

10

INTERSTATE

Kyle Busch, No. 18 Interstate Batteries Toyota Camry ***Race Recap for the Geico 500***

Date: June 22, 2020
Event: GEICO 500 (Round 13 of 36)
Series: NASCAR Cup Series
Location: Talladega (Ala.) Superspeedway (2.66-mile oval)
Format: 188 laps, broken into three stages (60 laps/60 laps/68 laps)
Note: Race extended three laps past its scheduled 188-lap distance due to a green-white-checked finish.
Start/Finish: 3rd /32nd (Running, completed 189 of 191 laps)
Point Standing: 9th (378 points, 112 behind leader)

Race Winner: Ryan Blaney of Team Penske (Ford)
Stage 1 Winner: Tyler Reddick of Richard Childress Racing (Chevrolet)
Stage 2 Winner: Ricky Stenhouse Jr. of JTG Daugherty Racing (Chevrolet)

Stage 1 Recap (Laps 1-60):

- Kyle Busch started third and finished fifth, collecting six bonus points.
- The Interstate Batteries driver rolled off third on Monday, as the race was delayed a day due to inclement weather on Sunday at Talladega.
- Busch stayed within the top-five for much of the first run of the race, as he told crew chief Adam Stevens he was a little bit free, but his car's balance was decent overall. He found himself in eighth-place when the competition yellow flew on lap 25.
- The defending NASCAR Cup Series champ was called to pit road on lap 27 for four tires and fuel, as he told Stevens he was lacking overall grip later in the run.
- Busch restarted 10th on lap 29, and ran back up into the top-five until rain made its way to the track yet again, bringing out a red flag.
- Following the red flag for rain, the caution laps took the field to the end of Stage 1, as Busch finished fifth.

Stage 2 Recap (Laps 61-120):

- Busch started sixth and finished third, collecting eight bonus points.
- The Interstate Batteries driver came to pit road on lap 61, taking on four tires, fuel, and adjustments as he restarted sixth when the green flag waved to start Stage 2.
- Busch took the lead on lap 67, and hung around the top-10 for the next run of the race until the caution waved on lap 95.
- Stevens called Busch to pit road on lap 97 for two tires and fuel, as he restarted 10th on lap 99.
- Busch stayed inside the top-10 until late in the stage when the caution waved and Stevens decided to keep Busch out instead of pitting, as the Interstate Batteries driver finished a strong third in Stage 2.

Final Stage Recap (Laps 121-191):

- Busch started 36th and finished 32nd.
- Busch came to pit road on lap 122 and took on four tires and fuel. During the stop, the Interstate Batteries saw a broken brace in the right rear quarter-panel. With the track position shuffled up with much of the field pitting prior to the end of Stage 2, Stevens called Busch back down to make the fix.
- Following the repairs, Busch restarted 36th for the final stage of the Geico 500.
- Busch moved quickly back up through the field, finding himself in 25th on lap 130 and up to 17th by lap 134.
- When the caution waved for an accident on lap 135, Busch stayed out as much of the field pitted, advancing himself to fourth by the time the field restarted on lap 139.
- Shortly after the lap 139 restart, the caution waved for another accident, as Busch came to pit road on lap 143 and then back to pit road to top off fuel on lap 145. But as he exited his stall, another car came in and made contact with the right front of Busch's Interstate Batteries Toyota.
- Busch radioed to the team that he thought the crush panel was knocked out of the right front, but the team decided that the damage didn't look too severe and they left him out to restart 18th on lap 146.
- Just two laps after the restart Busch had a tire go down. He was forced to pit under green, putting him one lap down to the leaders and eventually two laps down to the leaders in a disappointing end to a strong race.

Kyle Busch, driver of the No. 18 Interstate Batteries Toyota Camry for Joe Gibbs Racing:

“We had a really good Interstate Batteries Toyota. Seemed like we could push some of those guys and make some moves. Things got shuffled up there with strategy, but we decided to come back and top off fuel so we could make it all the way. It's just unfortunate we had contact there that probably knocked out the crush panel and it eventually cut our tire. We'll move on to Pocono.”

Team Interstate Results:

- Denny Hamlin (Finished 4th / Running, completed 191 of 191 laps)
- Erik Jones (Finished 5th / Running, completed 191 of 191 laps)
- Martin Truex Jr. (Finished 24th / Running, completed 191 of 191 laps)
- Kyle Busch (Finished 32nd / Running, completed 189 of 191 laps)

Next Up:

The next event on the NASCAR Cup Series schedule is a doubleheader June 27-28 at Pocono (Pa.) Raceway. The first race starts at 3:30 p.m. EDT on Saturday, June 27 with live coverage provided by FOX. The second race begins at 4 p.m. EDT on Sunday, June 28 with live coverage provided by FS1. SiriusXM NASCAR Radio will broadcast both races.

-TSC-

Contact Bill Janitz with True Speed Communication
(704) 498-7596 or Bill.Janitz@TrueSpeedCommunication.com
www.TrueSpeedCommunication.com ● Online Media Kit available at: www.TrueSpeedMedia.com