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INTERSTATE

Kyle Busch, No. 18 Interstate Batteries Toyota Camry ***Race Recap for the O'Reilly Auto Parts 500***

Date: July 19, 2020
Event: O'Reilly Auto Parts 500 (Round 18 of 36)
Series: NASCAR Cup Series
Location: Texas Motor Speedway in Fort Worth (1.5-mile oval)
Format: 334 laps, broken into three stages (105 laps/105 laps/124 laps)
Start/Finish: 4th/4th (Running, completed 334 of 334 laps)
Point Standing: 10th (520 points, 201 behind leader)

Race Winner: Austin Dillon of Richard Childress Racing (Chevrolet)
Stage 1 Winner: Ryan Blaney of Team Penske (Ford)
Stage 2 Winner: Ryan Blaney of Team Penske (Ford)

Stage 1 Recap (Laps 1-105):

- Kyle Busch started fourth and finished second, earning nine bonus points.
- The Interstate Batteries driver started in fourth via random draw and held that position for much of the first run of the race.
- The competition yellow waved on lap 20 and crew chief Adam Stevens called Busch in for left side tires, as he restarted fourth behind three cars that elected to stay out under the first yellow.
- Busch moved up to second by lap 65 and after making a pit stop on lap 90 to take on four tires, fuel and adjustments, as Busch finished Stage 1 in the second spot.

Stage 2 Recap (Laps 106-210):

- Busch started second and finished 10th, earning one bonus point.
- The Interstate Batteries driver elected to stay out following Stage 1 and restarted in the same spot as he finished the first stage.
- Busch fell to fourth by lap 130, telling Stevens that he was too tight overall, especially from center through the exit of each corner.
- The Las Vegas native came to pit road on lap 164, but Busch continued to struggle with the handling of his Interstate Batteries Toyota, as a tight condition dropped him to 10th by the time Stage 2 ended.

Final Stage Recap (Laps 211-334):

- Busch started eighth and finished fourth.
- Busch restarted the final stage in eighth, and shortly after the restart, leader Ryan Blaney got sideways off of turn 4. The lost momentum for Blaney caused the field to bottle up down the frontstretch.
- Busch went three wide and a chain reaction behind him caused a big accident as Kurt Busch tagged Aric Almirola who tagged Kyle Busch in the left rear sending Kyle Busch into the car of JGR teammate Martin Truex Jr.
- The accident caused a red flag and once it was lifted, Busch came to pit road for repairs to the quarterpanel and grill of his Interstate Batteries Toyota on lap 221.
- The Interstate Batteries made quick work on repairs and Busch did not lose a lap, as he restarted 17th on lap 224.
- Busch came to pit road under the next caution on lap 245, as Stevens and the team continued to work on the crash damage with Busch restarting 20th on lap 248.
- The Interstate Batteries driver battled hard and moved up to 13th by lap 255 and back into the top-10 by lap 264, as he told Stevens the car was better but he could still feel the effects of the damage.
- Busch's car seemed to come to life over the course of a long green flag run, as he moved up as far as third during green flag stops, as he caught a break as one of the few lead lap cars that had not made it to pit road when the caution waved on lap 306.
- The Interstate Batteries driver came to pit road on lap 307 to take on four tires, fuel and an air pressure adjustment, with Busch restarting in sixth.
- Busch moved up to fourth by lap 319 and battled for the win over the course of the last several restarts, but couldn't quite catch the Richard Childress Racing cars on the front row as he brought home a solid fourth-place finish.

Notes:

- Busch's fourth-place finish is his was his eighth top-five thus far this season and his 10th top-10 this season of 2020.
- This marks his 13th top-five and 15th top-10 in 29 career starts at Texas.

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

“It was a good finish and proud of the effort for everyone on this Interstate Batteries team. We came a long way today. We got a lot of damage on the frontend of the car that you can’t see with the eye. Going through the grass, it killed it. I thought early on in the first stage, second stage maybe that we had a second-place car and then as the day went, we just kept getting further and further behind. Still a lot of work to do. The car didn’t drive very good at all. Just was able to get something out of nothing there at the end. Thanks to Interstate Batteries, M&M’s, Toyota, TRD, Rowdy Energy – we’ll go to Kansas and see if we can get a win there.”

Team Interstate Results:

- Kyle Busch (Finished 4th / Running, completed 334 of 334 laps)
- Erik Jones (Finished 6th / Running, completed 334 of 334 laps)
- Denny Hamlin (Finished 20th / Running, completed 333 of 334 laps)
- Martin Truex Jr. (Finished 29th / Running, completed 320 of 334 laps)

Next Up:

The next event on the NASCAR Cup Series schedule is the Kansas 400 on Thursday, July 23 at Kansas Speedway in Kansas City. The race starts at 7:30 p.m. EDT with live coverage provided by NBCSN and SiriusXM NASCAR Radio.

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