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Coca-Cola



DANIEL SUÁREZ

'Pride Leads the Way' as Coca-Cola Team Heads to Charlotte Roval 400

MOORESVILLE, North Carolina (Oct. 7, 2020) – The home stretch of its first full NASCAR Cup Series season is at hand for the No. 96 Coca-Cola Toyota Camry team for Gaunt Brothers Racing (GBR) and its driver Daniel Suárez as they head to Charlotte (N.C.) Motor Speedway for Sunday's Bank of America Roval 400.

It will be the 32nd of 36 points-paying races on the 2020 schedule for the single-car operation that first joined the elite Cup Series ranks as a part-time team in 2017 and embarked on its first full campaign last January. It also marks the second and final road-course event of the season – the first coming in August on the 3.61-mile, 14-turn layout at Daytona (Fla.) International Speedway after this year's traditional road-course stops at Sonoma (Calif.) Raceway and Watkins Glen (N.Y.) International were cancelled due to COVID-19.

Sunday's 400-mile race on the 2.28-mile, 17-turn Charlotte "roval" will be another valuable data-gathering session for GBR as it looks ahead to taking another step in its evolution into a championship-contending Cup Series team during the 2021 season, which features not only a return to the road courses at Sonoma and Watkins Glen, but the addition of the circuits at Road America in Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin, Circuit of the Americas in Austin, Texas, and the grand prix layout at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

A special Coca-Cola paint scheme will adorn GBR's No. 96 Toyota Camry Sunday in celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month – Sept. 15 to Oct. 15 – and its 28-year-old driver from Monterrey, Mexico will be hosting his first and only Daniel's Amigos fan event prior to the race, albeit in a virtual setting thanks again to the pandemic.

Hispanic Heritage Month recognizes the contributions and influence of Hispanic Americans to the history, culture and achievements of the United States. The colorful paint scheme on the No. 96 GBR Toyota for this weekend was inspired by local Saltillo Sarape artists from Suárez's hometown, and features a message in Spanish that connects Hispanic heritage to the racing world – "El orgullo nos guía," which translates to "Pride leads the way."

So as it heads to the Charlotte roval with an eye toward 2021 and beyond, the No. 96 Coca-Cola Toyota team for GBR looks to continue building on the progress made during its busiest season of racing to date, and celebrate Hispanic heritage along the way.

DANIEL SUÁREZ, Driver of the No. 96 Coca-Cola Toyota Camry for Gaunt Brothers Racing:

You're sporting a very special Coca-Cola paint scheme for Sunday's race on the Charlotte roval. Tell us about it.

"I love it. Coca-Cola designed a special paint scheme to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, which is a significant period for many Hispanic Americans who celebrate Independence Day, like we do in my native country on Sept. 16. This weekend, I'm excited to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month by driving this colorful Coca-Cola Toyota Camry. It was inspired by local Saltillo Sarape artists due to my roots in Monterrey, Mexico. The message on the car is 'El orgullo nos guía,' which means 'Pride leads the way.' I'm very proud to be driving this No. 96 Toyota this weekend, and I hope we can get our best result of the season."

You're also participating in the first Daniel's Amigos event of the season, albeit in virtual form, on race day this weekend. What are your thoughts about the growth of the program?

"It's definitely something that I'm proud to be a part of, and it's been very satisfying to watch it grow during the four live events last year. It couldn't have happened without the tremendous support of Coca-Cola, NASCAR, the racetracks, and I think the cool thing about it is how it has grown so organically. It started with just a few hundred people at California to a few thousand people at Texas last year. We are fortunate to have this event Sunday to hopefully give it some momentum into next year. It's a fun event each time we do it. And it opens NASCAR up to a whole community that is very loyal and has supported me over the years."

Speaking of your racing roots, as you head to the season's second and final road-course race, you bring a lot of experience go-kart racing on road courses in your native country. How has that translated to the road-course racing you do now?

"Well, I grew up racing go-karts all of the time. I know I'm really good in road-course go karts, but stock car road-course racing is so different because the cars are so heavy. The basics are the same, but the way you have to take care of the brakes, take care of the tires and things like that is a totally different game. It's very hard to make these cars change directions so quickly because they are so heavy."

Most of the time, road-course racing is pretty good to me, so we'll see how it goes this weekend."

There is rain in the forecast for Sunday. How do you feel about road racing in the rain?

"In go karts, I love racing in the rain, but again, in go karts, rain is totally different from trying to race these heavy cars. I don't have a problem with the rain, but with these cars, it's just so different. We might see a lot of cars in the grass if it rains."

DANIEL SUÁREZ'S CHARLOTTE ROVAL PERFORMANCE PROFILE

Year	Date	Event	Start	Finish	Status/Laps	Laps Led	Earnings
2019	9/29	Bank of America Roval 400	13	34	Running, 108/109	0	N/A
2018	9/30	Bank of America Roval 400	17	21	Running, 109/109	0	N/A

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