

RACING THIS WEEK

XFINITY FINISH:
Connor Zilisch takes the checkered flag to win Saturday's Explore the Pocono Mountains 250 at Pocono Raceway.
M. Oliphant/Getty



XFINITY RECAP

• **Saturday's** EXPLORE THE POCONOS 250, Pocono Raceway



WINNER: CONNOR ZILISCH

In a day of varying strategies and dramatic restarts among the front runners, JR Motorsports rookie Connor Zilisch prevailed in a late race sprint to the checkered flag in Saturday's Explore the Pocono Mountains 250 at Pocono Raceway – the first oval win of this young talent's career.

Late race re-starts determined the day and ultimately it came down to a duel between Zilisch and his best friend, last year's Rookie of the Year, Jesse Love. Zilisch pulled his No. 88 JR Motorsports Chevrolet alongside Love's car as they crossed the start/finish line with four laps to go and then he took the lead for good with three laps left – .437-seconds ahead of the field.

It was that kind of resolute day for the 18-year-old Zilisch, who had some key help from a first-time crew chief. His team owner, Hall of Famer Dale Earnhardt Jr., filled in for the team's fulltime leader Mardy Lindley, who was serving a one-race suspension.

Another rookie rounded out the top-three with Kaulig Racing's Christian Eckes claiming a career best third-place finish in the No. 16 Chevrolet. Elliott rallied to finish fourth and Ryan Seig was fifth in his family-owned Ford.

Carson Kvapil, Sam Mayer, Sammy Smith, rookie Taylor Gray, and Justin Allgaier rounded out the top-10.

The reigning series champion Allgaier now holds an 82-point championship advantage.

TRUCKS RECAP

• **Friday's** MILLERTECH BATTERY 200, Pocono Raceway



WINNER: LAYNE RIGGS

Layne Riggs capped one of the best race weekends of his young career, claiming his first ever pole position then leading the final 20 laps of Friday's MillerTech Battery 200 to take his first Truck Series victory of the season in the opening race of a NASCAR tripleheader weekend at Pocono Raceway.

Riggs' No. 34 Front Row Motorsports Ford beat TRICON Garage driver Tanner Gray to the checkered flag by a healthy 3.64-seconds delivering the young star his third career series win.

Riggs had been fast all day and was running second to championship leader Corey Heim coming to a restart with 19 laps to go only to have Heim's No. 11 Toyota suffer a flat tire just as the field was about to take the green flag.

Just after Heim pulled off the track for a quick tire change, Cup driver and former Truck Series regular Carson Hocevar moved his No. 7 truck forward and into the lead on the restart – but was handed a penalty for the move.

Kaden Honeycutt, who started on the front row alongside Riggs, finished third in the No. 45 Niece Motorsports Chevrolet. Brandon Jones in the No. 1 TRICON Garage Toyota and former Xfinity champ Daniel Hemric in the No. 19 McAnally-Hilgemann Racing Chevrolet rounded out the top-five.

GREAT AMERICAN GETAWAY 400

Chase Briscoe's victory Sunday at Pocono Raceway makes him the 11th driver to earn a position in the 16-driver Cup Playoff field – the sixth different in just the last eight weeks.



Chase Briscoe, driver of the #19 Bass Pro Shops Toyota, on his way to the checkered flag in Sunday's Cup Series The Great American Getaway 400 at Pocono Raceway.

(Meg Oliphant/Getty Images)

Getaway Chase is on at Pocono Raceway

Chase Briscoe has earned a Cup Series season-best four pole positions and led laps in eight races in his first season driving the famous No. 19 Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota, and finally – finally – on Sunday afternoon that hard work translated into his first trophy, edging his JGR teammate Denny Hamlin in The Great American Getaway 400 presented by VisitPA.com at Pocono Raceway.

It came down to the suspenseful final laps, Briscoe having to save as much fuel as possible while maintaining the lead the last 34 laps with Pocono's all-time winningest driver Hamlin and a two-time Pocono winner, Team Penske's Ryan Blaney, directly in his rearview mirror, pushing him lap after lap.

But Briscoe did it – perfectly executing throttle control to maintain the lead and not run his Toyota Camry out of gas – ultimately beating Hamlin across the line by .682-second to formally punch his win-and-in 2025 Playoff ticket. The 30-year-old Indiana-native led a race best 72 of the 160 laps on the day and even had enough fuel for the well-deserved victory celebration.

"There was a lot [of pressure]," a smiling Briscoe conceded. "It was kind of weird. I wasn't driving hard so it's not like I was on the ragged edge, but it was just so hard having a guy chasing you, especially the guy that's the greatest of all time here, to be trying to save fuel and everything else.

"Just an amazing day for our race team," he continued, "Really the first race we've executed all year long."

Hamlin, a three-time winner this year who is returning to competition after missing last week's Mexico City race to be home in North Carolina for the birth of his son, showed why he is a seven-time Pocono winner, the track's all-time best. His runner-up finish marks the 10th time he's finished first or second at the unique 2.5-mile three-turn Pocono oval. He won in 2023 and now has finished second in the two races since.

"It was definitely going to be difficult," said Hamlin, who started on pole position, won the opening stage and led 32 laps. "The team did a great job and we were next best in line of our strategy, it just didn't work out."

"We're really strong and not showing up with any weaknesses right now, really proud of the effort we put forth," he continued. "Just love to get more wins but still overall a good solid day for us, now we move on to the next series of races."

Blaney, who earned his first career Cup Series victory at Pocono in 2017 and answered with a win last year, also had a great strategic day pay off with his third-place finish – especially impressive considering he started from the back of the grid after making adjustments on his car following qualifying. And. ... his rally came in a problematic cool-suit that forced him to run more than 100 laps without the device working correctly on the steamy hot summer afternoon.

RFK Racing driver Chris Buescher, who like Blaney earned his first career Cup Series win at Pocono (2016), started his No. 17 Ford on the outside of the front row and was among the day's nine leaders – ultimately finishing fourth. Hendrick Motorsports' Chase Elliott was fifth with back-to-back top-five finishes for the first time this year.

Briscoe's victory – the third of his career – makes him the 11th driver to earn a position in the 16-driver Playoff field – the sixth different in just the last eight weeks.

"To finally deliver a win is such an awesome feeling. ... such a big weight off my shoulders," Briscoe said. "I've been telling my wife the last few weeks, I have to win and so to come here and do, it is a great day."

Legacy Motor Club's John Hunter Nemechek finished sixth, followed by Hendrick Motorsport's Kyle Larson, RFK's Ryan Preece and RFK owner-driver Brad Keselowski. Team Penske's Austin Cindric rounded out the top-10.

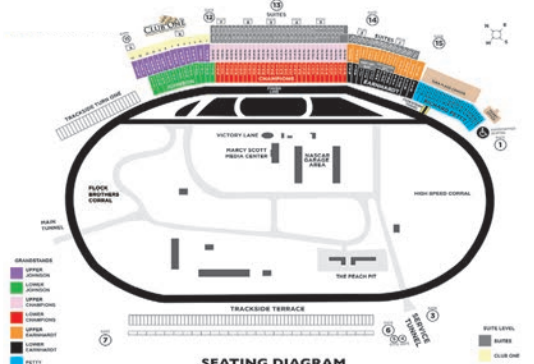
Hendrick Motorsports driver William Byron started from the rear of the field after a qualifying accident, moved forward at one point, but ultimately took a 27th-place finish. He still leads the NASCAR Cup Series championship standings by 54 points over his teammate Larson.

With nine races remaining to set the Playoff field, Hendrick's Alex Bowman sits in that 16th-place position, 20-points up on Preece for that final points-only transfer position.

The NASCAR Cup Series moves to Atlanta's EchoPark Speedway for Saturday night's Quaker State 400 (7 p.m. ET on TNT, PRN, SiriusXM NASCAR Radio) – the In Season Bracket Challenge Round 1 race of the \$1 million to-win five-race series.

Team Penske's Joey Logano is the defending race winner. Joe Gibbs Racing's Christopher Bell won at Atlanta this February.

NEXT RACE: QUAKER STATE 400



EchoPark Speedway
7 p.m. ET Sunday, TNT

- 1.54-mile race track in Hampton, Georgia, 20 miles south of Atlanta.
- Length: 1.54 mi (2.48 km)
- Banking: Turns: 28°; Straights: 5°
- Capacity: 71,000-125,000 (depending on configuration)
- Owner: Speedway Motorsports
- Opened: July 31, 1960

THE ATLANTA STORY

Competitors started fielding superspeedway cars for NASCAR races in Atlanta with 2022's Folds of Honor QuikTrip 500, won by William Byron. The combination of superspeedway-spec cars and Atlanta's revamped, steeper-banked track yielded tighter, more intense racing.

Few who saw Atlanta Motor Speedway in its infancy would recognize the track today, as it's a far cry from the structure planned in 1958. When the 1.5-mile track, then called Atlanta International Raceway, made its debut on July 31, 1960, it became the seventh superspeedway, a paved facility of one mile or more, to play host to a Cup race. Only three of the original seven; Darlington, Daytona and Charlotte, are still in operation.

With just the Weaver Grandstand and wooden bleachers on the backstretch, fans would bring blankets and sit on the dirt bank.

Bruce Smith changed all that when he purchased Atlanta International Raceway in 1990 and renamed the facility Atlanta Motor Speedway. A year later, the addition of the East Turn Grandstand expanded the seating capacity by 25,000, and the 30 suites that rimmed the top gave new meaning to "luxurious."

Atlanta Motor Speedway has undergone massive expansion and dramatically increased its menu, hosting everything from the Xfinity and Truck Series, drag racing, legends and Bandolero Racing as well as car shows, concerts and business conventions.



Joey Logano won the second Atlanta race, in the Playoffs, last year. (Getty)

2025 CUP SERIES STANDINGS

Top 30 as of June 22

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1 W. Byron Chevrolet	623	16 J. Berry Ford	354
2 K. Larson Chevrolet	569	17 A.J. Allmendinger Chevy	344
3 D. Hamlin Toyota	545	18 E. Jones Toyota	341
4 C. Bell Toyota	544	19 Ky. Busch Chevrolet	340
5 C. Elliott Chevrolet	543	20 C. Hocevar Chevrolet	333
6 R. Blaney Ford	503	21 J. Nemechek Toyota	332
7 T. Reddick Toyota	490	22 M. McDowell Chevy	332
8 R. Chastain Chevrolet	454	23 T. Gibbs Toyota	319
9 C. Briscoe Toyota	450	24 R. Stenhouse Chevy	319
10 J. Logano Ford	436	25 Z. Smith Ford	304
11 C. Buescher Ford	421	26 A. Dillon Chevrolet	297
12 D. Wallace Jr. Toyota	412	27 D. Suárez Chevrolet	296
13 A. Bowman Chevrolet	403	28 T. Gilliland Ford	295
14 R. Preece Ford	383	29 J. Haley Chevrolet	265
15 A. Cindric Ford	368	30 B. Keselowski Ford	261

2025 XFINITY SERIES STANDINGS

Top 20 as of June 21

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1 Justin Allgaier #7	618	11 Sammy Smith #8	415
2 Austin Hill #21	536	12 Taylor Gray #54	411
3 Sam Mayer #41	518	13 Harrison Burton #25	400
4 Jesse Love #2	502	14 Nicholas Sanchez #48	385
5 Connor Zilisch #88	488	15 Christian Eckes #16	356
6 Carson Kvapil #1	442	16 Daniel Dye #10	336
7 Brandon Jones #20	433	17 Dean Thompson #26	335
8 Jeb Burton #27	424	18 Josh Williams #11	298
9 Sheldon Creed #00	420	19 Brennan Poole #44	296
10 Ryan Sieg #39	418	20 Jeremy Clements #51	293

NEXT RACE: FOCUSED HEALTH 250, EchoPark Speedway (GA), 7:30 p.m. ET Friday, CW

2025 TRUCK SERIES STANDINGS

Top 20 as of June 20

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1 Corey Heim #11	629	11 Rajah Caruth #71	363
2 Chandler Smith #38	505	12 Gio Ruggiero #17	363
3 Daniel Hemric #19	486	13 Ben Rhodes #99	361
4 Layne Riggs #34	482	14 Tanner Gray #15	338
5 Grant Enfinger #9	461	15 Matt Crafton #88	291
6 Kaden Honeycutt #45	456	16 Connor Mosack #81	287
7 Tyler Ankrum #18	441	17 A. Perez De Lara #77	277
8 Ty Majeski #98	421	18 Jack Wood #91	272
9 Jake Garcia #13	411	19 Matt Mills #42	262
10 Stewart Friesen #52	381	20 Dawson Sutton #26	249

NEXT RACE: LIUNA 150, Lime Rock Park, Lakeville, CT, 1 p.m. ET Saturday, FOX

POCONO WINNER QUOTE

"To finally deliver a win is such an awesome feeling. ... such a big weight off my shoulders. I've been telling my wife the last few weeks, I have to win and so to come here and do, it is a great day."

— Chase Briscoe, who grabbed his first Cup win of the year Sunday at Pocono Raceway



Chase Briscoe in Victory Lane Sunday at Pocono.

MEG OLIPHANT/GETTY IMAGES

ALL AMERICAN

SUB + MELT

Declare your freedom from hunger with ham, Smith's bologna, hard salami and cheese on a toasty pretzel bun or piled high on a Barnbuster sub.

Country of Origin
Fresh & Local