

Hamlin salutes Kyle Busch after tying him on career win list

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BROOKLYN, Mich. — There were no boos for Denny Hamlin after this winning burnout at Michigan International Speedway.

Holding a black No. 18 flag out the window, the Joe Gibbs Racing star celebrated his 63rd career victory by smoking the tires of his No. 11 Toyota down the straightaway in honor of Kyle Busch, his late teammate whom he tied for ninth on the all-time win list in the NASCAR Cup Series.

"Truthfully, I had to outlive him to tie him," said Hamlin who radioed "We love you, KB" on his victory lap. "He was an amazing teammate. He taught me so much at tracks like this. I just can't say enough."

It was the second consecutive victory for Hamlin and his second consecutive win at Michigan, where he celebrated last year by taunting fans who booed him.

But there were only raucous cheers from the front-stretch grandstands Sunday as Hamlin jogged up to the flag stand to get the checkered flag while

still carrying his Busch tribute flag.

Busch drove the No. 18 from 2008-22 for Gibbs, teaming up with Hamlin for a NASCAR-record 523 races. Busch's death on May 21 rocked the NASCAR industry, which already was grieving over the offseason deaths of Greg Biffle and his family in a plane crash. Hamlin's father also died in a Dec. 28 house fire.

Noting that Hall of Famer Ned Jarrett also died last week, Hamlin dedicated his third win this season to Busch and his family.

"The offseason, it was rough for me, and it was rough for the NASCAR family," Hamlin said. "Just an unbelievable feeling to be able to strap in every week, and I don't take it for granted, this opportunity that I'm in. I just love we're making the best of it."

Just like last week's win at Nashville Superspeedway, when the Joe Gibbs Racing car started on the pole but was penalized for jumping the start, Hamlin qualified first at Michigan but dropped to the back at the green flag because of a penalty for unapproved adjustments to

his No. 11 Toyota.

Hamlin patiently worked his way to the front over 400 miles. He took the lead for good on a three-wide pass during a restart with 38 laps remaining, sweeping around Spire Racing teammates Daniel Suarez and Carson Hocevar, a home-state favorite.

Hamlin won by 11.110 seconds, his widest margin of victory in Cup and the largest win at Michigan since June 1991.

"This Toyota was just amazing," Hamlin said. "And at the last run there, it just hammered down. It had a few good restarts, and then once we got to the lead, I was going

to lay it out."

Erik Jones, another Michigan native, finished second after also starting from the rear for unapproved adjustments. Bubba Wallace recorded a season-best third, followed by Kyle Larson and

Hocevar, who notched his best Michigan finish.

"I don't think anyone was going to contend with Denny at the end," Larson said. "He was flying."

UP NEXT: NASCAR will make its lone trip this season to Pocono Raceway on June 14. Chase Briscoe won last year to earn his first victory with Joe Gibbs Racing.

LEGAL NOTICE

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON THE UPDATING OF THE LOGAN COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN

The Logan County Steering Committee and the Barren River Area Development District will be conducting a public hearing concerning the update of the Goals and Objectives of the Logan County Strategic Plan. The hearing will be held on Wednesday June 24th, 2026, at the Logan County Fairgrounds (200 W. 4th St. Russellville, KY 42276) between 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. CST (6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. EST). The current plan can be viewed at planning.bradd.org.

Residents of Logan County are encouraged to drop by the public meeting to comment on their views and opinions.

Comments can be made orally and/or in writing. If you cannot attend, written comments can be made to Judge Baker, 200 W. 4th St. Russellville, KY 42276 on or before Wednesday June 24th, 2026.

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POSTON

FROM PAGE B3

11 under heading to the final few holes.

Clark closed with two pars for a 67. He wound up alone in third, one shot out of the playoff.

Fleetwood hit into the rough with his first three shots on the 17th and had to scramble for bogey. He shot final round 68. Burns also missed the 17th

fairway, and his next shot tumbled back down the rough and settled on the bridge over a small creek. He hit that to 40 feet, and his long par putt peeked into the cup and somehow stayed out. A 10-foot birdie putt on the 18th narrowly missed. He shot 69 and tie for fourth with Fleetwood.

Scottie Scheffler, trying to join Tiger Woods with a third straight victory at the Memorial, was never in the mix for so much of the week. He closed with a 71 and tied for 12th.

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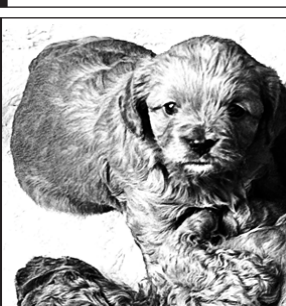
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