



## Coca-Cola of Kokomo Elite Series

*Round Six*

*Michigan International Speedway*

Trackside Report

March 1, 2020

33 drivers are on the entry list for tonight's Gateway to Magic 300, meaning all drivers will have the opportunity to start the race. The race is scheduled for 150 laps and is part of this year's Triptacular Memories Triple Crown series, counting for double points.

Henry Bennett enters tonight's race with a three-point lead on Philip Kraus in the championship standings, followed by Jason Brophy, Adam Blocker, and Joe Branch.

### Qualifying

Henry Bennett takes the pole for this evening's race with a best lap time of 31.885 seconds. Adam Crane qualified second, followed by Andreas Eik and Christopher Demeritt in the second row.

Joe Branch (24<sup>th</sup>), Philip Kraus (26<sup>th</sup>), Ray Kingsbury (31<sup>st</sup>), Simon Briant (32<sup>nd</sup>) all starting from the back with poor qualifying efforts this evening.

### Race

LAP 1: GREEN: Henry Bennett leads the full field of 33 cars into Turn 1 to begin the 150-lap race.

LAP 3: Charles Anti has retired from the race and will finish 33<sup>rd</sup>.

LAP 4: Multiple rows of drivers two-wide in the lead pack as the first 13 cars are tucked within one second of the lead.

LAP 5: Chris Stofer has climbed from 15<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> in the first few laps of the race.

LAP 7: Chad Simpson has moved from 19<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> as another quick climber early on in this race.

LAP 9: Four-wide for the race lead between Bennett, Eik, Crane, and Demeritt. Eik takes the lead from Bennett who had been protecting the bottom. Stofer up to P2.

LAP 10: CAUTION: Demeritt and Crane make contact, collecting Bennett as well to bring out the first caution of the race. Other cars involved include Dakota DiCienzo, Brendan Lichtenberg, and John Poole.

LAP 13: Yellow flag pit stops are underway and Philip Kraus has stayed out to lead a lap before eventually pitting. Chris Stofer assumes the race lead.

LAP 15: GREEN: Stofer leads the field back to green flag conditions, followed by Eik, AJ Burton and Simpson in the top four.

LAP 18: Three-wide for the lead into Turn 1 between Stofer, Eik and Burton.

LAP 19: Aaron Roufs up to P8 from a 29<sup>th</sup>-place starting position. Henry Bennett has retired from the race and will finish 30<sup>th</sup>. Joe Flanagan has dropped two laps from the leaders and is 29<sup>th</sup>.

LAP 21: CAUTION: Gabriel Perez goes for a spin down the backstretch to bring out the second yellow flag of the night. He spins but avoids making wall contact after making contact with Burton on the exit of Turn 2.

LAP 22: Yellow flag pit stops commence. To this point in the race, there have been eight lead changes. Andrew Wood is shown as the race leader. Perez, who brought out the caution, stays out and finds his way to fourth place – though on old tires.

LAP 24: Firestone reports that the track temperature is 103 degrees Fahrenheit and the ambient temperature is 75 degrees Fahrenheit.

LAP 25: GREEN: Wood leads the field back to green flag conditions, followed by Demeritt, Perez, and Stofer.

LAP 28: First 11 cars in the running order are within one second of the race lead. Wood continues to pace Stofer, Perez and Simpson.

LAP 32: Perez providing heavy pressure to Wood and the Team Talent driver yields the lead to Perez.

LAP 33: Perez drifts high on the exit of Turn 2 and Stofer jumps back to the race lead, followed by Andrew Kinsella – into the top two for the first time tonight.

LAP 34: Kinsella grabs the lead momentarily before yielding back to Stofer. Kinsella started the race 18<sup>th</sup> on the grid.

LAP 38: Stofer leading Kinsella, Roufs, Wood, and Eik. First nine cars in the lead pack are still less than a second off of the leader.

LAP 41: Bradley Walters catches the apron and does a half-spin off to the inside of the track without bringing out a yellow flag. He drops out of the main pack and falls to 26<sup>th</sup>.

LAP 43: Demeritt has climbed to sixth place after dropping back earlier in the race.

LAP 44: Lichtenberg goes a lap down as the lead pack engulfs him.

LAP 46: Perez is the first driver to hit pit lane for a green flag pit stop, pitting from the top five. Demeritt follows shortly thereafter, sliding sideways onto the pit lane.

LAP 52: Stofer leads Kinsella, Simpson, John Downing and Branch in the top five.

LAP 54: Lichtenberg spins coming to the pit lane but there is no yellow flag for the incident. Multiple drivers heading to the pit lane on this lap and Philip Kraus assumes the race lead.

LAP 56: Most of the field has cycled through the pit sequence, and Demeritt and Wood have separated themselves from the rest of the pack for the time being. Stofer, Simpson, Burton and Kraus lead the second pack, which is just over a second behind the leaders.

LAP 63: Wood and Demeritt have a miscommunication which hurts the momentum of the No. 144 machine.

LAP 69: Demeritt drops to seventh overall. The two leaders have dropped back into the main pack, and Stofer now leads Downing, Kinsella, Burton and Branch.

LAP 75: At the halfway mark, Downing and Stofer continue to battle for the lead with Burton, Branch and Kinsella behind them. Track temperature up to 107 degrees Fahrenheit according to Firestone.

LAP 77: 29 lead changes thus far in the race, and the fastest lap was turned by Logan Simmons – 31.009 seconds. Burton takes the race lead as Demeritt hits the pit lane.

LAP 83: Stofer leads Branch, followed by Kinsella, Eik, Downing, Showen, Briant, and Kruas all within one second of the lead. Stofer promptly pits from the top spot.

LAP 85: Multiple cars coming to pit lane each lap, and Kraus leads Brophy, Simpson and Thompson momentarily.

LAP 90: Kinsella leads Stofer, Showen, Burton, and Downing as the green flag pit cycle comes to a close. Wood runs P7 while Demeritt is P15 – they've dropped after coming out on top during the previous pit cycle.

LAP 96: Stofer paces the field ahead of Kinsella, Burton, Branch, and Downing. Top seven drivers are within one second of the lead.

LAP 102: Cahoe comes to the race lead with Roufs running P2 and Showen third. Demeritt is back up to P4 ahead of Branch, Stofer, Burton, Kinsella, Downing, and Wood in the top ten.

LAP 106: Demeritt onto the pit lane for a green flag stop as Roufs leads Cahoe, Burton, Showen, and Branch in the top five. Ray Kingsbury is up to P7, and Gabriel Perez has dropped well outside of the top-20 in 26<sup>th</sup> overall.

LAP 109: 24 cars are on the lead lap, as Logan Simmons (P24) is the last driver on the same lap as the leaders. Demeritt has dropped a lap to the leaders after making his green-flag stop.

LAP 112: Burton back to the lead as he pulls the top spot from Cahoe, leading Roufs, Showen, and Branch at the moment.

LAP 114: Multiple cars starting the final green flag pit cycle, including Showen and Burton this lap.

LAP 116: Branch, Brophy and Kingsbury still out on track. Simmons to the pit lane for service and he is down and away.

LAP 117: Branch pits from the lead, along with Downing, Poole, and David Adams.

LAP 119: Brophy leads Kingsbury, Kraus, Thompson and Levick while Christopher Demeritt leads all drivers in this pack trying to stay on the lead lap.

LAP 121: Thompson and Simpson come to the pit lane for their final stop of the night.

LAP 122: Kingsbury and Kraus pit as Brophy stays out one more lap. Brophy spins coming onto the pit lane and stalls the car pitting from the lead. Has to take a tow to the pit box and is eliminated from contention. Later reported that he was out of fuel, which caused the engine to shut off at the head of the pit lane.

LAP 123: Cahoe leads Demeritt, Showen and Roufs as the pit cycle is complete. Wood is the last driver in that lead group. Kinsella incurred a pit penalty during the final stop and lost enough time to drop back to 23<sup>rd</sup> overall.

LAP 127: Brophy has re-joined the race, two laps down after his pit road miscue.

LAP 129: Shownen has to come to the pit lane, dropping from the lead group. The front pack has dropped back to the larger second group, expanding the list of possible winners in this race.

LAP 130: Cahoe leads Roufs, Demeritt and Wood in the lead pack, followed by a quickly-closing Burton, Thompson, and Kraus.

LAP 133: Burton comes to pit lane for service, dropping from the lead pack after mounting a valiant charge to lead the second pack to the leaders.

LAP 135: Wood to the pit lane, as Roufs leads Cahoe, Stofer, Branch and Thompson in the race for the win.

LAP 139: Cahoe paces the race ahead of Roufs, Thompson, Levick and Stofer. Nine cars are within one second of the lead, in prime position to win the race.

LAP 141: Cahoe and Roufs have to come to the pit lane for service. Levick, Thompson, Kraus, Kingsbury, Simpson and Stofer lead the race.

LAP 143: Thompson to the race lead while the leaders deal with lapped traffic.

LAP 145: Dealing with the lapped traffic, Levick gets around Thompson to clearly grab the lead.

LAP 146: Levick breaks away from the field as Thompson and Kraus make contact in a hold-your-breath moment. Both cars wiggle but continue on without much losing too much ground to the leader.

LAP 149: Levick, Kraus and Simpson fighting for the lead heading into the final lap of the race – a Spark VR triple up front.

LAP 150: Levick and Kraus battle side-by-side through the entire lap, finishing with Kraus on top by 0.010 seconds. Philip Kraus wins the second Triptacular Memories Triple Crown race of the season in a 1-2-3-4 finish for Last Lap Motorsports. Simpson, Kingsbury, and Thompson round out the first five.

This is the first race win for Philip Kraus in his Indy Elite Series career, leading five laps en route to this win.

There were 58 lead changes in today's 150-lap race, as well as two cautions for six laps.

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**COCA-COLA OF KOKOMO ELITE SERIES  
POINTS STANDINGS AFTER ROUND SIX**

1. Philip Kraus, 290
2. Henry Bennett, 204
3. Jason Brophy, 198
4. Joe Branch, 170
5. Chad Simpson, 169
6. Chris Stofer, 159
7. Adam Blocker, 157
8. Tony Showen, 151  
Riley Thompson, 151
10. Frank Levick IV, 150

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The next race in the 2020 Coca-Cola of Kokomo Elite Series season will be the Alzheimer's Association 160 at Iowa Speedway on Sunday, March 8, 2020, shown live on SYM TV. The final Triptacular Memories Triple Crown race of the season will be held on Sunday, May 3 for the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual IES Indy 500 presented by Triptacular Memories.