

# RACING THIS WEEK

**JGR REPORT:** Joe Gibbs Racing announced a pair of changes. Chris Gabehart, who has served as the crew chief of the No. 11 team, will become the organization's competition director while Chris Gayle, who has been the crew chief for the No. 54 team, will assume chief role for Denny Hamlin.



## France Award for David Wilson

David Wilson, the head of Toyota's motorsports wing, was named the recipient of the Bill France Award of Excellence.

The honor was presented Friday evening during the annual NASCAR Awards banquet at the Charlotte Convention Center, recognizing Wilson's outstanding achievements in the sport during his 35 years with the automaker. He announced in August that he planned to retire Dec. 16 as group vice president and president of TRD, U.S.A. (Toyota Racing Development).

The Bill France Award of Excellence is not presented annually. Retiring Goodyear CEO Rich Kramer received the recognition last year, marking the first time it was presented since 2020 when seven-time Cup Series champion Jimmie Johnson was honored.

Wilson teared up and expressed his surprise at hearing his name announced by NASCAR CEO and chairman Jim France.

"I was well and truly stunned, rocked my world tonight to be called up on stage by my dear friend Jim France and to be recognized," Wilson said. "As I said, and what I believe and what's in my heart, is again on my very best day, I am simply a reflection of a wonderful team that's supported me, that's trusted me, that's empowered me to serve and so, yeah, I'm still soaking it in."

Wilson held many roles with Toyota's racing division, including the last 11 years as its leader. He worked in a time of significant growth for the manufacturer, which made its NASCAR national-series debut in the Craftsman Truck Series in 2004 and joined the premier Cup Series three years later.

Wilson's influence was felt in many other forms of motorsports — CART, CORR, Grand-Am, IMSA, Indy Racing League, MTEG, NHRA, SCORE and USAC. When asked in August about his lasting legacy in the sport, Wilson pointed to the company's increased connection to racing.

"It's pretty simple," Wilson said. "I'd like to again believe that TRD is better than when it was when I got here, and I'd like to believe that our sport, and Toyota's position in our sport, has left NASCAR in a better place. Coming back to when we entered 20 years ago, we didn't have a relationship with the sanctioning body, and we didn't have certainly a relationship with our competitors the way we do now, and so much has changed. I'm proud of the way the competitive model that Toyota brought to our sport, we've changed the way the sport goes racing, and I love that. I love that, but there's a lot that I'm really happy about and proud of."

Succeeding Wilson in the role is Tyler Gibbs, TRD's current general manager.



David Wilson, the head of Toyota's motorsports wing.



Joey Logano and his Championship rings pose with the Goodyear Gold Car awarded to him for winning the 2024 NASCAR Cup Series title. (Zach Sturniolo/NASCAR Digital Media)

## It was a golden night for Joey in Charlotte

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — On a cool Friday evening in uptown Charlotte, the NASCAR industry celebrated its heroes, industry inspirations and champions at the Charlotte Convention Center for the first time in the sport's modern era.

Race teams, drivers and fans gathered to watch these 2024 victors receive their trophies and to see the sport honor those whose careers impacted NASCAR not only this season but for years and even decades.

Cup Series champion Joey Logano began the afternoon celebrating his third title with the iconic Goodyear Gold Car given to each year's champion and then later being feted by the sport at the tuxedo-and-gown banquet that will be televised on The CW Network on Sunday at 3 p.m. ET.

The 34-year-old's three titles in the No. 22 Team Penske Ford are now the most among all active drivers, and he is one of only 10 competitors in the history of the sport to have ever earned a trio of championship trophies.

Logano thanked his team and team owner Roger Penske, and the father of three gave a special nod to his wife Brittany, who he praised for taking care of their young family and home — allowing him to maintain championship focus. He thanked his family, who was also in the audience, "remembering when I was a kid and got a go-kart for Christmas and now I'm sitting here a three-time Cup champion, it's just truly incredible."

"To me, we did get a lot of opportunities, and life's really all about what you do with the opportunities, you don't know when they are going to come your way, but are you ready to take advantage when they do," continued Logano, who received a full-room standing ovation when introduced by NASCAR President Steve Phelps.

Logano, whose four wins in 2024 gave him 36 total, was noticeably sentimental, reflecting on his career and season's accomplishments.

"If you take the opportunity that God's given us to talk to people, to inspire others to live a life of generosity, that's when these scenarios of just driving in circles aren't just driving in circles anymore," Logano said, noting the sport's huge push to help Hurricane Helene victims in Western North Carolina.

"That, to me, is something I'm most proud of in this industry and being part of that," added Logano, who has personally helped raise money and deliver supplies to the affected regions.

"I'm proud of winning. I'm proud to be part of this team, but what I'm probably most proud of is the heart of this sport."

Logano's team owner, NASCAR Hall-of-Famer Penske, has now earned five NASCAR Cup Series championships, including the last three consecutively between Logano (2022 and 2024) and Ryan Blaney (2023).

"From my perspective, Joey Logano was a winner when he came to our team in 2013," Penske said in his remarks on stage, adding, "We're so proud of all our teams. Racing is a common thread through our businesses. It's teamwork. It's pressure. It's integrity. It's transparency. And this has built the Penske brand. And we're thrilled to be here."

Beyond the Logano-Penske dominance, it was a night of emphasizing highlights across all NASCAR series — those in supporting roles in the pits and beyond.

The Xfinity Series and its first-time champion, popular veteran JR Motorsports' Justin Allgaier, along with Craftsman Truck Series first-time champion Ty Majeski and his ThorSport Racing team, were celebrated.

Allgaier's team co-owner Dale Earnhardt Jr. was visibly excited to honor his longtime driver.

"I'm normally not this kind of person, but I knew we were going to win it. I'm normally the kind of person who thinks about the odds and wonders how we might lose a race or what are the obstacles in front of us," Earnhardt said. "But for some reason, I just felt like the universe owed Justin, and we were going to collect when we got to Phoenix."

"Man did he get up on the wheel, all those restarts, those were classic, classic moments and if you just watched that seven-car work all night long you could see how bad Justin wanted it," Earnhardt continued. "He carried the whole company on his back that night. Just proud of him and so thankful to be able to see Justin celebrate this tonight."

The sport also celebrated Earnhardt's good friend, Joe Gibbs Racing's Martin Truex Jr., the 2017 Cup Series champion, who retired from full-time competition at the end of the 2024 season and also marked the distinction earned by a former Team Penske champion as well in Brad Keselowski, who claimed his first victory (at Darlington Raceway) as a driver-owner of Roush Fenway Keselowski Racing.

Hendrick Motorsports' Chase Elliott, the 2020 series champion, was named the sport's Most Popular Driver for the seventh consecutive season.

"First and foremost, thank you to the fans," said Elliott, 28, who won at Texas Motor Speedway this season. "When I look at this award, regardless if I win it or not ... I've always viewed it as an opportunity to honor and appreciate the legacy my family has set up for me."

## France Humanitarian award goes to ...

The NASCAR Foundation announced **Judy Simmons** as the winner of the 14th annual Betty Jane France Humanitarian Award during Friday's NASCAR Awards Banquet in Charlotte, North Carolina.

As the award winner, Simmons will receive a \$100,000 donation from The NASCAR Foundation to God's Pit Crew, a non-profit dedicated to providing disaster relief services to children and families.

"This award means so much to God's Pit Crew and me, and it will make a tremendous impact for the children we strive to provide healing to in the midst of disaster," said Simmons. "With this award, we will be able to provide more hope and comfort to the young lives that need it most."

Judy Simmons of Axton, Virginia, is a volunteer at God's Pit Crew, a local non-profit disaster relief organization that works to provide aid and hope to communities all over the country in the face of a major weather event. Judy has been a member of the God's Pit Crew disaster response team of more than 1,500 volunteers for six years, leading volunteer teams to provide essential needs to families and children in their time of crisis, including Play Pails that contain toys, games and hygiene items for children who have lost everything.

"Judy is an incredible person doing impactful work for families that have experienced hardship due to natural disasters, especially during the difficult times faced in Western North Carolina this year," said Nichole Krieger, The NASCAR Foundation Vice President and Executive Director. "The \$100,000 she won for God's Pit Crew will allow them to continue providing essential items for kids and families in need in times of major weather event or crisis. Both Judy and her organization are very deserving of this award."

Simmons earned the most online votes from a pool of nominees, including Tammy Raulerson with the Periwinkle Foundation in College Station, Texas; Carlos Washington with Boys and Girls Clubs of the Pee Dee Area in Florence, South Carolina; and Julie Woolridge with Hope of Mooresville in Mooresville, North Carolina. Each of these charities will receive a \$25,000 donation from The NASCAR Foundation.

In its 14 years, the Betty Jane France Humanitarian Award has recognized 56 NASCAR fans who are dedicated volunteers working for children's causes in communities nationwide.

### 2024 CUP SERIES FINAL STANDINGS

Top 30 (w/ Champion in bold) as of Nov. 10

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1 <b>J. Logano Ford</b>	5040	16 H. Burton Ford	2122
2 R. Blaney Ford	5035	17 C. Buescher Ford	930
3 W. Byron Chevrolet	5034	18 D. Wallace Jr. Toyota	878
4 T. Reddick Toyota	5031	19 R. Chastain Chevrolet	852
5 C. Bell Toyota	2413	20 Ky. Busch Chevrolet	766
6 K. Larson Chevrolet	2378	21 C. Hocevar Chevrolet	686
7 C. Elliott Chevrolet	2343	22 T. Gilliland Ford	630
8 D. Hamlin Toyota	2329	23 M. McDowell Ford	624
9 A. Bowman Chevrolet	2319	24 N. Gragson Ford	612
10 M. Truex Jr. Toyota	2258	25 R. Stenhouse Chevy	590
11 A. Cindric Ford	2248	26 R. Preece Ford	584
12 D. Suárez Chevrolet	2226	27 J. Berry Ford	579
13 B. Keselowski Ford	2209	28 E. Jones Toyota	516
14 C. Briscoe Ford	2184	29 D. Hemric Chevrolet	515
15 T. Gibbs Toyota	2169	30 Z. Smith Chevrolet	505

### 2024 XFINITY SERIES FINAL STANDINGS

Top 20 (w/ Champion in bold) as of Nov. 9

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1 <b>Justin Allgaier #7</b>	4035	11 Sammy Smith #8	2185
2 Cole Custer #00	4029	12 Shane v Gisbergen #97	2157
3 AJ Allmendinger #16	4028	13 Ryan Sieg #28	856
4 Austin Hill #21	4027	14 Brandon Jones #9	696
5 Chandler Smith #81	2314	15 Anthony Alfredo #5	641
6 Sheldon Creed #18	2264	16 Brennan Poole #44	572
7 Riley Herbst #98	2254	17 Aric Almirola #20	560
8 Jesse Love #2	2247	18 Josh Williams #11	515
9 Sam Mayer #1	2205	19 Jeb Burton #22	512
10 Parker Kligerman #48	2190	20 Jeremy Clements #51	477

**NEXT RACE:** UNITED RENTALS 300, Daytona International, Saturday, Feb. 15, 2025, CW

### 2024 TRUCK SERIES FINAL STANDINGS

Top 20 (w/ Champion in bold) as of Nov. 8

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1 <b>Ty Majeski #98</b>	4065	11 Layne Riggs #38	605
2 Corey Heim #11	4055	12 Stewart Friesen #52	557
3 Christian Eckes #19	4048	13 Tanner Gray #15	550
4 Grant Enfinger #9	4042	14 Matt Crafton #88	524
5 Nicholas Sanchez #2	2280	15 Chase Purdy #77	513
6 Taylor Gray #17	2247	16 Dean Thompson #5	469
7 Rajah Caruth #71	2213	17 Jake Garcia #13	459
8 Tyler Ankrum #18	2183	18 Bayley Curry #41	392
9 Ben Rhodes #99	2150	19 Kaden Honeycutt #45	384
10 Daniel Dye #43	2141	20 Bret Holmes #32	360

**NEXT RACE:** FRESH FROM FLORIDA 250, Daytona International, Friday, Feb. 14, 2025, FS1

A pair of familiar faces prevailed as the 2024 National Motorsports Press Association Most Popular Driver Award winners as **Chase Elliott** earned the honor in the Cup Series and Justin Allgaier won in the Xfinity Series. Rajah Caruth earned his first Most Popular Driver Award in the Craftsman Truck Series.

The 28-year-old Elliott has won the award for a seventh consecutive season, while Allgaier earned the Xfinity honor for the fifth time in the last six years.

Allgaier, 38, saw his three-year streak snapped in 2022 by Noah Gragson before winning the Xfinity award the last two seasons.



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