

KYLE BUSCH

Home Game

HUNTERSVILLE, N.C. (Feb. 24, 2010) – It's no secret that Kyle Busch loves to win races, no matter what the series and where the racetrack might be located. But if there is one track with special meaning for the 2009 NASCAR Nationwide Series champion, it's Las Vegas Motor Speedway (LVMS), a facility Busch saw built from the ground up while he was beginning his career in the Nevada desert.

While racing Legends cars in the shadow of the LVMS construction, Busch hoped and dreamed that one day he would have a chance to compete in the NASCAR races that would be held at the 1.5-mile oval.

That dream became a reality on Oct. 14, 2001 when Busch, at just 16 years old, started third and finished ninth in the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series race at Las Vegas. Shortly thereafter, an unexpected ruling by NASCAR that enacted a minimum age requirement for competitors in NASCAR's top-three series sidelined Busch until his 18th birthday.

Due to the ruling, Busch didn't compete in NASCAR events at Las Vegas until March 2004 when he finished 15th in the Nationwide Series race. A day later, the 2002 honors graduate from Las Vegas' Durango High School made his NASCAR Sprint Cup Series debut, but finished a disappointing 41st after an accident on lap 11.

It took Busch five years, but in March 2009 he won the Sprint Cup race at Las Vegas and was finally able to claim victory at his home track.

Did that satisfy the ultra-competitive Busch? Sure, but that race was a year ago, and Busch would like nothing more than to add a Las Vegas Nationwide Series trophy to his collection, and he'll look to do just that in Saturday's Sam's Town 300 Nationwide Series race.

Busch, driver of the No. 18 Z-Line Designs/Operation Helmet Toyota Camry for Joe Gibbs Racing, finished second in the 2007 Nationwide Series race, but has crashed out of the last two races at Las Vegas.

While Busch looks to find victory lane, his car will also sport the logo of Operation Helmet, a 100 percent volunteer, non-partisan charitable organization headquartered in Montgomery, Texas, that provides helmet upgrade kits free of charge to troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Jim Sexton, president and CEO of Z-Line Designs, has been a longtime supporter of Operation Helmet, and is using his sponsorship of Busch and Joe Gibbs Racing to generate increased support for Operation Helmet.

“Our troops give selflessly in protecting our freedom, and Operation Helmet is doing its best to return the favor,” said Sexton, whose father-in-law, Hugh Wild, served in the armed forces. “Having had a family member in the military further magnifies the importance of this amazing organization.”

Operation Helmet, which was also on the No. 18 during several races during 2009, is led by Dr. Bob Meadors, whose tireless efforts have led to more than 47,000 helmet upgrade kits being distributed to U.S. military personnel since 2004. The upgrade kits prevent traumatic head and brain injuries to soldiers by focusing on three core elements – protection, comfort and stability. Shock-absorbing pads keep the helmet from slapping the skull when hit with a blast or other impact, thereby decreasing the chances of brain injuries. Most importantly, the upgrade kit allows a helmet to stay on a soldier’s head longer, more often and in one place.

Z-Line Designs, the San Ramon, Calif.-based designer and import manufacturer of ready-to-assemble furniture, has given more than \$30,000 to the organization.

Kyle Busch, No. 18 Z-Line Designs / Operation Helmet NASCAR Nationwide Series Toyota Camry

You scored an exciting Nationwide Series victory last week at Auto Club Speedway in Fontana, Calif. Talk about that.

“It was exciting for us. Hopefully, it was exciting for the fans. What we were feeling in the racecar was, hopefully, what the fans were feeling in the grandstands – the excitement that came down there at the end. What a race. Joey (Logano) was just a dominant force all day. It was really a shame to see him kind of get messed up there at the end. I don’t even know what happened, but I think he got loose and we ended up getting by him. We raced down the backstretch with (Greg) Biffle, and (Brad) Keselowski put his nose in there late getting into (turn) three. I thought we were going to wreck, but we made it

through there. Going down the frontstretch, I pushed Biffle just to get us down there a little faster so we didn't have to battle anyone behind us, and then he got a little loose getting into (turn) one and I was able to get by him and race through (turns) three and four coming to the checkers side-by-side. We just barely edged it out. It was nerve-wracking there for a little bit. I wasn't sure if we were going to be able to win it, but we held it out just in the nick of time."

You watched Las Vegas Motor Speedway being built. What do you remember about that?

"My family watched the place get built from the ground up. When we were racing out at the Bullring, the track was nothing but a dirt lot. It was actually part of the parking lot for that Bullring racetrack. So, it's come a long ways. I remember sitting up in the grandstands when I was younger and when Kurt (brother) and my dad (Tom) were racing, turning around and looking out there and watching it. They broke ground I think in '95 or '96 or something like that. I just kept turning around and watching it, watched the grandstands go up, the banking be put in, the outside retaining wall, the garages and stuff. Every weekend we were over at the Bullring, we saw what was happening at the big track."

You won last year's Sprint Cup race at Las Vegas. How important is it for you to win the Nationwide Series race there in 2010?

"Obviously being from Las Vegas, it's a huge race for me. My preference would be to win both races at Las Vegas and get a sweep for the weekend. It'd be nice to win the Nationwide race though, considering we've crashed out of the last two races there. It was awesome winning the Sprint Cup race there, so I'd love to get to victory lane again with Z-Line Designs and celebrate in my hometown."

Jason Ratcliff, crew chief, No. 18 Z-Line Designs / Operation Helmet NASCAR Nationwide Series Toyota Camry

Being in the desert, does LVMS age faster than other racetracks because of the constant sunlight on it?

"I don't know. It seems to me that the tracks that go through a tough winter, like Kentucky, seem to change more year to year. More than the tracks that just get heat and sunlight. It's the hot summers and the freezing winters that make the changes. I would say Vegas probably changes less because the climate doesn't change as much."

With Kyle being a Las Vegas native, how important is it for you and the Z-Line Designs team to put him in victory lane?

“It’s real important. When we went to Las Vegas a couple of years ago and tested with Kyle – and that was one of the first tests we did with Kyle – we could tell how important it was to him. Winning at every track is a big deal, but I think for Kyle, winning out there is even a bigger deal. I lived in Texas for 13 years, so every time I go to Texas, it’s a big deal for me, even though I don’t live there anymore.”

The Car

Chassis No. 1888: This car made its debut in May 2009 at Charlotte (N.C.) Motor Speedway where Busch started second and finished third. It’s only other start came in November at Texas Motor Speedway in Fort Worth when Busch started sixth and led 179 of 200 laps en route to winning the O’Reilly Challenge.

Meet the No. 18 Z-Line Designs / Joe Gibbs Racing Team

Primary Team Members:

Driver: Kyle Busch

Crew Chief: Jason Ratcliff

Car Chief: Leo Thorson

Engine Builder: Mark Cronquist

Engine Tuner: Kevin Grubb

Spotter: Jeff Dickerson

Over-The-Wall Crew Members:

Gas Man: Brad Rothlin (also serves as shock specialist)

Front Tire Changer: Nick Odell

Catch Can Man: Jon Eicher

Front Tire Carrier: Brad Donaghy

Windshield: Toby Bigelow

Rear Tire Changer: Jack Seminara

Jack Man: Jason Tate

Rear Tire Carrier: Eric Groen

Road Crew Members:

Truck Driver: Dennis Valverde

Tire Specialist: Jason Clements

Mechanic: Josh Koch

Engineer: Matt Lucas

Kyle Busch's Las Vegas Motor Speedway Nationwide Series Box Score

Year	Date	Event	Start	Finish	Status/Laps	Laps Led	Earnings
2009	2/28	×Sam's Town 300	5	39	Crash, 21/209	0	\$21,76
2008	3/1	×Sam's Town 300	3	31	Crash, 102/202	18	\$22,39
2007	3/10	Sam's Town 300	20	2	Running, 200/200	81	\$63,95
2006	3/11	×Sam's Town 300	13	19	Running, 204/206	0	\$23,44
2005	3/12	Sam's Town 300	3	11	Running, 200/200	2	\$31,10
2004	3/6	Sam's Town 300	10	15	Running, 200/200	0	\$29,95

× Race length extended due to green-white-checker finish.

About Z-Line Designs

Based in San Ramon, Calif., Z-Line Designs is one of the nation's leading designers and import manufacturer of home office, home entertainment furniture and office seating. Their products can be found at Staples, OfficeMax, Target, Sears, Wal-Mart, Fry's Electronics, Conn's and other national retailers. The company designs and sources innovative, award-winning home office, home entertainment and home décor furniture in both hi-tech-inspired and traditional designs using a range of materials from solid American oak, birch and maple to mixed media combinations of wood, metal and glass. Z-Line Designs is one of the most unique manufacturers of computer desk systems, computer workstations, computer armoires, file/storage products and a large variety of television, audio and entertainment centers. Z-Line Designs is a two-time 2008 and one-time 2007 CES Innovation Award Winner, a two-time winner of the Staples "Best Category Development" Award (2003 & 2005), a two-time winner of the Staples "Vendor of the Year" (2004 & 2009), a seven-time ADEX Award winner (1999, 2003-2007, 2009) and a two-time Pinnacle Award winner (2002 & 2005). In 2008, the company

expanded its entertainment division to include the next generation of full-motion wall mounts and wall furniture systems.