

Kyle Busch makes history at TMS

Contributed by Austin Kilgore
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Kyle Busch had NOS on the hood of his car, but the way he drove his No. 18 Toyota at the O'Reilly 300, he may have had a little NOS under the hood as well.

Busch started from the pole and lead 178 of 300 laps, a Nationwide Series record for laps lead at Texas Motor Speedway. His win makes him the first Nationwide Series driver to win from the pole at the track, and the first to win three consecutive TMS races in the series.

He started the race strong and never let up. By the time the first caution came out on lap 68, Busch had lapped all but the top 11 cars in the 43-car field.

Despite his dominance, Busch had his doubts about taking his car to victory lane. After all, in the Truck Series last week at Martinsville, he dominated before a pit stop penalty sent him to the back of the field, and in the Nationwide Series two weeks ago, after leading the most laps, a bad pit stop kept him from winning the race at Bristol.

"I wasn't sure we were going to win all day," Busch said. The 88 [of Brad Keselowski] was going to be the car to beat the last 20 laps.

Keselowski started from the rear of the field with a backup car because he wrecked during Thursday's qualifying. At the restart after the first caution, Keselowski had driven up to second place. In the closing laps, Keselowski's lap times were faster than Busch and the No. 88 was gaining on the No. 18.

But with 12 laps to go, the caution came out when the lapped car of John Wes Townley hit the wall, giving Busch an opportunity to regroup.

"He [Keselowski] was catching me there, and if we didn't get a caution like we did, it probably would have been a whale of a show there because he was pretty good and I felt like I needed to let my tires cool down again," Busch said.

During the caution, Busch and Keselowski tried to fake each other out by driving down the apron of the track at turn four as if they were going to pit, but neither driver had a new set of tires, nor did they take their opponent's bait.

"I really did not want that caution or need," Keselowski said. "I had a shot I felt like at beating Kyle on the long run, [but] I knew I was going to have a hard time passing him on the short run."

Sixth place Tony Stewart did have a fresh set of tires, and after pitting, won the race off pit road and restarted seventh.

With seven laps to go at the restart Keselowski, Joey Logano and Carl Edwards battled for second position, giving Busch the opportunity to drive away from the field and Stewart the chance to charge through the field, eventually taking second place from Keselowski, who finished third.

