

Motorsports

Buescher emerges at Pocono for 1st career Cup win

By DAN GELSTON
Associated Press

LONG POND, Pa. — Chris Buescher waited out a foul-weathered end on pit road to become a stunning winner in Monday’s Sprint Cup race at Pocono Raceway.

Buescher, who drives for underfunded Front Row Motorsports and hadn’t finished better than 14th all season, was the beneficiary on a rare Monday race postponed a day by rain.

Buescher entered the race outside the top 30 in points, and cracking the top 30 was one of the two major requirements of making the Chase. The other is winning a race. Buescher now has the first Cup victory of his career, and will need to find a way to wrangle a spot in the top 30 over the final five races before the Chase field is set. He is still six points behind David Ragan for 30th.

NASCAR called the red flag with 22 laps left and parked the cars on pit road. Buescher could only sit and wait in the No. 34 Ford, though NASCAR let drivers get out of their cars after about 10 minutes as they waited wait out the



Chris Buescher (34) races with Michael McDowell (95) and Jamie McMurray (1) during the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Pennsylvania 400 auto race at Pocono Raceway, Monday, Aug. 1, 2016, in Long Pond, Pa.

gloomy conditions. “I’m a little scared to get out,” Buescher said.

No need. He was declared the winner after 80 minutes on pit road.

Buescher won twice last season in the Xfinity Series and won the series championship. His FRM team will spend 2016 as basically the fourth Jack Roush driver because of a shared technical alliance between the organizations. He finished 30th or worse 10 times this season.

Ragan had Front Row’s only

victory 118 races ago in fall 2013 at Talladega.

The 23-year-old Buescher, a former ARCA champion, rested against a fence and was swarmed by fans and photographers wanting a picture with him before the race was even called. With veteran crew chief Bob Osborne calling the shots, Buescher and his crew rooted for the rain and fog to stick around.

“I’m trying to remember every rain dance I’ve ever learned,” he said in the car.

How about a raucous victory

Pennsylvania 400

Monday’s Results

- 1) Chris Buescher
- 2) Brad Keselowski
- 3) Regan Smith
- 4) Kevin Harvick
- 5) Tony Stewart
- 6) Kyle Larson
- 7) Denny Hamlin
- 8) Carl Edwards
- 9) Kyle Busch
- 10) Kurt Busch

celebration instead?

“If he gets it, he deserves one,” Tony Stewart said over the radio.

Buescher is on the brink of becoming the first Chase for the Sprint Cup championship bracket buster. Led by four-time winners Kyle Busch and Brad Keselowski, there are 11 slots seemingly set for race winners, and Buescher would make 12. Chase Elliott, Austin Dillon, Ryan Newman, Jamie McMurray and Kyle Larson are the four winless drivers battling for the final four spots.

Dillon and Larson nearly crashed the party.

Pocono became the first track in

NASCAR history to have two races pushed to Monday because of rain, and nasty weather affected the racing all day. With rain looming toward the halfway point, Larson and Dillon engaged in a thrilling five-lap battle for first. Larson kept his tight lead with a timely block of Dillon just two laps shy of the halfway point. Dillon dipped low and briefly snagged the lead, only for Larson to snatch it right back at the halfway point that made the race official.

But Larson and Dillon took their door-to-door battle on the high line, allowing Joey Logano to swoop low and seize the lead in one of the most exciting mid-race moves of the season. Logano, the 2015 Daytona 500 champion, pulled away in the fog — but Elliott got loose and turned Logano into the wall with 55 laps left in the race and sent his 22 to the garage.

Larson and Dillon resumed their race for the lead shortly before the fog came, but both faded.

Keselowski was second, followed by Regan Smith, Kevin Harvick and Stewart. Larson finished sixth and Dillon 13th. Jeff Gordon finished 28th driving for the injured Dale Earnhardt Jr.

BRIEFLY

Golf tournament tees off for Special Olympics

ECHO — A golf tournament to benefit the Hermiston/Pendleton Special Olympics program will tee off this month in Echo.

In its 11th year, the four-person scramble is Saturday, Aug. 13 with check-in at 8 a.m. at Echo Hills Golf Course. The cost is \$120 per team, with a portion being tax deductible. In addition, players an buy mulligans for \$5 and a score enhancement device for \$10.

The registration fees includes 18 holes of golf, door prizes, closest to the pin, longest putt and longest drive contests, a continental breakfast and lunch. In addition, prizes will be awarded to the first and second place teams. To reserve a cart, call 541-376-8244.

Money raised will help support the local Special Olympics program, which offers training and athletic competitions for people with intellectual disabilities. There is no charge for athletes to participate.

For more information or for a registration form, contact Mark or Kristi Smalley at smalleys@eotnet.net or 541-567-1546.

Tournament golfs fore life

ECHO — Golf Fore Life benefits Pregnancy Care Services in Pendleton and Hermiston.

The nine-hole, four-person scramble is Saturday, Aug. 27 with sign-in at 1 p.m. and a shotgun start at 2 p.m. at Echo Hills Golf Course. The cost is \$240 per team. Individuals can pay \$60 and be added to a foursome. The fee includes green fees, a cart and a barbecue dinner. In addition, prizes will be awarded to the top team and winners of the longest drive, closest to the pin and longest putt contests. Mulligans can be purchased for \$10. Also, people who don’t golf are invited to come for the dinner, which costs \$15.

Pregnancy Care Services provides resources for men and women who are faced with making decisions regarding an unplanned pregnancy. They have offices in Hermiston and Pendleton.

People planning to participate are asked to register by Wednesday, Aug. 17. For more information or for a registration form, call 541-276-5757, 541-567-2393 or visit www.pregnancycareservices.com.

— East Oregonian

Rodeo

Minor wins Chief Joseph Days all-around

East Oregonian & PRCA Media

JOSEPH — Jason Minor gave his all-around hopes in the Columbia River Circuit a boost by winning the title at the 71st Chief Joseph Days rodeo on Saturday night in Joseph.

Minor won \$1,375 in tie-down and team roping to move into third place in the season standings.

The Ellensburg, Washington, cowboy won his money in the second round. He placed second in the round in tie-down with a time of 8.6 seconds, and was fifth in the round of team roping with header Taylor White with a time of 6.1.

Other winners at this \$95,980 PRCA rodeo were bareback riders Richmond Champion and Zach Brown with 83 points on one head for \$1,647 each; steer wrestler Dakota Eldridge (8.2 seconds on two head for \$1,636); team ropers Cole Sherwood and Steve Sherwood (12.7 seconds on two head for \$1,846 each); saddle bronc rider Cody DeMoss (83 points on one head for \$2,425), tie-down roper J.C. Malone (17.4 seconds on two head for \$1,799); barrel racer Callahan Crossley



Wallowa County Chieftan photo/Ellen Morris Bishop

Randy DeMoss took the lead in the saddle bronc competition with an 83 on Friday, July 29 at the Chief Joseph Days Rodeo in Joseph. DeMoss’ score would hold to give him the event title.

(17.1 seconds on one run for \$2,017), steer roper Corey Ross (30.5 seconds on two head for \$1,047); bull rider Derek Kolbaba (78 points on one head for \$2,059).

QUICK CHEMISTRY: Tyler Wade and Dakota Kirchenschlager have only been roping together for four months, but they worked in perfect harmony in the short round at the Cheyenne (Wyo.) Frontier Days on July 31.

The pair of 24-year-olds came into the finals in the lead, and they kept it that way to earn the biggest win of their PRCA careers.

“I’ve won a lot of different events, but it’s such a big

deal to win this rodeo,” Wade said. “This is awesome.”

Kirchenschlager came close to capturing his first Cheyenne title last season, finishing second by three-tenths of a second with partner JoJo LeMond.

The duo placed second in the final round with a time of 9.8 seconds, and clocked a time of 27.0 seconds in the three-head average, which was plenty fast enough to hold off Kaleb Driggers and Junior Nogueira by 1.4 seconds.

Other winners at the \$831,571 rodeo were all-around cowboy J.D. Yates (\$24,351 in team

roping and steer roping), bareback rider Orin Larsen (255.5 points on three head), steer wrestler J.D. Struxness (26.7 seconds on three head), saddle bronc rider Jacobs Crawley (261 points on three head), tie-down roper Jerome Schneeberger (39.1 seconds on three head), steer roper Jarrett Blessing (53.9 seconds on three head), barrel racer Tillar Murray (52.73 seconds on three runs) and bull rider Roscoe Jarboe (246 points on three head).

NEW WORLD LEADERS: After several weeks of there being nearly no changes at the top of the world standings, there are five new leaders as of Aug. 1. Josh Peek overtook Ryan Jarrett for the lead in the all-around standings with \$76,316. Team ropers Kaleb Driggers and Junior Nogueira both shot to the lead after finishing second in the average at Cheyenne and winning in Grace, Idaho. Timber Moore surged ahead of Hunter Herrin in the tie-down roping standings thanks to a first-round win in Cheyenne and a victory in Rock Springs, Wyo., while Rocky Patterson took over the top spot in steer roping thanks to a first-round win in Cheyenne and placing in two rounds in Deadwood, S.D.

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