



Press Release

(For immediate Release) _____

RAPHAEL LESSARD - DOMINATION THEN DISAPPOINTMENT **ARCA Series: Pensacola 200 at Five Flags Speedway** (Pensacola, Florida)

Pensacola, Florida, United States - March 10th, 2019. Raphaël Lessard opened his 2019 season last night (Saturday) at the Pensacola 200, aboard his **#19 FRL Express Inc. /KBR Development** car, a track where he recently excelled, the 0.8 km paved oval of Pensacola (Florida, USA). In the race, Raphael Lessard impressed everyone, starting from sixth on the grid and taking over the lead on lap 39, and then easily keeping it until the first caution period of the race on lap 82. He restarted second, took over the lead again on lap 123 and keeping it until the second caution period on lap 160. Restarting from second place again on lap 163, Raphael Lessard ran into serious oversteer by lap 168 and gradually slipped down to an unsatisfactory 8th place by the end of the 200-lap race.

The team prepared the car thoroughly, including a test day the previous week, helping Raphael Lessard to translate more easily from Super Late Model cars to a heavier and much more powerful ARCA car. The test session went very well, allowing Raphael Lessard to concentrate on his driving in the rough and tumble 20-car pack for the race, which he did in masterful fashion.

In order to take full advantage of last week's practice, Crew Chief Jeff Stankiewicz decided to use the same settings and old tires from the test session for a first run, and push as hard as possible, as if it was qualifying. They found that the car under-steered and the team was able to correct this easily before mounting a set of new tires.

"Once the new tires were on, we worked to make the car quick and consistent over long runs while minimizing tire wear and keeping the car predictable and easy to drive. Our final lap time only 0.442 sec. slower than the quickest driver confirmed that we have a good car for the 200 laps of the race, and especially for the end of the race! " said a satisfied Raphael Lessard after the session.

Raphael Lessard promised himself to go all-out in the qualifying session and delivered the goods, recording the 6th fastest lap (out of 20 participants), 0.12 sec. from pole, and an impressive 0.59 sec. faster than his best time in practice. "Qualifying rules allow only two fast laps, but I was able to confirm that the car remains constant with the right settings we found during the practice, which will be good for the race. I have confidence in our set-up, and I expect a comfortable and efficient car for the duration of the race. I have a winning car and I will push as hard as I can from the first to the last lap, always managing my tire wear", confirmed Raphaël Lessard after qualifying.

After the race, Raphael Lessard was philosophical. "No doubt in my mind! We had the best car on the track today before the last stop. The four new tires we took on at the last stop caused our loss. We suspect that one or two bad tires in the set caused the understeer, which rarely happens and ruined our race. Everything else worked perfectly. I got along well with Jeff Stankiewicz, the Crew Chief with

whom I was working for the first time. We were both convinced that we had the winning car, even a dominating one. We certainly ruled this ARCA race, a great achievement, and I am ready to continue in that vein for my next outing, in a NASCAR Gander Outdoors truck."

Next race – Martinsville, in the NASCAR Gander Outdoors Truck series (Martinsville, Virginia, March 22-23)

"I have already turned the page on last Saturday's race and now focus on my next race where I plan to apply my new knowledge to the best of my ability with the Kyle Busch Motorsports team in Martinsville," said Raphael Lessard, who is already mentally ready for the next race.

Photo credit: Kevtron Media

High resolution pictures: <https://urlz.fr/986t>

2019 SEASON

DATE	RACE	SERIES	TEAM	START	RESULTS
March 9, 2019	Five Flags Speedway, Pensacola, USA	ARCA	KBR Development	6 th	8 th
March 23, 2019	Martinsville Speedway, Virginia, USA	Gander Outdoors Truck	Kyle Busch Motorsports		
May 3, 2019	Dover International Speedway, Delaware, USA	Gander Outdoors Truck	Kyle Busch Motorsports		
August 15, 2019	Bristol Motor Speedway, Tennessee, USA	Gander Outdoors Truck	Kyle Busch Motorsports		

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ABOUT RAPHAEL LESSARD

Born on July 5, 2001, in St-Joseph-de-Beauce, Quebec, Canada, Raphael Lessard is one of the hottest prospects in North-American racing today. Raphael made his debut as a race car driver in 2013, on local tracks in the Quebec City area. A quick learner, Lessard moved up the ranks through 2014 and 2015, when he caught the eye of ex-NASCAR Cup Series driver David Gilliland. This led to Lessard running in the last four races of the 2015 season on the PASS North Tour, an asphalt Late Model series, driving for David Gilliland Racing. In 2016, his first full-time season with Gilliland, Lessard won the CARS Super Late Model Tour Championship with four wins, eight top-five and nine top-ten finishes in his No. 99 Toyota Camry. He also became the youngest Canadian race car driver to win a USA-based major stock car series. Since 2016, Lessard is part of Toyota's prestigious driver development program (TRD). To this day, he is the only Canadian to be recruited into this program. [Raphael Lessard Racing](#)

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

2018 - Competed in 16 Super Late Model events for Kyle Busch Motorsports

- Earned **two wins, seven top-five** and **13 top-10** finishes
- **Won the U.S. Short Track Nationals** at Bristol Motor Speedway
- **Won the Red Bull 400** at Anderson Speedway
- **Led 60 laps at the prestigious Snowball Derby** in December, when a leak put him out of the race lead with 6 laps to go.

2017 - Competed in **20 Super Late Model and two ARCA Series events**

- Earned **two wins and eight top-five finishes in Super Late Model competition**
- Captured **one top-10 finish in two starts in ARCA competition**

2016 – Competed in 10 races

- Won the CARS Super Late Model Series **Champion**
- **Youngest Canadian driver to win** in a USA-based major stock car series
- **Four wins, eight top-five and nine top-10** finishes in the 10-race schedule
- **Voted most popular driver in North America for 2016 by Speed51.com**

- Named **Top-10 Pavement Short Track Driver to watch in 2017** by Speed51.com
- Voted as the **seventh-ranked driver in the United States by Speed51.com's Short Track Power Ranking**

ABOUT KBR Development

KBR is a team running the full 2019 ARCA Menards Series, operating out of a 11,000-square-foot headquarters installation in Zeeland, Michigan. KBR works with only the best industry experts and top manufacturers in all aspects of operations. Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series winner Erik Jones, Raphael Lessard, Brandon McReynolds and Carson Hocevar are just a few of the talented drivers to have driven for the team.

ABOUT FRL EXPRESS Inc.

FRL Express Inc. is a general trucking company founded in December 2004 by François Lessard, specializing in general transportation in closed trailers, on short or long distances, in Canada and in the United States. Our team now employs about fifty logistics specialists as well as ten contracted truck drivers. We are proud of our business growth and evolution since our inception and recognize the hard work of every member of our team who contributed to our success. Our business priorities are taking care of our team members, providing flawless customer service, and ensuring complete customer satisfaction. We contribute to the success of our son Raphaël Lessard and are very proud of his accomplishments.

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