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COMMSCOPE®



DANIEL SUÁREZ

Throwing it Back to CommScope Driver's 2016 Championship

MOORESVILLE, North Carolina (Sept. 1, 2020) – Considering the theme for this year's annual Throwback Weekend at historic Darlington (S.C.) Raceway is "NASCAR Champions ... Past, Present and Future," Daniel Suárez's No. 96 CommScope Toyota Camry team for Gaunt Brothers Racing (GBR) didn't have to dig too deep to find an appropriate paint scheme to showcase during Sunday night's Cook Out Southern 500.

After all, the single-car team competing in its first full season since joining the Cup Series ranks in 2017 has had a bona fide NASCAR champion strapped into the cockpit of its racecars all year long in the person of Suárez, who made history by winning the 2016 NASCAR Xfinity Series title.

Driving the No. 19 Toyota for Joe Gibbs Racing, the native of Monterrey, Mexico became the first Latin American-born champion of a NASCAR national series that year behind his three victories, 19 top-five finishes, 27 top-10s and 347 laps led during the 33-race Xfinity Series campaign. He clinched his title with a dominating victory in the season finale at Homestead-Miami Speedway, where he started on the pole, led a race-high 133 laps, and beat runner-up Ty Dillon by .968 of a second.

Riding along with Suárez that year was his now-longtime sponsor ARRIS, known today as CommScope, and two weeks ago his GBR team was able to surprise its champion driver by unveiling Sunday night's orange-and-white ARRIS paint scheme during a nationally televised interview. Not surprisingly, Suárez said he felt goosebumps when the scheme was revealed, and that he will be proud to sport those colors in the iconic Southern 500.

Safe to say Suárez's most recent Cup Series outing Saturday night on the Daytona (Fla.) International Speedway oval was another throwback, of sorts. The 28-year-old posted his strongest performance, yet, since joining GBR just before the start of the 2020 season when he drove to the front in his No. 96 CommScope Toyota and stayed there most of the night, leading 19 laps in the middle stage before getting caught up in a multicar accident during the closing laps that relegated him and the team to a 26th-place result. It ended a string of 24 consecutive races in which Suárez and his No. 96 Toyota were running at the finish – a stretch duplicated only by regular-season champion Kevin Harvick.

Sunday night's race marks the series' third race of 2020 to the 1.366-mile egg-shaped Darlington oval. The previous two were run four days apart – on May 17 and 20 – and marked NASCAR's return to competition after a 10-week hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Suárez posted finishes of 25th and 27th in the back-to-back events, the first two run this season with no practice or qualifying.

Sporting his throwback championship paint scheme, and coming off the season's most promising performance, Suárez and his GBR teammates head to Darlington looking to keep the momentum going at "The Track Too Tough To Tame."

DANIEL SUÁREZ, Driver of the No. 96 CommScope Toyota for Gaunt Brothers Racing:

Your thoughts about heading to Darlington for the third time this season Sunday night?

"Obviously, I have raced there several times in the past, so I know what I need to be successful there, and I just have to be smart, try to help the team in every way, make the right decisions, and keep learning because it's been a whole different game with no track time before these races. It's certainly important to be efficient, to not make mistakes, and make sure we have no mechanical issues with our CommScope Toyota, no matter how small they can be. In May, I actually felt good after the Wednesday-night race. Our car felt like it had more potential. It wasn't a top-20 car, yet, but it was better than it was in Sunday's race when we finished 25th. We improved the car and that's all that ever matters. It doesn't matter how much, just as long as we keep improving. That will bring us more and more speed, eventually. It was a step in the right direction."

What do you think about the throwback paint scheme you'll be sporting Sunday night in celebration of your 2016 title?

"It's a very nice scheme – the team surprised me with it and it gave me goosebumps the first time I saw it. I'm very excited to be driving it at Darlington, but at the same time I get a little concerned because, when you're throwing back to yourself, that means you're getting old (laughs). Seriously, there have been many changes since my 2016 Xfinity championship, but one constant has been my sponsor ARRIS, who is now CommScope. I want to thank CommScope for sticking with me all these years. Not only has CommScope stuck with me, they have helped millions of race fans stay connected at the racetrack, at home and everywhere in-between with their wireless

technologies. I also want to thank my team owner Marty Gaunt, and Toyota and Coca-Cola because I wouldn't be where I am today without their support. I can't wait to drive this car on Sunday night."

You had a good race going Saturday night at Daytona, even leading the team's first-ever green-flag laps before an accident cut short your bid in the closing laps. Your thoughts on that?

"It felt good to be running back up front again. I've really missed that. It was a shame that we got caught in someone else's mess and couldn't finish where we deserved. But it was another learning experience in a different kind of year full of learning experiences. We left there disappointed with the result, but we felt good about being able to make the most out of the situation. I was very thankful for all the hard work by everybody who allowed us to have a fast racecar, and I was very thankful for all the love after the race from our family and friends and fans. They definitely knew we were there that night. I think it will give us positive momentum for these last 10 weeks of the season."

DANIEL SUÁREZ'S DARLINGTON PERFORMANCE PROFILE

Year	Date	Event	Start	Finish	Status/Laps	Laps Led	Earnings
2020	5/20	Toyota 500k	25	27	Running, 207/208	1	N/A
	5/17	The Real Heroes 400	37	25	Running, 292/293	0	N/A
2019	9/1	Southern 500	5	11	Running, 367/367	0	N/A
2018	9/2	Southern 500	16	29	Running, 358/367	0	N/A
2017	9/3	Southern 500	19	38	Accident, 125/367	0	N/A

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