



MONDAY  
MARCH 19<sup>TH</sup>, 2018

WRITTEN BY JOHN SINGLER  
CONCORD, NORTH CAROLINA

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**WEEKEND WINNERS ... MARTIN TRUEX JR., *Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series* ... and JOEY LOGANO, *Xfinity Series* ...**

**AUTO CLUB 400:** Martin Truex Junior returned to his 2017 championship form on Sunday with a dominating victory at **Auto Club Speedway** in Fontana, California. The **Furniture Row Racing** driver started from the pole, swept the first two stages and led a race-high 125 laps en route to his sixteenth Cup Series win and first this year in defense of his title. Truex passed **Kyle Busch** for his final lead thirty-two laps from the finish and kept the **Number-78 Toyota** in front the rest of the way, beating runner-up **Kyle Larson** to the finish by more than eleven seconds. Busch took third place with **Team Penske teammates Brad Keselowski and Joey Logano** completing the top five. For Truex, the win caps a steady recovery after a disappointing eighteenth-place finish in the season-opening **Daytona 500**. Since then, he's had finishes of fifth in Atlanta, fourth in Las Vegas, fifth in Phoenix and now his first victory at A-C-S. It's rare for pole winners to win Cup Series races on the two-mile Southern California oval. Truex is just the third to do it since the track first hosted NASCAR in 1997, joining **Jimmie Johnson** (2008) and Larson last year ... Truex's month-long resurgence has carried him to the top of the *Monster Energy Series* standings heading into the first short-track race of the season next weekend at **Martinsville Speedway**. He enjoys a nine-point lead over Busch and is nineteen ahead of Logano, who also won Saturday's Xfinity Series race in dominating fashion. In fact, Truex and Logano combined to lead 264 of the 350 laps possible in the two races ... Sunday's Cup Series race included **sixteen lead changes among just seven drivers** ... There were **five cautions for twenty-one laps**.

**NASCAR CUP SERIES**

**Top 10 Finishers in the Auto Club 400**

<u>DRIVER</u>	<u>STARTING POSITION</u>	<u>LAPS LED</u>
1. Martin Truex Jr.	(Pole)	125
2. Kyle Larson	(3)	--
3. Kyle Busch	(2)	62
4. Brad Keselowski	(11)	--
5. Joey Logano	(6)	9
6. Denny Hamlin	(25)	1
7. Erik Jones	(4)	--
8. Ryan Blaney	(8)	--
9. Jimmie Johnson	(33)	--
10. Austin Dillon	(5)	--

**RACE NOTES ...**

**Kevin Harvick's** hopes of a fourth straight victory were dashed on Sunday when he tangled with **Kyle Larson** early in the **Auto Club 400**. The contact damaged Harvick's **Number-4 Stewart-Haas Racing Ford** and though he was running at the finish, the 2014 champion placed thirty-fifth in the thirty-seven-car field. He was nine laps down to winner **Martin Truex Junior**. The last *Monster Energy Series* driver to post four straight wins was **Jimmie Johnson** in 2007. He finished a season-best ninth in Sunday's race on what he considers his home track in Fontana, California – one of just ten drivers on the lead lap at the end of the day.



**NASCAR CUP SERIES**  
**Unofficial Point Standings**  
**After 5 Races**

<u>DRIVER</u>	<u>POINTS</u>	<u>BEHIND LEADER</u>
1. Martin Truex Jr.	216	----
2. Kyle Busch	207	-9
3. Joey Logano	197	-19
4. Brad Keselowski	183	-33
5. Ryan Blaney	181	-35
6. Denny Hamlin	176	-40
7. Kyle Larson	174	-42
8. Kevin Harvick	170	-46
9. Clint Bowyer	155	-61
10. Aric Almirola	148	-68

**TRACK FACTS ...**

With Sunday's win, it could be said that **Martin Truex Junior** is actually *ahead* of the early-season pace he set a year ago en route to the *Monster Energy Series* championship. In 2017, Truex had one victory through the first five races and was third in the regular-season point standings. In 2018, he has one victory through the first five races but is *first* in the point standings, two spots higher than he was at this juncture last season. Considering how dominant Truex was over the course of the 2017 campaign, this news does not bode well for the competition moving forward.



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**JOEY LOGANO WINS ROSEANNE 300 X-FINITY SERIES RACE**

Team Penske's **Joey Logano** crushed the X-finity Series field on Saturday, leading all but eleven of the 150 laps to claim victory at **Auto Club Speedway**. Logano started from the front row alongside rookie pole winner **Christopher Bell**, grabbed his first lead just five laps into the race, swept the first two stages and beat runner-up **Justin Allgaier** to the checkered flag by one-point-four seconds in collecting his twenty-ninth win. Logano's the fourth *Monster Energy Series* regular to win this season through the first five X-finity Series races – joining **Kevin Harvick**, **Kyle Larson** and **Brad Keselowski**. Points leader **Elliott Sadler** finished third on Saturday with **Austin Dillon** and **Daniel Hemric** completing the top five. **Tyler Reddick** – the only X-finity Series regular to win this season (at Daytona) – ran seventh at A-C-S. Bell finished twenty-first after leading only the first four laps ... There were just **six lead changes**, tying the track record for the fewest in a race that was set in 2009.

**NASCAR X-FINITY SERIES**

**Top 10 Finishers in the Roseanne 300**

DRIVER	STARTING POSITION	LAPS LED
1. <b>Joey Logano</b>	(2)	139
2. <b>Justin Allgaier</b>	(6)	2
3. <b>Elliott Sadler</b>	(11)	4
4. <b>Austin Dillon</b>	(19)	--
5. <b>Daniel Hemric</b>	(5)	--
6. <b>Cole Custer</b>	(4)	--
7. <b>Tyler Reddick (R)</b>	(16)	--
8. <b>Matt Tifft</b>	(20)	--
9. <b>Ryan Preece</b>	(8)	--
10. <b>Ross Chastain</b>	(13)	--

**Unofficial Point Standings – After 5 Races**

DRIVER	POINTS	BEHIND LEADER
1. <b>Elliott Sadler</b>	199	----
2. <b>Tyler Reddick (R)</b>	195	-4
3. <b>Justin Allgaier</b>	194	-5
4. <b>Christopher Bell (R)</b>	172	-27
5. <b>Daniel Hemric</b>	169	-30
6. <b>Cole Custer</b>	144	-55
7. <b>Spencer Gallagher</b>	143	-56
8. <b>Ryan Truex</b>	140	-59
9. <b>Brandon Jones</b>	139	-60
10. <b>Matt Tifft</b>	132	-67

**FONTANA FACTS**

With **Joey Logano's** victory on Saturday, there have now been five different winners through the first five X-finity Series races of the season: **Tyler Reddick**, **Kevin Harvick**, **Kyle Larson**, **Brad Keselowski** and Logano. The win for Team Penske gives **Ford** its first X-finity Series victory at **Auto Club Speedway** since **Matt Kenseth** steered a **Jack Roush**-owned entry into the Winner's Circle in 2007 ... Reddick was the highest-finishing rookie on Saturday, coming home in seventh place ... The race included **seven cautions for thirty-two laps** ... **Justin Allgaier** has now run second to Team Penske cars the last two weeks, chasing Keselowski to the finish nine days ago at **I-S-M Raceway in Phoenix** and then posting his runner-up finish to Logano this weekend at Auto Club Speedway. Allgaier is third in the standings, a single point behind Reddick and five down to leader **Elliott Sadler** ... On Saturday, **Ryan Truex** finished twelfth in the **Roseanne 300** and on Sunday, the **Kaulig Racing** driver celebrated his 26<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**THE WEEK AHEAD**

**ON MOTOR RACING NETWORK**

**TUESDAY**

Mike Bagley will host **NASCAR Live** from 7 to 8 p.m. (ET). Now in its thirty-fifth year, **NASCAR Live** invites listeners to call 1-800-2-NASCAR to participate or post their questions on the **NASCAR Live** link at [nascarlive@mrn.com](mailto:nascarlive@mrn.com).

**SATURDAY**

**Motor Racing Network** – "**The Voice of NASCAR**" will have live coverage of the **Alpha Energy Solutions 250 Camping World Truck Series** race from **Martinsville Speedway**, beginning at 1:30 p.m. (ET).

**SUNDAY**

► Join Rob Tanner for **NASCAR U.S.A. – "America's Tailgate Party"** from 10 a.m. to 12 noon (ET) featuring racing updates, country music news and artists from the top of the charts.

► **Motor Racing Network's** live coverage of the **S-T-P 500 Monster Energy Series** race from **Martinsville Speedway** will start at 1 p.m. (ET).