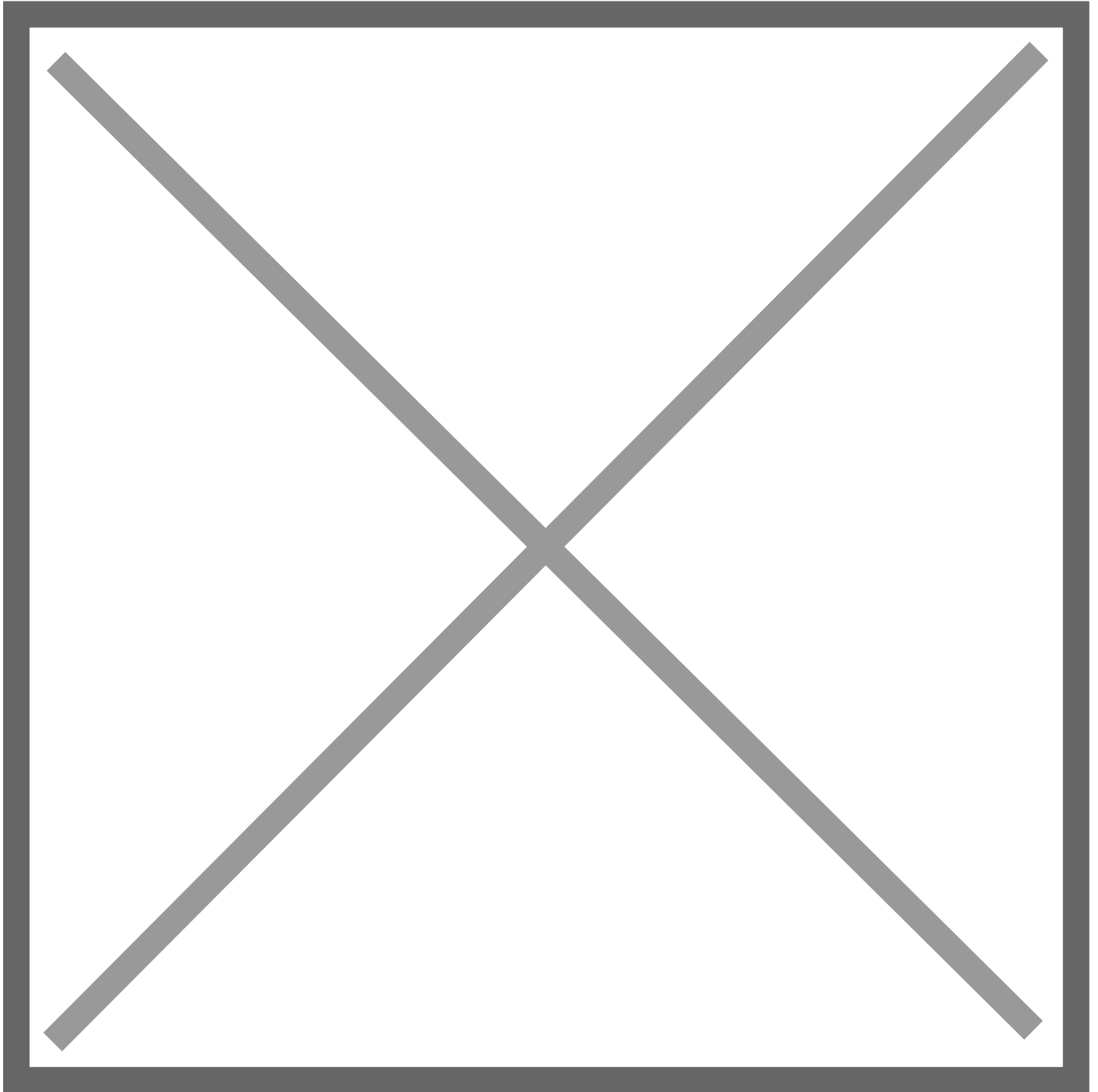
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NASCAR returned to action with a trio of races at Darlington Raceway after more than two months away where Denny Hamlin won Wednesday night's Toyota 500 to highlight the return to racing.

NASCAR

Hamlin's second win of the season came in the rain-shortened Toyota 500 on Wednesday. The Daytona 500 winner ran among the top-five throughout the evening and took the lead under caution on Lap 197 (of 208) before the race was called shortly after due to rain fall.



Denny Hamlin drove his way to victory in the Toyota 500 at Darlington Raceway.

“I’ve got my happy face on and made sure I brought it with me today,” said Hamlin of the unique mask he wore following Wednesday’s race. “The pit crew did a great job today. Everybody really. I was pretty happy with how it all turned out. This is a driver’s race track. You can move around, you can do different things to make your car handle. We got it right today.”

After earning three top-10 finishes in Sunday’s Cup Series race, five Camry drivers finished in the top-11 in Wednesday’s Toyota 500. Along with Hamlin, fellow Camry drivers Kyle Busch (second) and Erik Jones (fifth) earned top-five finishes. Martin Truex Jr. (10th) and Christopher Bell (11th) also scored top-12 results in Wednesday’s Toyota-sponsored race.

Hamlin (fifth), Truex (sixth) and Jones (eighth) also recorded top-10 finishes in the series first official race back after a two month break on Sunday. Kevin Harvick won the race.

“I felt totally comfortable with everything, and I feel like they did a really good job of having a game plan and having a strategy,” said Truex, of NASCAR’s efforts to return to the track on Sunday. “Honestly, I feel 100% comfortable with how things went and that everybody is safe, and everybody is able to go about their business and do their jobs, and not have to worry about it. I have to commend NASCAR and everybody involved for what they did.”

Busch, who’s competing in a stretch of seven straight races to mark NASCAR’s return, finished runner-up finisher in Thursday’s rain-delayed NASCAR Xfinity Series (NXS) Toyota 200 at Darlington. He led 45 laps (of 147) before a speeding penalty on the final stage restart. He recovered for his second top-five in as many NXS events this year.

“Had a good showing and put on a little bit of an exciting show there at the end,” said Busch of his last lap battle with race-winner Chase Briscoe. “I knew being on the inside going into turn one wasn’t good, but he (Chase Briscoe) got such a bad run off of four that I had no choice. I thought about blitzing the outside of three and four, but I knew that he would just go in on the bottom and slide up to the top and plug it for me. We weren’t close enough. We’ll take second I guess, have no other choice, right?”

Harrison Burton earned his fifth straight top-10 with a ninth-place result at the 1.36-mile track. He’s the only driver in the series to collect five top-10s in all races this season.

What’s Next

NASCAR racing continues with four races scheduled at Charlotte Motor Speedway in the coming week. The NASCAR Cup Series will compete in the longest race of the year in Sunday’s Memorial Day weekend tradition with the Coca-Cola 600 at 6 p.m. EDT on FOX.

The Xfinity Series will follow on Monday in Charlotte at 7:30 p.m. EDT on FS1, while the NASCAR Gander RV & Outdoors Truck Series returns on Tuesday at 8 p.m. EDT on FS1. The NASCAR Cup Series will then cap off four straight nights of racing at Charlotte Motor Speedway \ on Wednesday night at 8 p.m. EDT on FS1.