



## Suárez Drives to 24<sup>th</sup> Place at Michigan

### *Toyota Team Scores its Seventh Top-25 of the Season*

**Date:** Aug. 8, 2020  
**Event:** FireKeepers Casino 400 (Round 21 of 36)  
**Series:** NASCAR Cup Series  
**Location:** Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn (2-mile oval)  
**Format:** 156 laps, broken into three stages (40 laps/45 laps/71 laps)  
**Start/Finish:** 37<sup>th</sup> / 24<sup>th</sup> (Running, completed 161 of 161 laps)  
**Point Standing:** 31<sup>st</sup> with 227 points  
**Note:** Race extended five laps past its scheduled 156-lap distance due to a green-white-checkered finish.  
**Race Winner:** Kevin Harvick of Stewart-Haas Racing (Ford)  
**Stage 1 Winner:** Kevin Harvick of Stewart-Haas Racing (Ford)  
**Stage 2 Winner:** Kevin Harvick of Stewart-Haas Racing (Ford)

#### **Stage 1 Recap (Laps 1-40):**

- Started 37<sup>th</sup>, finished 31<sup>st</sup>.
- From his 37<sup>th</sup> starting position, Suárez was up to 33<sup>rd</sup> by the end of the opening lap and held that position until the lap-15 competition caution. He reported his No. 96 Toyota Camry was super free at the start of the run, pretty loose throughout, but that it was gradually coming to him yet still a long way off. He pitted for tires, fuel, air pressure adjustments to both rears and the right front, and a huge track bar adjustment. He was 28<sup>th</sup> when the race went back to green on lap 19.
- Suárez was 31<sup>st</sup> when the caution flag flew to end the stage. He said the previous changes helped but that he needed more of the same. He pitted during the break for adjustments to the track bar and wedge, as well as right-rear air pressure, and packer removed from the right front.

#### **Stage 2 Recap (Laps 41-85):**

- Started 29<sup>th</sup>, finished 28<sup>th</sup>.
- The stage went green from start to finish.
- Suárez took the green flag 28<sup>th</sup> on lap 47, dropped back to 30<sup>th</sup> throughout the middle portion of the stage, and crossed the finish line 28<sup>th</sup> at stage's end. He said the balance of his Toyota was good in clean air but not so much in traffic. He pitted during the break for a right-front air pressure adjustment and packer removed from both fronts.

#### **Final Stage Recap (Laps 86-161):**

- Started 23<sup>rd</sup>, finished 24<sup>th</sup>.
- Suárez took the green flag 23<sup>rd</sup> to start the stage on lap 91 after choosing the non-preferred inside lane under NASCAR's new "choose cone" rule. He slid back to 27<sup>th</sup> by the time the caution flag flew for a single-car incident on the frontstretch on lap 93 and stayed on track.
- The race went back to green on lap 97 with Suárez restarting 23<sup>rd</sup>. He slid back to 28<sup>th</sup> by the time the caution flag flew for another single-car incident on lap 105. He said his Toyota was too tight on corner entry during that short run. He pitted for tires and fuel and a track bar adjustment. He restarted 28<sup>th</sup> when the race went back to green on lap 110.
- Suárez was holding down the 30<sup>th</sup> position when the caution flag flew for a single-car incident on lap 130. He said the balance of his Toyota was the best it had been all day, just lacked straightaway speed. He also said he ran over debris from the incident, so he pitted for four tires and to check the splitter, which turned out to have incurred very minimal damage. He restarted 31<sup>st</sup> when the race went back to green on lap 138.
- The caution flag flew for a single-car incident on the backstraight with Suárez up to 29<sup>th</sup>. He had reached as high as 26<sup>th</sup> and had momentum to gain more spots when he was balked by slower traffic that cost him four positions. He stayed on track and restarted 27<sup>th</sup> on lap 147.
- The caution flew once again on lap 149 for another single-car incident with Suárez running 29<sup>th</sup>. He stayed on track once again and restarted 26<sup>th</sup> on lap 153 after an almost six-minute red flag period for track cleanup.
- The day's final caution flag flew on lap 154 for a multicar incident that set up the green-white-checkered finish. Suárez restarted 25<sup>th</sup> and picked up one position on his way to the finish.

#### **Daniel Suárez, driver of the No. 96 Toyota Camry for Gaunt Brothers Racing:**

"I was pretty happy with the way our Toyota was handling during the second half of the race, especially on the longer runs. Good job by Dave (Winson, crew chief) and all the guys. We're still lacking the overall speed we need to be more competitive. That will come.

We have work to do to make things better for tomorrow. One good thing is we will have a much better starting position (24<sup>th</sup>) than we usually have, so hopefully we can take advantage of that and have a really good finish.”

#### **Race Notes:**

- Today’s result was the seventh top-25 of the season for Suárez and the No. 96 GBR Toyota, which also has been running at the finish in every race in which they’ve competed this season. That’s 20 consecutive outings.
- It was also the team’s fifth lead-lap finish of the season and third in the last five points-paying races.
- Kevin Harvick won the FireKeepers Casino 400 to score his 54<sup>th</sup> career NASCAR Cup Series victory, his fifth of the season and his fourth at Michigan. His margin of victory over second-place Brad Keselowski was .284 of a second.
- There were nine caution periods for a total of 43 laps.
- Thirty-two of the 39 drivers in the race finished on the lead lap.
- Harvick remains the championship leader after the FireKeepers Casino 400 with a 94-point advantage over second-place Keselowski.

#### **Next Up:**

The second event of the NASCAR Cup Series doubleheader at Michigan for Daniel Suárez and Gaunt Brothers Racing is Sunday’s Consumers Energy 400. The race starts at 4:30 p.m. EDT with live coverage provided by NBCSN and SiriusXM NASCAR Radio.

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