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Kyle Busch, No. 18 M&M'S Fudge Brownie Toyota Camry **Race Recap for Blue-Emu Maximum Pain Relief 500**

Date: June 10, 2020
Event: Blue-Emu Maximum Pain Relief 500 (Round 11 of 36)
Series: NASCAR Cup Series
Location: Martinsville (Va.) Speedway (.526-mile oval)
Format: 500 laps, broken into three stages (130 laps/130 laps/240 laps)
Start/Finish: 7th /19th (Running, completed 499 of 500 laps)
Point Standing: 9th (326 points, 126 out of first)

Race Winner: Martin Truex Jr. of Joe Gibbs Racing (Toyota)
Stage 1 Winner: Joey Logano of Team Penske (Ford)
Stage 2 Winner: Jimmie Johnson of Hendrick Motorsports (Chevrolet)

Stage 1 Recap (Laps 1-130):

- Kyle Busch started seventh and finished 25th.
- The M&M'S Fudge Brownie driver quickly moved up to third by lap 22. However, Busch's car suddenly turned ill-handling, as he radioed crew chief Adam Stevens that he had a potential brake problem.
- Busch dropped through the running order, as he fell to 15th by lap 51 and went a lap down to the leaders by lap 57.
- As the competition yellow flag flew, Busch dropped to 27th as they worked in the pits to diagnose and fix the issues with the car.
- Stevens called Busch to pit road on lap 63, first taking right side tires and then a return trip to take on left side tires in order for the team to figure out what the issue might be.
- Busch restarted 35th and one lap down to start Stage 2, but slowly worked his way up through the other cars one lap down, moving up to 25th by lap 100.
- The M&M'S Fudge Brownie driver held his position one lap down, as he finished the stage in 25th.

Stage 2 Recap (Laps 131-260):

- Busch started 33rd and finished 25th.
- Busch was called to pit road following Stage 2 on lap 132, as he took on four tires and needing to fix some damage to the nose.
- The M&M'S Fudge Brownie Toyota started Stage 2 in 33rd, as he hoped the multiple stops and repairs would help the handling.
- While the No. 18 team made many changes, the handling of Busch's car was still off, as he told Stevens that he was getting rear wheel shake and he couldn't keep the gas down on exit.
- All Busch could do was try to hold on, as he was lapped by leader Jimmie Johnson on 231 as the entire Stage 2 went caution free.

Final Stage Recap (Laps 261-500):

- Busch started 24th and finished 19th.
- Busch started the final stage two laps down, and with the first 50 laps of the stage going green.
- The M&M'S Fudge Brownie driver got the first break he needed, as the caution waved on lap 328 and Busch stayed out and took the wave around, as he went back green flag racing in the 20th spot just one lap down.
- As the leaders were coming up on him to put him back two laps down, Busch caught a break as the caution waved for a spin on lap 387.
- Busch came to pit road for the final time on lap 389, and restarted 20th as the only car one lap down. Unfortunately for the defending Cup Series champion, the caution never waved again and he never got a shot to get back on the lead lap.

Kyle Busch, driver of the No. 18 M&M'S Fudge Brownie Toyota Camry for Joe Gibbs Racing:

“We had a lot of issues with the car when the race started on that first run. I'm not exactly sure everything we had wrong. I know Adam (Stevens) and the guys worked on it and later in the race it was so much better. We had a good M&M'S Fudge Brownie Camry at the end of the race. We just didn't get enough cautions to be able to get back on the lead lap and get ourselves back up front.”

Next Up: The next event on the NASCAR Cup Series schedule is the Homestead 400 on Sunday, June 14 at Homestead-Miami Speedway. The race starts at 3:30 p.m. EDT with live coverage provided by FOX and SiriusXM NASCAR Radio.

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