

2025 SIX RIVERS MEDIA **BRISTOL RACE** WEEKEND GUIDE

**IT'S
BRISTOL,
BABY!**



SEPTEMBER 11 - 13



THE NIGHT RACE

SEPT. 11-13 |  **NASCAR**



SCAN QR CODE
TO GET TICKETS!

Weekend schedule, BMS winners

By JEFF BIRCHFIELD

jbirchfield@sixriversmedia.com

Weekend Schedule

THURSDAY, SEPT. 11

1:00 p.m. — Spectator gates open
1:00 p.m. — ARCA Menard's
Series practice
2:00 p.m. — ARCA Menard's
Series qualifying
3:05 p.m. — NASCAR Truck Series

practice
4:10 p.m. — NASCAR Truck Series
qualifying
5:20 p.m. — ARCA Series driver
introductions
5:30 p.m. — ARCA Series Bush's
Beans 200
7:45 p.m. — Truck Series driver
introductions
8:10 p.m. — NASCAR Truck Series
UNOH 200

FRIDAY, SEPT. 12

2:00 p.m. — Spectator gates open
2:05 p.m. — NASCAR Xfinity
Series practice
3:10 p.m. — NASCAR Xfinity
Series qualifying
4:35 p.m. — NASCAR Cup Series
practice
5:40 p.m. — NASCAR Cup Series
qualifying
7:00 p.m. — Xfinity Series driver
introductions

7:30 p.m. — NASCAR Xfinity
Series Food City 300

SATURDAY, SEPT. 13

2:00 p.m. — Spectator gates open
3:00 p.m. — BMS fan track walk
5:30 p.m. — Chris Janson concert
6:50 p.m. — Cup Series driver
introductions
7:30 p.m. — NASCAR Cup Series
Bass Pro Shops Night Race

Bristol Motor Speedway Past Winners NASCAR Cup Series Bass Pro Shops Night Race (former Volunteer 500)

2024 Kyle Larson
2023 Denny Hamlin
2022 Chris Buescher
2021 Kyle Larson
2020 Kevin Harvick
2019 Denny Hamlin
2018 Kurt Busch
2017 Kyle Busch
2016 Kevin Harvick
2015 Joey Logano
2014 Joey Logano
2013 Matt Kenseth
2012 Denny Hamlin
2011 Brad Keselowski
2010 Kyle Busch
2009 Kyle Busch
2008 Carl Edwards
2007 Carl Edwards
2006 Matt Kenseth
2005 Matt Kenseth
2004 Dale Earnhardt Jr.
2003 Kurt Busch
2002 Jeff Gordon
2001 Tony Stewart
2000 Rusty Wallace
1999 Dale Earnhardt
1998 Mark Martin
1997 Dale Jarrett
1996 Rusty Wallace
1995 Terry Labonte
1994 Rusty Wallace
1993 Mark Martin
1992 Darrell Waltrip
1991 Alan Kulwicki
1990 Ernie Irvan
1989 Darrell Waltrip
1988 Dale Earnhardt
1987 Dale Earnhardt
1986 Darrell Waltrip
1985 Dale Earnhardt
1984 Terry Labonte
1983 Darrell Waltrip
1982 Darrell Waltrip
1981 Darrell Waltrip
1980 Cale Yarborough
1979 Darrell Waltrip
1978 Cale Yarborough
1977 Cale Yarborough
1976 Cale Yarborough
1975 Richard Petty
1974 Cale Yarborough
1973 Benny Parsons
1972 Bobby Allison
1971 Charlie Glotzbach
1970 Bobby Allison
1969 David Pearson
1968 David Pearson
1967 Richard Petty
1966 Paul Goldsmith
1965 Ned Jarrett
1964 Fred Lorenzen
1963 Fred Lorenzen
1962 Jim Paschal
1961 Jack Smith

Food City 500
(former Southeastern 500)
2025 Kyle Larson



BRISTOL MOTOR SPEEDWAY

Darrell Waltrip leads all drivers with 12 NASCAR Cup Series wins at Bristol

2024 Denny Hamlin
2023 Christopher Bell (dirt)
2022 Kyle Busch (dirt)
2021 Joey Logano (dirt)
2020 Brad Keselowski
2019 Kyle Busch
2018 Kyle Busch
2017 Jimmie Johnson
2016 Carl Edwards
2015 Matt Kenseth
2014 Carl Edwards
2013 Kasey Kahne
2012 Brad Keselowski
2011 Kyle Busch
2010 Jimmie Johnson
2009 Kyle Busch
2008 Jeff Burton
2007 Kyle Busch
2006 Kurt Busch
2005 Kevin Harvick
2004 Kurt Busch
2003 Kurt Busch
2002 Kurt Busch
2001 Elliott Sadler
2000 Rusty Wallace
1999 Rusty Wallace
1998 Jeff Gordon
1997 Jeff Gordon
1996 Jeff Gordon
1995 Jeff Gordon
1994 Dale Earnhardt
1993 Rusty Wallace
1992 Alan Kulwicki
1991 Rusty Wallace
1990 Davey Allison
1989 Rusty Wallace
1988 Bill Elliott
1987 Dale Earnhardt
1986 Rusty Wallace
1985 Dale Earnhardt Sr.
1984 Darrell Waltrip
1983 Darrell Waltrip
1982 Darrell Waltrip
1981 Darrell Waltrip
1980 Dale Earnhardt
1979 Dale Earnhardt
1978 Darrell Waltrip
1977 Cale Yarborough

1976 Cale Yarborough
1975 Richard Petty
1974 Cale Yarborough
1973 Cale Yarborough
1972 Bobby Allison
1971 David Pearson
1970 Donnie Allison
1969 Bobby Allison
1968 David Pearson
1967 David Pearson
1966 Dick Hutcherson
1965 Junior Johnson
1964 Fred Lorenzen
1963 Fireball Roberts
1962 Bobby Johns
1961 Joe Weatherly

BMS Cup Series Wins

Darrell Waltrip 12
Dale Earnhardt 9
Rusty Wallace 9
Cale Yarborough 9
Kyle Busch 9
Kurt Busch 6
Jeff Gordon 5
David Pearson 5
Bobby Allison 4
Carl Edwards 4
Denny Hamlin 4
Matt Kenseth 4
Kyle Larson 3
Kevin Harvick 3
Brad Keselowski 3
Joey Logano 3
Fred Lorenzen 3
Richard Petty 3
Jimmie Johnson 2
Alan Kulwicki 2
Terry Labonte 2
Mark Martin 2
Davey Allison 1
Donnie Allison 1
Christopher Bell 1
Jeff Burton 1
Dale Earnhardt Jr. 1
Bill Elliott 1
Charlie Glotzbach 1
Paul Goldsmith 1

Dick Hutcherson 1
Ernie Irvan 1
Dale Jarrett 1
Ned Jarrett 1
Bobby Johns 1
Junior Johnson 1
Kasey Kahne 1
Benny Parsons 1
Jim Paschal 1
Fireball Roberts 1
Elliott Sadler 1
Jack Smith 1
Tony Stewart 1
Joe Weatherly 1

NASCAR Xfinity Series

2025 Kyle Larson
2024 Cole Custer
2023 Justin Allgaier
2022 Noah Gragson
2021 A.J. Allmendinger
2020 Noah Gragson
Chase Briscoe
2019 Christopher Bell
Tyler Reddick
2018 Ryan Preece
Kyle Larson
2017 Erik Jones
Kyle Busch
2016 Erik Jones
Austin Dillon
2015 Joey Logano
Austin Dillon
2014 Kyle Busch
Ryan Blaney
2013 Kyle Busch
Kyle Busch
2012 Elliott Sadler
Joey Logano
2011 Kyle Busch
Kyle Busch
2010 Justin Allgaier
Kyle Busch
2009 Kevin Harvick
David Ragan
2008 Clint Bowyer
Brad Keselowski

2007 Carl Edwards
Kasey Kahne
2006 Kyle Busch
Matt Kenseth
2005 Kevin Harvick
Ryan Newman
2004 Martin Truex Jr.
Dale Earnhardt Jr.
2003 Kevin Harvick
Michael Waltrip
2002 Jeff Green
Jimmy Spencer
2001 Matt Kenseth
Kevin Harvick
2000 Sterling Marlin
Kevin Harvick
1999 Jason Keller
Matt Kenseth
1998 Elliott Sadler
Kevin LePage
1997 Jeff Burton
Jimmy Spencer
1996 Mark Martin
Jeff Fuller
1995 Steve Grissom
Steve Grissom
1994 David Green
Kenny Wallace
1993 Michael Waltrip
Todd Bodine
1992 Harry Gant
Todd Bodine
1991 Bobby Labonte
Dale Jarrett
1990 L.D. Ottinger
Rick Mast
1989 Rick Wilson
Mark Martin
1988 Dale Earnhardt
Larry Pearson
1987 Morgan Shepherd
Larry Pearson
1986 Morgan Shepherd
Brett Bodine
1985 Darrell Waltrip
Brett Bodine

1984 Morgan Shepherd
1983 Morgan Shepherd
Sam Ard
1982 Phil Parsons
Jack Ingram

NASCAR Truck Series

2025 Chandler Smith
2024 Christian Eckes
Layne Riggs
2023 Joey Logano (dirt)
Corey Heim
2022 Ben Rhodes (dirt)
Ty Majeski
2021 Martin Truex Jr. (dirt)
Chandler Smith
2020 Sam Mayer
2019 Brett Moffitt
2018 Johnny Sauter
2017 Kyle Busch
2016 Ben Kennedy
2015 Ryan Blaney
2014 Brad Keselowski
2013 Kyle Busch
2012 Timothy Peters
2011 Kevin Harvick
2010 Kyle Busch
2009 Kyle Busch
2008 Kyle Busch
2007 Johnny Benson Jr.
2006 Mark Martin
2005 Mike Skinner
2004 Carl Edwards
2003 Travis Kvapil
2000-2002 No Truck Race at
BMS
1999 Jack Sprague
1998 Ron Hornaday Jr.
1997 Ron Hornaday Jr.
1996 Rick Cerelli
1995 Joe Ruttman
ARCA Menards Series
2024 William Sawalich
2023 William Sawalich
2022 Sammy Smith
2021 Ty Gibbs
2020 Sam Mayer



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Bass Pro Shops Night Race 2025 Driver Capsules



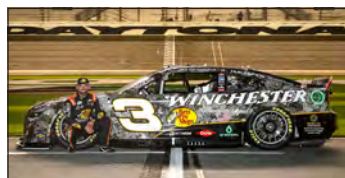
1 Ross Chastain

Trackhouse Racing Chevrolet
Hometown: Alva, Fla.
Crew chief: Phil Surgen.
Best Bristol concrete finish: 6th



2 Austin Cindric

Team Penske Ford
Hometown: Columbus, Ohio.
Crew chief: Brian Wilson.
Best Bristol concrete finish: 13th



3 Austin Dillon

Richard Childress Racing
Hometown: Lewisville, N.C.
Crew chief: Richard Boswell
Best Bristol concrete finish: 4th



4 Noah Gragson

Front Row Motorsports Ford
Hometown: Las Vegas
Crew chief: Drew Blickensderfer
Best Bristol concrete finish: 12th



5 Kyle Larson

Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet
Hometown: Elk Grove, Calif.
Crew chief: Cliff Daniels
Best Bristol finish: Win (2 times)



6 Brad Keselowski

RFK Racing Ford
Hometown: Rochester Hills, Mich.
Crew chief: Jeremy Bullins
Best Bristol concrete finish: Win
(3 times)



7 Justin Haley

Spire Motorsports Chevrolet
Hometown: Winamac, Ind.
Crew chief: Ryan Sparks
Best Bristol concrete finish: 12th



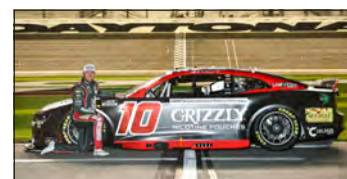
8 Kyle Busch

Richard Childress Racing Chevrolet
Hometown: Las Vegas
Crew chief: Randall Burdett
Best Bristol concrete finish: Win (8 times)



9 Chase Elliott

Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet
Hometown: Dawsonville, Ga.
Crew chief: Alan Gustafson
Best Bristol concrete finish: 2nd



10 Ty Dillon

Kaulig Racing Chevrolet
Hometown: Lewisville, N.C.
Crew Chief: Andrew Dickeson
Best Bristol concrete finish: 15th



11 Denny Hamlin

Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota
Hometown: Chesterfield, Va.
Crew chief: Chris Gayle
Best Bristol concrete finish: Win
(4 times)



12 Ryan Blaney

Team Penske Ford
Hometown: High Point, N.C.
Crew chief: Jonathan Hassler.
Best Bristol concrete finish: 4th



16 A.J. Allmendinger

Kaulig Racing Chevrolet
Hometown: Los Gatos, Calif.
Crew chief: Trent Owens
Best Bristol concrete finish: 7th



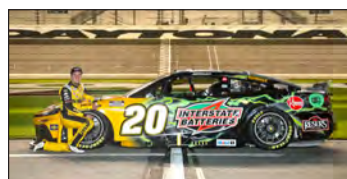
17 Chris Buescher

RFK Racing Ford
Hometown: Prosper, Texas
Crew chief: Scott Graves
Best Bristol concrete finish: Win
(2022)



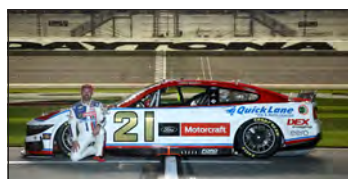
19 Chase Briscoe

Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota
Hometown: Mitchell, Ind.
Crew chief: James Small
Best Bristol concrete finish: 4th



20 Christopher Bell

Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota
Hometown: Norman, Okla.
Crew chief: Adam Stevens
Best Bristol concrete finish: 3rd



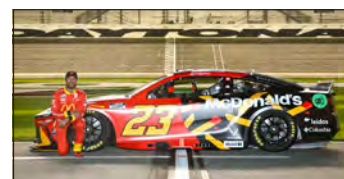
21 Josh Berry

Wood Brothers Racing Ford
Hometown: Hendersonville, Tenn.
Crew chief: Miles Stanley
Best Bristol concrete finish: 12th



22 Joey Logano

Team Penske Ford
Hometown: Middletown, Conn.
Crew chief: Paul Wolfe
Best Bristol concrete finish: Win
(2 times)



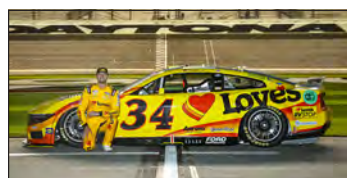
23 Bubba Wallace

23XI Racing Toyota
Hometown: Mobile, Ala.
Crew chief: Charles Denike
Best Bristol concrete finish: 3rd



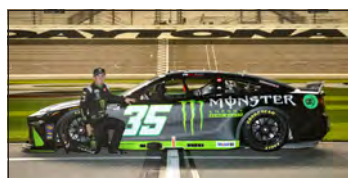
24 William Byron

Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet
Hometown: Charlotte, N.C.
Crew chief: Rudy Fugle.
Best Bristol concrete finish: 3rd



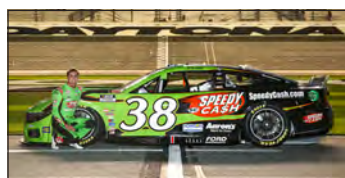
34 Todd Gilliland

Front Row Motorsports Ford
Hometown: Sherrills Ford, N.C.
Crew chief: Chris Lawson
Best Bristol concrete finish: 16th



35 Riley Herbst

23XI Racing Toyota
Hometown: Las Vegas
Crew chief: Davin Restivo
Best Bristol concrete finish: 28th



38 Zane Smith

Front Row Motorsports Ford
Hometown: Huntington Beach, Calif.
Crew chief: Ryan Bergenty
Best Bristol concrete finish: 16th



41 Cole Custer

Haas Factory Team Ford
Hometown: Ladera Ranch, Calif.
Crew chief: Chad Johnston.
Best Bristol concrete finish: 8th



42 John Hunter Nemechek

Legacy Motor Club Toyota
Hometown: Mooresville, N.C.
Crew chief: Travis Mack
Best Bristol concrete finish: 6th



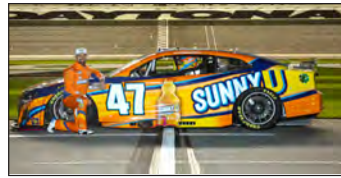
43 Erik Jones

Legacy Motor Club Toyota
Hometown: Byron, Mich.
Crew chief: Ben Beshore
Best Bristol concrete finish: 2nd



45 Tyler Reddick

23XI Racing Toyota
Hometown: Corning, Calif.
Crew chief: Billy Scott
Best Bristol concrete finish: 4th



47 Ricky Stenhouse Jr.

Hyak Motorsports Chevrolet
Hometown: Olive Branch, Ms.
Crew chief: Mike Kelley
Best Bristol concrete finish: 2nd



48 Alex Bowman

Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet
Hometown: Tuscon, Ariz.
Crew chief: Blake Harris
Best Bristol concrete finish: 4th



54 Ty Gibbs

Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota
Hometown: Charlotte, N.C.
Crew chief: Tyler Allen
Best Bristol concrete finish: 3rd



60 Ryan Preece

RFK Racing Ford
Hometown: Berlin, Conn.
Crew chief: Derrick Finley
Best Bristol concrete finish: 7th



71 Michael McDowell

Spire Motorsports Chevrolet
Hometown: Phoenix
Crew chief: Travis Peterson
Best Bristol concrete finish: 6th



77 Carson Hocevar

Spire Motorsports Chevrolet
Hometown: Portage, Mich.
Crew chief: Luke Lambert
Best Bristol concrete finish: 11th



78 B.J. McLeod

Live Fast Motorsports
Hometown: Wauchula, Fla.
Crew chief: George Ingram
Best Bristol concrete finish: 24th



88 Shane Van Gisbergen

Trackhouse Racing Chevrolet
Hometown: Auckland, New Zealand
Crew chief: Stephen Doran
Best Bristol concrete finish: 38th



99 Daniel Suarez

Trackhouse Racing Chevrolet
Hometown: Monterrey, Mexico.
Crew chief: Matt Swiderski
Best Bristol concrete finish: 8th



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Larson looks to continue recent domination at BMS

By JEFF BIRCHFIELD
jbirchfield@sixriversmedia.com

Kyle Larson has dominated Bristol Motor Speedway over the last two races in a way not seen since the 1970s.

One has to go back to the era of NASCAR Hall of Famer Cale Yarborough to see the kind of dominant performances that Larson had in last year's Bass Pro Shops Night Race and this season's Food City 500.

Larson, driver of the No. 5 Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet, has led 873 of the last 1,000 laps to leave everyone else racing for best in class.

"The last two races we've qualified well, which really helps," said Larson, the 2021 NASCAR champion. "Then our car balance is just really good. I could tell right away in practice this time around my car was extremely good. When spend 800 and something laps out front, you just become a better leader and a better driver at managing the pace."

Obviously, his rival drivers wish the three-time Cup Series winner at Bristol wasn't so good at managing the pace. Other keys for Larson are knowing how to quickly get around the other cars and having a strong car himself.

"It's learning what it takes to set guys up and what to look for in passing and keeping that buffer to seconds," Larson said. "I think just experience



RANDALL PERRY

Kyle Larson emerges victorious from his car after winning the 2025 Food City 500 at Bristol Motor Speedway.



FILE PHOTO

Kyle Larson's crew services the No. 5 Chevrolet on his way to winning the 2024 Bass Pro Shops Night Race.

to go along with a good car and a track that I've really always ran well here. Just knew now I kind of have the team and car

to go along with it. Jeff Gordon, who had his own share of success at Bristol Motor Speedway with five wins, now serves



RANDALL PERRY

Kyle Larson poses with the sword and trophy after winning the 2024 Bass Pro Shops Night Race.

as a vice-president at Hendrick Motorsports. He talked about being amazed at what Larson is able to do

behind the wheel of a race car.

At the end of the NASCAR regular season, Larson had

three wins in the Cup Series, two wins in the Xfinity Series and one in the Truck Series.

He also had nine wins in winged sprint cars.

"I've seen him race so many different types of cars and do extraordinary things and dominate races," Gordon said. "It's all about what are the records that he can break or what are the things that he can do next. I'm just glad that he's a part of our organization and that we get to go race with him and he's teamed up with Cliff Daniels, which I think they make just a great pairing for crew chief and driver."

No one would argue with Gordon's assessment as Larson and Daniels appear to have the chemistry that all teams look for. Daniels appreciates how Larson doesn't just rely on his talent. He studies for each race, looking at both recent races and those in the past like the 2004 Night Race won by Dale Earnhardt Jr.

"I like to think of myself as a little bit of a NASCAR history buff, but I totally forgot I think the fact that 'It's Bristol, baby,' came from him from that race," Larson said. "I had exhausted myself on watching all of the 2023 and 2024 races. For me it's a helpful reminder just to see the way the track has evolved, the way the sport has evolved, and just have a healthy appreciation for what we do."



RANDALL PERRY

Justin Allgaier raises his arms in victory lane following the 2023 Food City 300 NASCAR Xfinity Series race.

Xfinity Series champion Allgaier relives Food City 300 win

By **JEFF BIRCHFIELD**
jbirchfield@sixriversmedia.com

Justin Allgaier saw the gamble pay off at the 2023 Food City 500.

After making a late pit stop for fresh tires, Allgaier powered his way through the field and made a winning pass of Daniel Hemric with 11 laps to go to win the prestigious race at Bristol Motor Speedway.

Allgaier, driver of the No. 7 JR Motorsports Chevrolet, has led the most laps in six of the last 10 NASCAR Xfinity Series races at BMS.

The 2023 victory was his second win at the "World's Fastest Half-Mile" for the veteran driver, but his first since 2010.

The reigning NASCAR Xfinity Series champion

recalled how he and crew chief Jim Pullman had the race as the one they most wanted to win.

"Jim Pullman and I circled this place on the calendar before the season started," Allgaier said. "We were like, 'We're going to win Bristol.' And man, we won Bristol. It's Bristol Baby!"

The win was made more special as Allgaier raced car owner Dale Earnhardt Jr. for the lead earlier in the race.

"How cool was that to battle the boss," Allgaier said. "We'd led so many laps here and come up short. We just had to stay positive. I know the fans wanted Dale Jr. to win, but it was so cool to battle with him."

Earnhardt led 47 laps and was still amongst the leaders

when he had to pull in the pits on lap 270 for a fire inside his car. He finished 30th in the final rundown.

Allgaier had previously scored his first career Xfinity Series victory at BMS in 2010. He drove a No. 12 Dodge for Roger Penske when he held off then teammate Brad Keselowski for the win.

The rest of a powerhouse top-five were: Kyle Busch, Carl Edwards and Kevin Harvick. Bristol is also the site of his best career finish at the Cup level, an eighth-place in 2015.

"Bristol is my favorite race track," Allgaier said. "Obviously with my first win in the Xfinity Series and my best finish in the Cup Series, it's near and dear to my heart."

Racing is in the air!



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AP / GEORGE WALKER IV

Fans cheer during a flyover before the MLB Speedway Classic baseball game between the Atlanta Braves and the Cincinnati Reds at Bristol Motor Speedway.

Bristol Motor Speedway serves as home for major events

By **JEFF BIRCHFIELD**
jbirchfield@sixriversmedia.com

No idea seems too far-fetched for Bristol Motor Speedway.

When it was first reported that NASCAR was planning to host a Major League Baseball game, there were plenty of questions and plenty of skeptics. It wasn't "fake news" as it became official months later the MLB Speedway Classic between the Atlanta Braves and Cincinnati Reds would play August 2, 2025.

Since then, there was an incredible transformation to create an "Infield of Dreams" in the BMS infield, and another one to get the speedway back to a race track in a month for the Bass Pro Shops Night Race weekend.

In addition, a full stage to host country music superstar Tim McGraw was also built and later torn down.

Bold ideas are nothing new as Bristol Motor Speedway has

become more than a race track, but one of the greatest entertainment venues in the world.

For two decades, the buzz was to convert it into a massive football stadium. They did that in 2016 with Tennessee and Virginia Tech playing the Battle at Bristol in front of a world-record 156,990 people in attendance.

They followed it up with East Tennessee State having a record home crowd a week later with their win over Western Carolina. Football wasn't a new idea, the track hosted the defending NFL champion Philadelphia Eagles in an exhibition game against the Washington Redskins in 1961.

How about making it a concert venue and host the biggest acts in American music?

BMS did that as well, nine years before McGraw with Kenny Chesney returning home to East Tennessee and playing to over 40,000 fans.

OK, let's suspend the largest

four-sided video screen in the world over the middle of the infield. That's been done a while with Colossus, a structure weighing nearly 700 tons and featuring four LED screens 68 feet wide by 30 feet tall.

More recently, they've hosted "Country Thunder" with such acts as Morgan Wallen, Jason Aldean, Cody Johnson and Jelly Roll.

What if the world was hit by a pandemic unlike anything seen in nearly a century?

Say it shuts everything down, how would Bristol Motor Speedway respond? In a place where champions are crowned, the BMS staff stepped up to the task. They were good community partners and provided quality entertainment to the fans.

The Food City presents Supermarket Heroes 500 was one of the first races back after NASCAR returned from the COVID-19 shutdown. BMS then hosted the NASCAR All-Star Race

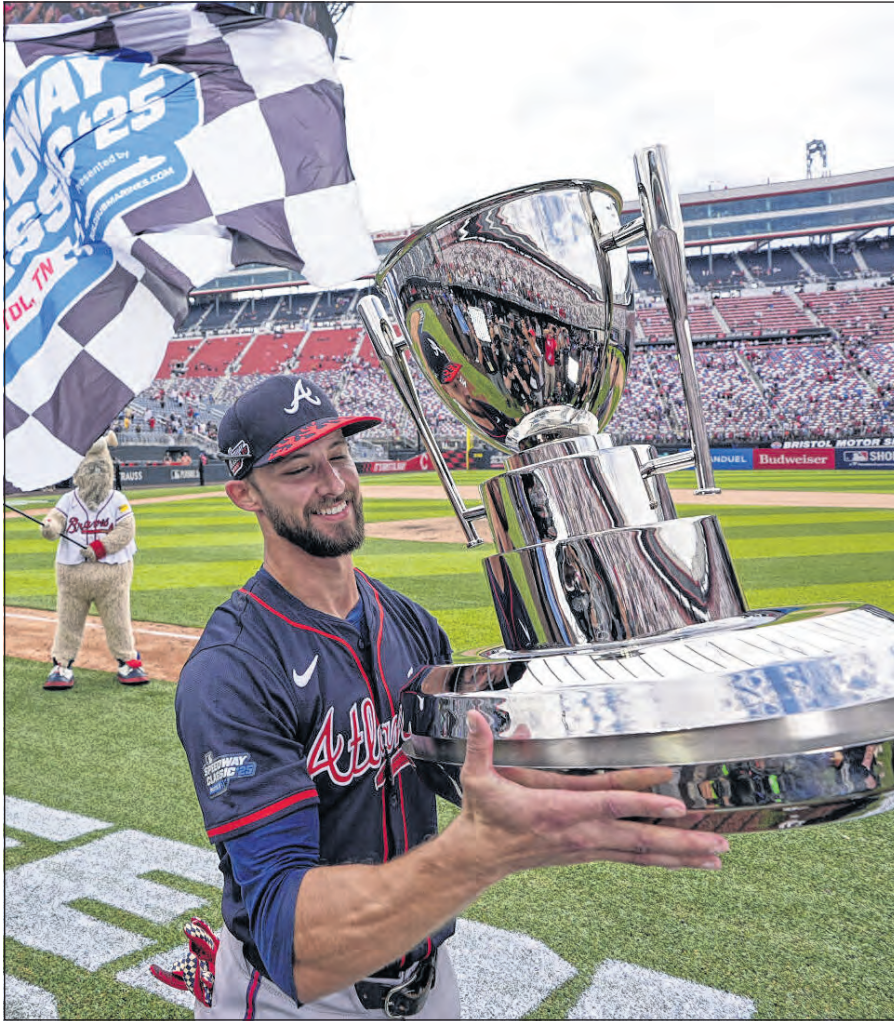
in July 2020 as eventual series champion Chase Elliott sprinted to the victory. It was attended by the largest crowd of any sporting event in America to that point with over 22,000 fans.

Another big crowd came to see the Bass Pro Shops NRA Night Race in September, a cut-off race in the NASCAR playoffs.

A year later, they took the concrete racing surface, covered it with clay and hosted the first NASCAR Cup Series race on dirt in over 50 years. Before NASCAR came to town, they invited the grassroots racers to the track and see how that works.

A week before the Food City Dirt Race, nearly 1,400 entries came to experience the Bristol Dirt Nationals. It was a week-long, high-speed, mud-slinging celebration of dirt-track racing at the world's greatest short track.

The Pinnacle Speedway in Lights, long heralded as the premier holiday lights display in the



AP / GEORGE WALKER IV

Atlanta Braves outfielder Eli White holds the trophy after hitting two home runs in a 4-2 win against the Cincinnati Reds at the MLB Speedway Classic.

region, encompasses a four-mile route with over 2 million lights. It's the primary fundraiser for the Bristol chapter of Speedway Children's Charities, which raises money for agencies in the surrounding 18-county region.

In addition, the facility has served as a place for community meetings, 5K runs, wedding receptions, corporate team-building experiences and hundreds of other motorsports competition.

The latest "far-fetched" idea came directly from SMI Chairman Marcus Smith. He floated the idea of putting a roof over Bristol during Kevin Harvick's "Happy Hour" podcast in July.

Harvick used the baseball analogy that the SMI group swings for the fences when it comes to big events, something that Smith certainly agrees with.

"A roof on Bristol, that's a big

dream, but it's doable," Smith said. "If we can hang the largest TV in the world over Bristol, we can put a roof on it."

It became even more of a topic when constant rain ruined the experience for many during the MLB Speedway Classic weekend. Smith talked about the possibility of more huge events that Bristol could host if weather wasn't an issue.

"We could do Wrestlemania. You could have the biggest UFC fight in the world," Smith said. "Anything you do at Bristol is going to be the biggest at any stadium in terms of having a field and being able to see it. You put a football field at Charlotte, it would be a postage stamp, but at Bristol, everybody can see it."



FILE PHOTO

A world record crowd of 156,990 for a football game showed up at the Battle at Bristol between Tennessee and Virginia Tech.



FILE PHOTO

Lee Corso puts on the Tennessee Vols racing helmet during College Gameday as Dale Earnhardt Jr. and Kirk Herbstreit get a laugh.



FILE PHOTO

Speedway in Lights is a holiday tradition in the Tri Cities.

Van Gisbergen in midst of record rookie year

By JEFF BIRCHFIELD

jbirchfield@sixriversmedia.com

Shane Van Gisbergen is NASCAR's King of the Road. Can he be the "Boss of the Bullrings?"

The New Zealand native is setting a new standard with four wins in his rookie season. All of the wins heading, however, into the Cup Series playoffs have come on road courses. He will be trying to conquer the "World's Fastest Half-Mile" during Saturday's Bass Pro Shops Night Race at Bristol Motor Speedway.

Van Gisbergen, 36, has totally dominated this season's road circuits by winning over 10 seconds at both Mexico City and Watkins Glen. The driver of the No. 88 Trackhouse Racing Chevrolet, however, has shown improvement on the ovals.



AP / SETH WENIG

Shane van Gisbergen, center right, has bowled over the competition on the road courses this season.

His best efforts at the short tracks are a 12th-place finish last fall at Martinsville and a 14th-place run at Richmond. Van Gisbergen needed little improvement on the road courses, but found it with a switch of teams during the offseason.

"The difference has been

that I'm with the team full time this year and I've been able to develop a setup and fine tune it to the way I want," Van Gisbergen said. "Last year, I just jumped in and got the Trackhouse car delivered to Kaulig and then the Kaulig guys would run it. Whereas this year I'm all

involved in the setup, trying to learn every week, and I really feel like as a team we've been able to tailor the car to my needs."

Van Gisbergen was an already accomplished driver when he came to the United States. He's a three-time champion and 80-time race winner. Now he has five wins on the NASCAR circuit, including his first career start at the Chicago Street Course in 2023.

"The prep that we go through, not just for these road courses, but we do it every week," Van Gisbergen said. "I feel like we've gotten a lot better, especially on the ovals. It's been cool working with a great bunch of people, and just to share four wins with everyone, it's so cool."

Van Gisbergen, who has four wins in the Xfinity Series, said setting the rookie record means every-

thing to him. He feels it validates car owner Justin Marks' faith in him. He also loves seeing how excited the guys on the pit crew have been.

He felt a test at Charlotte and a preliminary race to the NASCAR All-Star Race helped turn the tide for him on ovals. Still, there is some trepidation coming to Bristol where finished 38th in the Food City 500 with suspension troubles.

A year ago, he finished 18th, a lap off the pace in the NASCAR Xfinity Series race at Bristol. He explained it's definitely foreign for the foreign racer.

"Probably the one we'd most be worried about is Bristol," Van Gisbergen said before the playoffs. "I ran terrible there. Bristol was so far from anything I've ever done, and that's a really tough place."

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LaJoie taking his talents to the Truck Series

By **JEFF BIRCHFIELD**
jbirchfield@sixriversmedia.com

Corey LaJoie is taking over the Kyle Larson ride at Bristol Motor Speedway.

Don't panic Larson fans, we're talking about the Spire Motorsports Chevrolet that Larson raced earlier this season in the NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series back in April. Larson drove the truck to a win at Homestead-Miami and a second place finish at Bristol.

Now, it's LaJoie's turn behind the wheel for the UNOH 200 Truck Series race. LaJoie misses driving the No. 7 Spire Motorsports Chevrolet in the Cup Series at Bristol, but is thankful



FILE PHOTO

Corey LaJoie visits with a young patient at Niswonger Children's Hospital.

the team has him in the truck.

"The Bristol Night Race is my favorite race of the year," he said. "The Bristol

Night Race is special, but the Cup Series so hard if you don't have an iron-clad team. You don't want to go to Bristol because there's

nowhere to hide. I am running the Truck Series race at Bristol so I'm glad to be in that race."

LaJoie, host of the

popular Stacking Pennies podcast, was at the Olde Farm Golf Course in Bristol, Va., prior to the MLB Speedway Classic golf tournament. It was something the 33-year-old race driver was glad to do as it supported Speedway Children's Charities. LaJoie has been heavily involved in NEGU, an organization supporting children with cancer, and appreciates the work of Speedway Motorsports chairman Marcus Smith and all the SCC staff with all they do.

"I've been a Speedway Children's Charities ambassador for a couple years now," he said. "Knowing Marcus's heart and the entire

SCC team's heart, it always makes me willing to come out here, no matter if it's driving to Bristol. Actually, driving to Bristol is one of my favorite things to do. I love the scenery."

LaJoie, a fan of the Atlanta Braves, was glad to see his team win 4-2 over the Cincinnati Reds in the Speedway Classic. The son of two-time NASCAR Xfinity Series champion Randy LaJoie raced from a young age, but also played baseball growing up.

He played alongside five-time Major League All-Star Corey Seager in high school, where LaJoie said he found his future was in racing.

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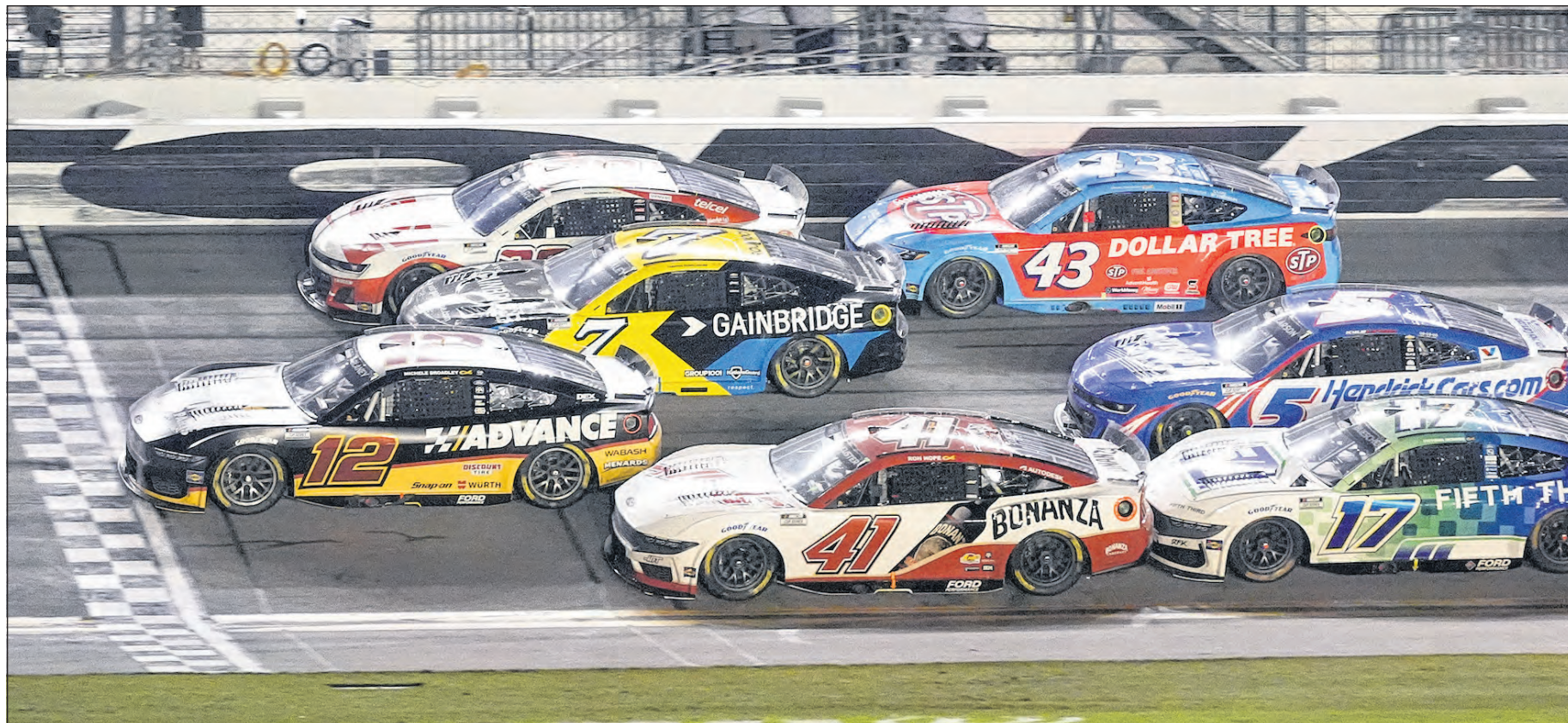
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AP / JOHN RAOUX

Ryan Blaney (12) crosses the finish line to win the Coke Zero 400 at Daytona International Speedway, Saturday, Aug. 23, 2025.

Front-runner Blaney looking for first Bristol win

By **JEFF BIRCHFIELD**
jbirchfield@sixriversmedia.com

Ryan Blaney loves running up front, but there's one lead he'd rather not have.

The driver of the No. 12 Team Penske Ford leads all active drivers with most laps led at Bristol Motor Speedway without a victory. He has paced the field for 555 laps around the "World's Fastest Half-Mile" over 17 races. That is 111 more laps for the 2023 NASCAR Cup Series champion than his good friend Chase Elliott has led.

Blaney desperately wants to win Saturday's Bass Pro Shops Night Race. He has had an affinity for Bristol, even when he was a kid watching his father, Dave, race.

"Bristol is one of my favorite places," he said. "I remember watching my dad there as a kid and loving the atmosphere around that place."

It's a place he has enjoyed success. Blaney beat Kyle Busch on a final restart to win an Xfinity Series race in 2014. He also set the track qualifying record for the Cup Series with a lap at 132.075 mph in April 2019. In addition, Blaney earned the pole for the 2024 Food City 500.

His record at Bristol includes three top-five and seven top-10 finishes in 17 races. It's a track



AP / GEORGE WALKER IV

Ryan Blaney celebrates after winning the Cracker Barrel 400 at Nashville Superspeedway, Sunday, June 1, 2025.

which his father also showed speed with Dave Blaney qualifying in the top five on five different occasions, including a front-row start in 2005.

Bristol is a place where strategy can come

into play as Ryan finished fifth in April after a decision by crew chief Jonathan Hassler to stay out on old tires.

"It was a good risk to take," Blaney said in an interview with FOX Sports. "I thought Jonathan did a good job of taking a chance. We weren't going to win, I was already running fifth and at the end of the day we got back to where we were running, which is good. I took a chance trying to get a yellow and trapping a bunch of guys lap down, but really good effort."

His recent performance leads Blaney to believe he could finally reach victory lane at the "Last Great Colosseum." Blaney recently scored his 15th career victory in the Coke Zero 400 at Daytona. It was his second victory of the year after winning at Nashville Superspeedway in June.

"I think this team is really doing a good job of hitting our stride when we need to," Blaney said. "I've been proud of our efforts all year, it's just been can we smooth some things out and have some stuff go our way. It seems to be smoothing out and this team is just performing and finishing where we should."

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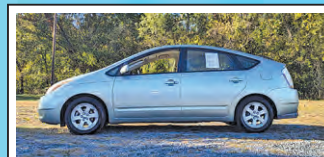
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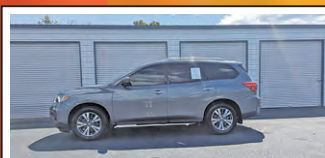
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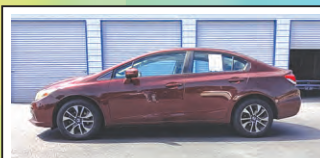
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RANDALL PERRY

Toyota drivers Denny Hamlin (11) and Ty Gibbs (54) race for the lead during the 2023 Bass Pro Shops Night Race at Bristol Motor Speedway.

Toyota contingent appears to be strong at Bristol

By **JEFF BIRCHFIELD**
jbirchfield@sixriversmedia.com

Toyota has won more NASCAR Cup Series races on the Bristol Motor Speedway concrete than any other manufacturer over the last decade.

There has been eight Toyota wins on the BMS concrete since the start of the 2015 season with five wins each for Chevrolet and Ford.

There's a decent chance a Toyota could be in victory lane again Saturday at the Bass Pro Shops Night Race. Denny Hamlin leads the way among active Toyota drivers with four wins, including three over the last decade. It includes back-to-back wins in the 2023 Bass Pro Shops NRA Night Race and the 2024 Food City 500.

Hamlin, driver of the No. 11 Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota, has four pole positions and 20 top-10 finishes in 36 races. That's one more top-10 than Kyle Busch, who has eight wins on the BMS concrete. Hamlin's last four finishes at BMS include the aforementioned two wins, a fourth-place and a runner-up at the Food City 500 in the spring.

He's the only one of the current Joe Gibbs Racing drivers to have a Cup win on the concrete. Christopher Bell is a former Bristol winner, however, with a victory in the 2023 Food City Dirt Race. He's a driver many feel is close to Larson in sheer driving talent. Bell has five straight top-10 finishes on the BMS paved surface and six overall in eight races.

Chase Briscoe, driver of the No. 19 Toyota, posted a solid fourth-place at BMS in the spring. It was his first top-five and second top-10 in six races on the high-banked, .533-mile oval. Briscoe won at Pocono in June and has been steady throughout the season. He scored a win in the 2020 Food City 500 for the Xfinity Series at Bristol.

Ty Gibbs rounds out the JGR Racing quartet in the No. 54 Toyota. The grandson of the team owner has three top-10 finishes in five Bristol races with a high of third at the Food City 500 in April. Gibbs missed the NASCAR play-offs, but he led 197 laps at the 2021 Bush's Beans 200 for the ARCA Series.

Going outside the JGR organization, Bubba Wallace is in the midst

of the best season of his Cup Series career. The driver of the No. 23 Toyota co-owned by Michael Jordan and Hamlin won the prestigious Brickyard 400 at Indianapolis by holding off Kyle Larson on multiple restarts.

Wallace has three top-10 finishes at Bristol including a third in last year's Night Race. He has a Bristol win in a late model car at the 2017 Short Track U.S. Nationals.

Tyler Reddick, a teammate to Wallace at 23XI Racing, has surprisingly struggled in the Cup Series at Bristol. The No. 45 Toyota driver has just one top-10 finish in eight previous starts. Reddick won at Bristol in 2019, driving for Richard Childress in the Xfinity Series. He has a high finish of 15th in his last five Bristol Cup races.

Riley Herbst, the rookie driver for 23XI Racing in the No. 35 Toyota, finished 28th, four laps off the pace at the Food City 500 in April. Herbst had two top-10 finishes at BMS in the Xfinity Series with a third-place in the 2021 fall race.

Legacy Motor Club's efforts are led by Erik Jones, driver of the No. 43 Toyota. Jones posted a second-place finish in the 2017 Bristol Night Race when he was driving



AP / DARRON CUMMINGS

Chase Briscoe heads down the backstretch during the Brickyard 400 at Indianapolis Motor Speedway, Sunday, July 27, 2025.

for Furniture Row Racing. He also scored a pair of other top-five finishes at Bristol.

John Hunter Nemechek has shown strength at Bristol in the No. 42 Toyota. Nemechek has a best finish of sixth on the high banks. It came in the 2024 Food City 500.

While Hamlin is the only one in the group with a win on the Bristol concrete, Toyota drivers still look to be among the top contenders in Saturday's race.



RANDALL PERRY

Denny Hamlin celebrates his win in the 2023 Bass Pro Shops Night Race with BMS President Jerry Caldwell.



AP / DARRON CUMMINGS

Bubba Wallace celebrates after winning the Brickyard 400 at Indianapolis Motor Speedway, Sunday, July 27, 2025.

Welcome Race Fans! Ty & Tucker Say "It's Bristol Baby!!"



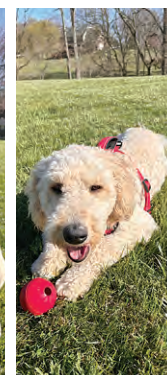
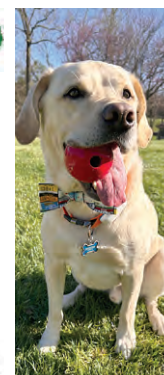
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Johnson City's King was BMS track champion

By **JEFF BIRCHFIELD**
jbirchfield@sixriversmedia.com

Johnson City racing legend Brownie King raced on the sands of Daytona Beach, in the first Daytona 500 and was track champion at Bristol Motor Speedway.

King made 97 starts in the NASCAR Cup Series and finished fifth in the 1959 Convertible Division standings, just one spot behind Richard Petty. He was also the 1962 Sportsman Division track champion at Bristol Motor Speedway when the track hosted a weekly racing series.

Now 91, King reflected on being the track champion at the "Last Great Colosseum."

"Back then, we ran the Modified and Sportsman cars together," King recalled. "I was driving a 1958 Ford Sportsman car. The closest competitor was a guy running a 1936 Chevrolet coach. I was running that car like they used to run years ago."

King was just one of 19 drivers to race in the final NASCAR Cup Series race on the old Daytona Beach course and in the first Daytona 500 on the 2.5-mile superspeedway. He was honored at the 2017 Daytona Back to the Roots celebration with the Pioneer Award and appeared on "Lost Speedways" with Dale Earnhardt Jr.

"I was running a Chevrolet for Jess Potter at the first

Daytona 500 and it was originally a hardtop," King said. "The race was supposed to have half convertibles and half hardtops. They came around and offered Jess \$100 to cut the top off. That's what we did, but it ended up slowing the car down."

He explained they didn't know much about aerodynamics back then. The drivers would notice, however, it would sometimes be like running into a wall when they'd try to pass a car.

Outside of racing, King worked in service and later sales at the Johnson City Chevrolet dealership for 40-plus years. In 1976, he opened B&B Auto Repair in Johnson City with Brad Teague, for whom King served as a crew chief after hanging up his helmet.

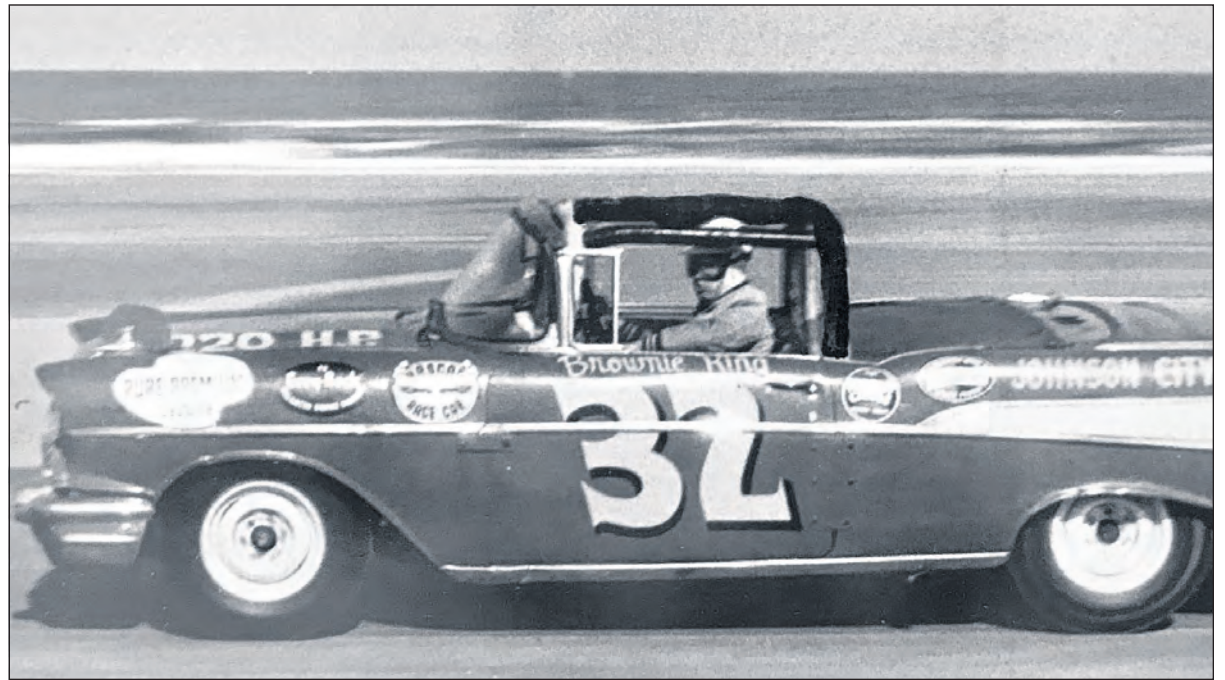
Teague had become friends with King in 1965 and he credits King for giving him his break in racing and being meticulous with his work.

"You liked for him to work on the car because he made sure everything was checked out," Teague said. "No matter what Brownie did working with a car, whether it was a race car or a street car, it was done right."

King was also a scratch golfer. He made six hole-in-ones and won the club championship at Pine Oaks Golf Course in 1968 and 1977.

BEHIND THE WHEEL

King got interested



CONTRIBUTED

Brownie King is shown driving his convertible on the Daytona Beach course in 1958.

in racing as a teenager and started hanging out and working on cars at Jess and Clyde Potter's garage in Johnson City. After saving his money, he and Jess Potter bought a 1932 Ford and made a race car out of it — which they towed to Asheville-Weaverville Speedway.

When the driver they hired didn't show up, King lied about his age so he could get a NASCAR license and race the car himself.

He was a natural behind the wheel, finishing fifth out of 36 drivers. Just months later, he won his first race in Richlands, Virginia. King made his NASCAR Cup Series debut in 1956 at Columbia, South Carolina, where he finished 18th, one spot ahead of three-time champion Lee Petty. King posted two top-

five and 27 top-10 finishes in his NASCAR Cup Series career and finished ninth in the 1957 points standings. Still, he said the competition he faced at Bristol on a weekly basis was as tough as running against the top drivers in NASCAR. His biggest win at Bristol was a 400-lap race that featured both Sportsman and Modified cars.

"I raced against a lot of good drivers both around East Tennessee and in NASCAR," King said. "In East Tennessee, there were some real good race car drivers like Bill Morton, Gene Glover and the Utsman brothers. If they've had factory backing, they could have won some NASCAR races."

King fondly remembers that 1958 Ford he won Bristol's



FILE PHOTO

Brownie King holds up one of his racing shirts from back in the day.

Sportsman division championship with. Bill Morton won the Modified crown in a yellow 1936 Chevrolet that King also recalls. King later won 14 of 21 races one season at Johnson City's old Sportsman Speedway.

As far as his favorite race track, it was definitely Bristol,

"It has always been the perfect half-mile race track," he said. "Back then, the banking was only about 15 degrees compared to the 30 it is now. There was plenty of room to race on and if your car was good enough, you could pass anywhere you wanted to on it."

BMS comes through in times of need

By JEFF BIRCHFIELD
jbirchfield@sixriversmedia.com

Bristol Motor Speedway is the largest sports and entertainment venue in the state of Tennessee. It served an even more important role following the devastation of Hurricane Helen.

BMS was designated the Northeast Tennessee Disaster Relief Center in coordination with the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency. It served as home base for recovery efforts and a major distribution center in the aftermath of the devastating flooding.

Amanda Delp, who served as director for the relief center, told why it was so important to have a place like BMS to handle supplies. Flash flooding had ravaged parts of Unicoi, Carter, Washington, Johnson and Greene counties in Tennessee.

In the days following Helene, a



FILE PHOTO

Bristol Motor Speedway was designated the Northeast Tennessee Disaster Relief Center following Hurricane Helene.

truck was delayed for an extended period of time trying to get relief supplies to Unicoi County High School.

The usual two-minute drive from Main Street in Erwin to the high school took over 45 minutes with traffic backed up. With other tractors and trailers stalled trying to get water and other supplies to the high school, things got so crowded that emergency vehicles got blocked in.

Others saw the same gridlock in other counties. The 80,000-square foot South Building, which often serves as a spot for the drivers' meetings, was turned into a warehouse to store supplies. It turns out it wasn't near enough room.

Delp said they had to move nearly \$5 million worth of water underneath Gate 7 at the speedway. Gate 6 was filled with paper times. She estimates they turned the South Building over 6-8 times with \$40 million of donated supplies.

The relief center was open 14 hours a day, seven days a week through October as staff worked closely with organizations like Samaritan's Purse. Donations came from every state within the continental United States. Volunteers traveled as far away as Florida, New York and northern Ohio to help.

"Some of them drove eight, 10-12, hours to help us," Delp said. "We had one couple that just got in the



FILE PHOTO

Cyclist participate in the Quillen 100 as a fundraiser for cardiovascular health.

car and started driving and didn't even know where they were there. People had that heart that they just wanted to come help."

Besides a major donation and collection site, BMS provide workspace for the logistics and search and rescue teams in a central staging area. They housed a regional disaster relief hotline.

The campgrounds on property were also opened. In the week following the storm, we interviewed some of those staying at the campground. It included a family of nine in a camper, and an Army veteran

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FILE PHOTO

Bristol Motor Speedway's South Building is filled with disaster relief supplies following Hurricane Helene.

staying in his tent after his home along the Nolichucky River was washed away.

The family of nine had been camping at Green Mountain, N.C., and had to evacuate. Returning to their upstate South Carolina home wasn't an option as they had no power or water. The mother talked about the folks at BMS coming by frequently to check on them.

They weren't ideal conditions, but the showers at the dragway were opened. With a good internet connection at the speedway, the kids were able to do homework. The family were surprised when some of the staff brought presents and a cake to help a couple of the younger kids celebrate their birthdays.

Bristol Motor Speedway has also served as host to the RAM clinic, providing thousands of uninsured people with free medical and dental services. From January through early March 2020, BMS served as a COVID-19 vaccination location.

Even when it's not a disaster,

BMS has been an outstanding community partner.

Speedway Children's Charities has raised more than \$20 million for nearly 100 local children-based organizations in Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia.

The Pinnacle Speedway in Lights, long heralded as the premier holiday lights display in the region, encompasses a four-mile route with over 2 million lights. It's the primary fundraiser for the Bristol chapter of Speedway Children's Charities, which raises money for agencies in the surrounding 18-county region.

"What began as a simple signature fundraising event has evolved into a tradition-rich holiday treat for thousands of visitors each year," said Claudia Byrd, executive director of the Bristol chapter of Speedway Children's Charities. "The Pinnacle Speedway in Lights provides an opportunity to get together with loved ones for an evening of amplifying the holiday spirit."



FILE PHOTO

Claudia Byrd, director of the Bristol Chapter of Speedway Children's Charities, shows a check for area agencies during the 2021 Night of Smiles.



FILE PHOTO

Bristol Motor Speedway has also hosted the RAM clinic to offer free dental work for those in need.



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