



# KURT BUSCH

## Consolation Game

KANNAPOLIS, North Carolina (Nov. 13, 2018) – Kurt Busch endured heartbreak Sunday at ISM Raceway near Phoenix when he was eliminated from the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series playoffs after being involved in a multi-car accident late in the race, which caused him to finish 32<sup>nd</sup>.

As a result, Busch, driver of the No. 41 Haas Automation/Monster Energy Ford Fusion, won't have a shot at the Cup Series championship in this week's season-ending Ford EcoBoost 400 at Homestead-Miami Speedway.

But he can still win the race and end what has been a magical season.

In Olympic hockey, there is a bronze medal game. The "consolation game" is played between two teams that lost their semifinal games against the teams going for the gold medal. Until 1981, the NCAA men's basketball tournament featured the "third-place game" – who can forget Ray Meyer and the DePaul Blue Demons edging the University of Pennsylvania Quakers coached by Bob Weinbauer in 1979 in a 96-93 thriller?

Busch has two poles, one win, four top-five finishes and six top-10s at Homestead. Additionally, the 40-year-old driver has led 97 laps, has an average starting position of 13.5, an average finish of 18.4, and has completed 89.2 percent (4,054 of 4,545) of the laps he's contested there.

He's also had a remarkable 2018 season. In August at Bristol (Tenn.) Motor Speedway, he scored his 30<sup>th</sup> career win and his sixth at "Thunder Valley." Busch has won five poles this season, his most since he scored six in 2006. He became just the 21<sup>st</sup> driver to lead 9,000 career laps and is now just 223 laps behind Buddy Baker for 19<sup>th</sup> on the all-time list.

Busch has 21 top-10 finishes this season and if he scores another one this week at Homestead, it will be a career high for him. He had 21 in 2004, 2009, 2015 and 2016.

And a top-10 finish might put Busch fifth in points, which would be his highest finish in the standings since 2009.

After 35 points-paying races and two exhibitions, it's finally time for the finale. And, as always, Busch hopes to be in victory lane.

***KURT BUSCH, Driver of the No. 41 Haas Automation/Monster Energy Ford Fusion for Stewart-Haas Racing:***

### **Talk about racing at Homestead-Miami Speedway.**

"Homestead is a fast, mile-and-a-half racetrack. It's a sister racetrack to Texas, to me. It's an older track, the worn-out asphalt is similar to Texas and, if you ran well at Texas, you'll run well at Miami. There's a lot that carries over from one to the other. Since 2004, there's been a nostalgic feeling when I get to Homestead. Winning the championship in the first year of the 'Chase' format was a magical time for me."

### **What's it like for you, as a driver, to have seen Homestead change so much over the years?**

"Homestead is a lot of fun to race on, both the old configuration and the current configuration with the multiple grooves of banking. With the old configuration, it was all about the bottom of the racetrack, how you could exit the corner and make the straightaways longer. It was all about the softest springs you could run because you wanted the car as low as possible. Now, with the way the cars are set up, you have to have stiffer springs to manage the banking. You have to shoot for the middle. You run the middle groove in practice. That way, you can get to the bottom and not have your car so far off on setup, and then you can go to the high groove when the tires wear out to keep your momentum up high. But then, you have those crazy restarts and that is what this racetrack is perfectly designed for – that mad dash at the beginning with fresh tires. It's the ultimate place because it puts it more in the driver's hands."

### **Talk a little bit about the race at Homestead from a fan's perspective.**

"NASCAR has always been about family. A family can come and find all types of different activities around the event. Perfect weather, usually. The race ends right around nightfall, so you can get back home before it gets too late on that Sunday night and get the kids back to school on Monday."

**Kurt Busch's Homestead-Miami Performance Profile:**

Year	Event	Start	Finish	Status/Laps	Laps Led	Earnings
2017	Ford EcoBoost 400	8	22	Running, 265/267	0	N/A
2016	×Ford EcoBoost 400	16	13	Running, 268/268	0	N/A
2015	Ford EcoBoost 400	15	8	Running, 267/267	0	\$106,190
2014	Ford EcoBoost 400	2	11	Running, 267/267	1	\$82,340
2013	Ford EcoBoost 400	2	21	Running, 267/267	4	\$104,255
2012	Ford 400	26	9	Running, 267/267	0	\$107,318
2011	Ford 400	4	34	Running, 220/267	0	\$108,450
2010	Ford 400	15	18	Running, 267/267	0	\$112,898
2009	Ford 400	12	4	Running, 267/267	43	\$157,275
2008	Ford 400	38	43	Accident, 207/267	0	\$61,876
2007	Ford 400	5	2	Running, 267/267	17	\$263,808
2006	×Ford 400	36	43	Accident, 9/268	0	\$100,506
2004	×Ford 400	1	5	Running, 271/271	4	\$130,650
2003	Ford 400	7	36	Running, 147/267	0	\$63,760
2002	<b>Ford 400</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Running, 267/267</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>\$297,100</b>
2001	Pennzoil 400	32	23	Running, 267/267	0	\$49,550
2000	Pennzoil 400	10	19	Running, 264/267	0	\$50,300

\* Race cut short due to weather. × Race length extended due to green-white-checkered finish. † Qualifying canceled due to weather, starting position set via car owner points.