



## **Press Release**

(For immediate Distribution)

### **RAPHAEL LESSARD FINISHES A FIGHTING FOURTH AT POCONO RACEWAY**

First race on a 2.5-mile circuit in ARCA series

Pocono (Pennsylvania, United States) - May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019. For his first race on the triangular circuit of the Pocono Raceway, and also on a 2.5-mile circuit, Raphaël Lessard, at the wheel of car #28 FRL Express| Les cuisines Thermo-Bois, gave us a great show. Seventh on the grid, the young driver had moved up to second place on lap 31 of the 80-lap race, then dropped back due to tire problems and clawed his way back late in the race to finish the race in fourth place right behind the third-place car after some effective setup changes by the KBR team gave the driver a quicker car than the leaders.

“Team leader Jeff Stankiewicz and the crew knew exactly what to do, and every change made during pit stops improved the car,” explains the driver of car #28 FRL Express| Les cuisines Thermo-Bois.

#### **An Intense Flag-to-Flag Race**

The rain the day before the race (Thursday, May 30<sup>th</sup>) caused the Friday morning practice session to be postponed and the qualifying session to be cancelled. The drivers all started according to their best time from the morning practice session. The changes made to the car for this morning's tests (Friday) did not produce the desired effect at first, and the team reacted quickly by returning to the settings from the successful Wednesday test session (May 29<sup>th</sup>).

In second position during the first caution period (lap 30), the car started understeering badly right off the restart due to a technical problem with the right front tire, forcing Raphaël Lessard to adapt his driving so he could maintain a pace that limited the loss of efficiency in corners. His second visit was under green on lap 60, and the team changed all four tires. Back on track, Raphaël Lessard then mentioned now having “a car that could beat the other quick guys”.

With only fifteen laps to go, Raphaël Lessard was fourth, 15 seconds behind the third-place car. The time has come to attack as hard as possible and the young driver delivered the goods in a promising demonstration of all-out committed driving. Cutting the third-place driver's lead by one second a lap moved Raphaël Lessard up to a strong fourth-place finish, just two seconds behind the car in front of him.

“For the most part, the car was fast and easy to drive. The pit stops went very well, and I only needed one late yellow flag to close to the end of the race to close up to the three cars in front of me and attack them on the restart. But it was not to be. My car had become unbeatable! Thanks to the whole KBR team for the excellent work, to my partners Les cuisines Thermo-Bois and the investors who allow me to live my passion,” concluded a driver who was looking for more but convinced that he left nothing on the track.

**Photo credit:** Interview Kevtron Media

**High resolution pictures:** <https://buff.ly/2JCvTOq>

**2019 SEASON**

DATE	TRACK	SERIES	TEAM	GRID	RESULT	Notes
March 9, 2019	Five Flags Speedway, Pensacola, USA	ARCA	KBR Development	6th	8th	Led 83 of 250 laps
March 23, 2019	Martinsville Speedway, Virginie, USA	Gander Outdoors Truck	Kyle Busch Motosports	7th	14th	---
April 6, 2019	Bristol Motor Speedway, Tennessee, USA	K&N Pro East	Bill McAnally Racing	17th	9th	Mechanical problem and team penalty
April 10 & 11, 2019	Bristol Motors Speedway	Gander Outdoors Truck	Kyle Busch Motosports	--	--	Practice
May 3, 2019	Dover International Speedway, Delaware, USA	Gander Outdoors Truck	Kyle Busch Motosports	7th	11th	Quickest time in practice session
May 21 & 21, 2019	Iowa Speedway, Newton, USA	Gander Outdoors Truck	Kyle Busch Motosports	--	--	Practice
May 31, 2019	Pocono Raceway, Pennsylvanie, USA	ARCA	KBR Development	7th	4th	--
June 29, 2019	Autodrome Chaudière, Vallée-Jonction, Québec	Pinty's	Dumoulin Competition			
August 15, 2019	Bristol Motor Speedway, Tennessee, USA	Gander Outdoors Truck	Kyle Busch Motosports			

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## **ABOUT RAPHAEL LESSARD**

Born on July 5, 2001, in Saint-Joseph-de-Beauce, Quebec, Canada, Raphael Lessard is one of the most promising prospects in North American oval racing. Raphael made his debut in stock-cars in 2013, on local tracks in the Quebec City area. His exceptional talent quickly allowed him to climb the ladder and attract the attention of David Gilliland, a former NASCAR Monster Energy Series driver and now a team owner, in 2015. An agreement then allowed Lessard to participate in the last four races of the season in the PASS North Tour Series; a Late Model series on paved ovals, at the wheel of a David Gilliland Racing team car.

In 2016, his first full-time season with Gilliland Racing, Lessard won the CARS Super Late Model Tour title with four wins, 8 top five and 9 top ten in his No. 99 Toyota Camry, and thus becoming the youngest Canadian driver to win a major stock car series title in the United States. Since 2016, Lessard has been part of the Toyota Racing Development (TRD) prestigious driver development program. To date, he is the only Canadian to have been recruited into this program.

### **2018 - 16 races - Super Late Model with Kyle Busch Motorsports**

- Two wins, seven top-5s and 13 top-10s
- Wins the U.S. Short Track Nationals race at Bristol Motor Speedway
- Wins the Red Bull 400 at Anderson Speedway
- Leads 60 laps at the famous Snowball Derby in December, before a mechanical problem puts him out of the race with only six (6) laps to go.

### **2017 - Competed in 20 Super Late Model races and two ARCA series races**

- Two wins and eight top-5 finishes in the Super Late Model category
- A top-10 from two races in the ARCA series
- Voted the most popular driver in North America by Speed51.com
- Voted as one of the top 10 drivers to watch in 2017 by Speed51.com
- Named by Speed51.com Short Track Power Ranking as 7th best driver in the United States

### **2016 - Participated in 10 races**

- CARS Super Late Model Series Champion
- Youngest Canadian driver to win a prestigious stock-car series in the United States
- Four wins, eight top-5s and nine top-10s in 10 races

### **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.**

F.R.L. Express Inc. is a general transportation company founded in 2004 by François Lessard. Its main field of activity over the last 15 years is general transport in closed trailers over short and long distances in Canada and the United States. FRL currently have about 50 employees in addition to about ten tow carriers. FRL owners are proud of the progress made in recent years thanks to the FRL team members and wishes to continue on this positive note. "Our employees, customer service and satisfaction are our priorities. We are all proud to be partners in the success and achievements of our son Raphael Lessard," state the proud parents.

### **ABOUT ARCA**

This professional Stock Car racing series is often used to develop young drivers on their way to more senior NASCAR series. Races take place on all types of paved tracks and on dirt. ARCA cars are based on older NASCAR Cup cars, using a standardized 700 hp Ilmor engine. ARCA races are often presented as part of a major NASCAR race weekend to showcase their young drivers in front of the NASCAR officials, sponsors, teams and VIPs.

The series has helped launch drivers such as Benny Parsons, Ken Schrader and Kyle Petty at the time, and more recently, Kyle Busch, Justin Allgaier, Casey Mears, and Sam Hornish, Jr.

Young drivers often find rides for the traditional ARCA race that is part of Daytona Speedweek at the start of the racing season. Driving in an event like that one is part of the process to qualify for a NASCAR race licence for Speedway races on tracks such as Daytona and Talladega in senior NASCAR Series. Racing in ARCA costs about 10% of racing in the NASCAR Gander Outdoors Truck Series.

### **ABOUT POCONO RACEWAY**

This tri-oval opened in 1974 and features an asymmetrical configuration. Turn 1, inclined at 14 degrees, mimics the Trenton Speedway, while turn 2, inclined at 9 degrees, uses the Indianapolis Motor

Speedway shape, and turn 3, inclined at 6 degrees, is based on the old Trenton Speedway. The three very different corner geometries mean that trajectories, corner speed, aerodynamics drag and downforce, bumps and how to pass a competitor in the corners vary greatly over one lap. The essentially flat corners and all taken at relatively high speeds that remind drivers of racing on a road course. Emerson Fittipaldi holds the top speed record at 340 km/h in an Indy Car, and Kyle Larson holds that record for NASCAR, at 295 km/h. ARCA cars are expected to approach 300 km/h at the finish line, on the longest straightaway in NASCAR.

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