

¡EL SEGUNDO!

NASCAR MÉXICO RETURNS FOR ITS SECOND US RACE

PHOTOS BY JOE SAGE

SUAREZ CAPTURES FOURTH CONSECUTIVE WIN IN THE TOYOTA 120 NASCAR MÉXICO TOYOTA SERIES RACE AT PHOENIX INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY

SUAREZ TRIUNFA POR CUARTA VEZ CONSECUTIVAMENTE EN LA CARRERA TOYOTA 120 DE NASCAR MÉXICO EN LA PHOENIX INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY

The NASCAR México Toyota Series celebrated the start of its 11th season, its second year in Arizona, and the 50th anniversary of Phoenix International Raceway with a thrilling ending to the Toyota 120. Daniel Suarez claimed his

fourth consecutive victory in NASCAR touring series races by making a daring last-lap pass of Antonio Perez in the backstretch dog-leg and fending off a late charge from defending series champion Rodrigo Peralta, to claim victory by .097 seconds.

With the top three all on fatigued tires,

Peralta was able to slip past Perez coming out of turn 4, for a second-place finish.

The first half of the Toyota 120 was plagued by wrecks and caution flags, but it still got off in daring fashion as Perez dove from his position in third below pole-sitter Ruben Pardo in turn 1, allowing outside pole-sitter Suarez to pull into the lead.

The first caution period came on lap 5 as Hector Felix spun his Toyota off turn 3. It was only the beginning: the yellow flag waved six times in the first half of the race. Things settled down after that, with Perez showing the way, and the race went caution-free from a restart on lap 65 to the end.

Suarez was caught speeding on pit road on a lap 46 pit stop and was assessed a pass-through penalty, forcing him to roll down pit lane as the rest of the field sped past, in the process dropping from first to 12th. He clearly had the fastest car, but the question became whether he could get around Perez as the laps ticked by.

Pole-sitter Pardo also ran into challenges, as a handling issue sent him tumbling back through the field and behind by a lap at mid-race, but the 34-year-old then came charging forward to claim a top-five finish.

NASCAR and OCESA, the leading live entertainment company in Latin America, have announced a ten-year extension of their cooperative event agreement.

NASCAR México has been an exciting addition to the calendar at Phoenix International Raceway. Thrilling, accessible and flavorful, we recommend the NASCAR México Toyota Series as a don't-miss event. Stay tuned for details of next year's race. ■

