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Kyle Busch, No. 18 M&M'S Toyota Camry *Race Recap for the South Point 400*

Date: Sept. 27, 2020
Event: South Point 400 (Round 30 of 36)
Series: NASCAR Cup Series
Location: Las Vegas Motor Speedway (1.5-mile oval)
Format: 267 laps, broken into three stages (80 laps/80 laps/107 laps)
Note: Race extended one lap past its scheduled 267-lap distance due to a green-white-checked finish.

Start/Finish: 2nd/6th (Running, completed 268 of 268 laps)
Point Standing: 9th (3,043 points, 9 behind the 8th-place cutoff)

Race Winner: Kurt Busch of Chip Ganassi Racing (Chevrolet)
Stage 1 Winner: Denny Hamlin of Joe Gibbs Racing (Toyota)
Stage 2 Winner: Chase Elliott of Hendrick Motorsports (Chevrolet)

Stage 1 Recap (Laps 1-80):

- Kyle Busch started second and finished third, earning eight bonus points.
- The M&M'S driver started second and held that spot until the competition yellow on lap 25.
- Crew chief Adam Stevens called Busch to pit road on lap 27 for four tires, fuel, and adjustments as the M&M'S over-the-wall crew vaulted him into the lead on the lap 30 restart.
- Busch fell two positions shortly after the restart, as his car was a little too tight, especially over the bumps as he finished third in Stage 1.

Stage 2 Recap (Laps 81-160):

- Busch started first and finished 11th.
- The Las Vegas native came to pit road on lap 82 and took on four tires, fuel, and adjustments as again the M&M'S pit crew performed another fast stop and got Busch off pit road first.
- Busch started Stage 2 in the lead, but lost the lead to JGR teammate Denny Hamlin on lap 89, as the three wide pass forced Busch up into the car of Joey Logano, causing damage to both cars.
- Despite the damage to the right rear of the M&M'S Toyota, Busch was able to hold onto the fourth position until a green flag pit stop on lap 119.
- Busch pitted on lap 119 for tires, fuel, and adjustments, but as front tire changer Cam Waugh went to change the right front tire, the air gun ceased up and he had to run over the wall for another gun. The delay causes the pit stop to be long, as Busch settled into ninth-place after green flag pit stops cycled out.
- With other cars opting to pit later in the cycle and on fresher tires at the end of the stage, Busch fell to 11th when Stage 2 ended.

Final Stage Recap (Laps 161-267):

- Busch started 20th and finished sixth.
- Busch came to pit road following Stage 2 on lap 163, and the M&M'S team spent time to fix the damage to the right rear quarterpanel, as the No. 18 Toyota restarted 20th for the start of the final stage.
- The defending Cup Series champion moved up to 14th when the caution waved on lap 190 for debris. Busch came to pit road for fresh tires, fuel, and adjustments as the No. 18 team gained him six spots on pit road to put the M&M'S Toyota eighth on the restart.
- Busch dropped to 12th shortly after the restart, as he told Stevens his car was too tight.
- The M&M'S driver came to pit road on lap 231, but just three laps later the caution waved, catching Busch and many of the other leaders a lap down.
- Busch was forced to take the wave around prior to the next restart, as he returned to the lead lap to restart in the 18th position.
- The caution waved on lap 251 and with Busch in 17th, he came to pit road two laps later to take four tires and try to get his car loosened up for the final 12 lap shootout to the finish, as he restarted in 17th.
- One more caution and subsequent restart provided Busch an opportunity to salvage a decent finish, as he restarted 14th on the green-white-checked dash to the finish as Busch made up an amazing eight spots on the final two laps to finish in sixth-place.

Notes:

- Busch's sixth-place finish is his 17th top-10 finish of 2020.
- Busch now has 11 top-10 finishes in 20 starts at his hometown track in Las Vegas.

How do you feel about salvaging a sixth-place result in tonight's race?

“We weren't great early on and didn't quite have the long run speed. We worked on it and I thought we were making some gains on it and then we got that damage and got way back in traffic. Then there towards the end, was just able to get lucky on a couple of the last restarts in order to pick off a few spots with the M&M's Camry and get ourselves in a better position for the finish. It was a pretty dismal day I guess. I looked like it was going to be about 12th or 14th if we didn't have some good moves on that last restart there to get us a sixth-place finish.”

Next Up:

The next event on the NASCAR Cup Series schedule is the YellaWood 500 on Sunday, Oct. 4 at Talladega (Ala.) Superspeedway. It is the fifth race of the 10-race playoffs and the second race in the Round of 12. It starts at 2 p.m. EDT with live coverage provided by NBC and SiriusXM NASCAR Radio.

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