

RACING THIS WEEK

XFINITY BURNOUT ALERT! Austin Hill celebrates after winning Saturday's Ag-Pro 300 at Talladega Superspeedway. **L. Riely/Getty**



XFINITY RECAP

• **Saturday's** AG-PRO 300, Talladega Superspeedway



WINNER: AUSTIN HILL

TALLADEGA, Ala. — Richard Childress Racing's Austin Hill prevailed in a three-wide photo finish in the Ag-Pro 300 NASCAR Xfinity Series race Saturday at Talladega Superspeedway — edging ahead of Jeb Burton and his RCR teammate Jesse Love at the time the field was frozen with an electronic timestamp approaching the checkered flag.

The caution flag and checkered flag flew simultaneously after Love's No. 2 Chevrolet made contact with the rear of then-race leader, JR Motorsports rookie Connor Zilisch's No. 88 Chevrolet just after the white flag came out signaling one lap to go. Zilisch's car spun down into the track apron, hitting the wall, leaving Hill, Burton and Love to sort out the trophy.

It marks the ninth superspeedway victory for Hill, making the 30-year-old Georgia native the Xfinity Series' all-time winningest driver on drafting-style tracks such as Talladega, Daytona and Atlanta — breaking a tie with a pair of Hall of Famers, Tony Stewart and the late Dale Earnhardt.

"Man, we really had to work for that one," said Hill, who now has a series-best three victories this year and 13 in his career. "It just seemed like our car was really good. Everyone at RCR and RCR engines are bad to the bone, like always. We had to work. I thought the 2 (Love) was really good and when we got the push from the 2 going into [turn] one, he got inside of me and I thought that was a bad mistake and I should have covered it. So I thought we were done. But I just locked in and kept pushing the heck out of the 2 car.

"I knew it was either me or the 27 [Burton]," he said of the photo finish. "Man, to win them — any way you win them is always great — and finally to conquer Talladega, that's something I've really wanted to do for a long time.

"We've won at all these other superspeedways and to finally get it done at all the different superspeedways we go to, it just shows the 21 team can win at any of them and we're really good at this style of racing."

It was an especially tough outcome for Burton, who had two previous wins at this 2.66-mile high-banked Talladega track — NASCAR's largest — and still felt after the race that his No. 27 Jordan Anderson Racing Chevrolet was leading the field at the time of caution — although ultimately video did confirm Hill's win.

"I felt like we did everything we could today, so just frustrated," said an emotional Burton. "Every angle I see, we won the race.

"Just appreciate my guys," he continued. "We do a lot with a little team. We don't have a lot of chances to win, you know. That's what's frustrating."

JACK LINK'S 500

Team Penske's Austin Cindric pulled away from RFK Racing's Ryan Preece to capture the victory Sunday at Talladega. The win was Cindric's third of his Cup Series career and first since June 2024 at World Wide Technology Raceway.



Austin Cindric, driver of the #2 Menards/Quaker State Ford, takes the checkered flag to win the Cup Series Jack Link's 500 at Talladega Superspeedway on Sunday.

(Logan Riely/Getty Images)

Cindric tames Talladega for first win of season

TALLADEGA, Ala. — Austin Cindric's dramatic last-lap pass provided exactly the sort of Talladega Superspeedway thrill that NASCAR fans have come to expect at the sport's biggest track, earning the 2022 Daytona 500 winner Cindric — and Team Penske — their first trophy of the 2025 Cup Series season.

Cindric's No. 2 Team Penske Ford pulled ahead of Roush Fenway Keselowski Racing driver Ryan Preece's No. 60 Ford by the length of a front hood to claim a 0.022-second victory in Sunday's Jack Link's 500 — the two Ford Mustangs exchanged the lead five times in the final six laps and ultimately finished side-by-side holding off a pair of hard-charging Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet teammates just behind in Kyle Larson and William Byron.

"I'm just so proud of this team from the [pit] cycles to the fast cars to the fuel-only stops," said the 26-year old Cindric, whose team — with 17 laps remaining — turned in the fastest final pit stop putting him back out front and able to contend for the win in a race that featured 67 lead changes among 23 drivers.

"It definitely wasn't easy," Cindric said of holding off the Hendrick teammates for the checkered flag. "I give a lot of credit, Kyle [Larson] did a lot to take care of me, pushing me at the right times in the tri-oval, and as mad as I was at him after Atlanta [race], I feel like we're good now. That was great and having a photo-finish at Talladega and get in the playoffs in front of this amazing crowd, beautiful day in Alabama."

As thrilling as the win was for Cindric, it was a heartbreaking runner-up for the 34-year-old Preece, who came a literal split-second away from his first Cup Series victory.

"I'm happy, but as a racer, you want to win, right?" Preece said. "Coming through the tri-oval, I felt like, all right, we're all sticking together, and nobody was leaving me.

"It's not easy. I felt like this was the most aggressive I've raced on a superspeedway and really pushing the issues because you've got to figure out who's gonna have that fast car, and obviously, it was all Fords today. The right holes opened at the right times, but ultimately, just 22 thousandths short."

The Hendrick teammates Larson and Byron acknowledged lapped traffic in front of the lead pack, looming just beyond the finish line, certainly created an extra consideration. Yet the third-place showing for Larson, who won Stage 1 and led three laps on the day, was a career-best effort at Talladega. It was a major move forward personally on the large drafting tracks such as Talladega, Daytona and Atlanta, where the 2021 Cup Series champion and 31-race winner has yet to earn a trophy.

Cindric is the 10th different winner in the last 10 Talladega races — a record streak at the 2.66-mile high-banked track. Yet Sunday's race was calm compared to previous editions at the high-action drafting track. It marked the fourth time a Talladega race had only four caution flags — two of which were scheduled stage caution breaks.

As encouraging as Cindric and Preece's runs were, it was a gut-wrenching afternoon for their teammates, Ryan Blaney (Penske) and Brad Keselowski (RFK Racing).

The two former champions and past multi-time Talladega winners were collected in an accident on lap 43 during a pit stop cycle before the first Stage break. Keselowski and Chevy's Kyle Busch collided on track as Keselowski was moving toward pit road — their contact collected Blaney, spinning him out as well.

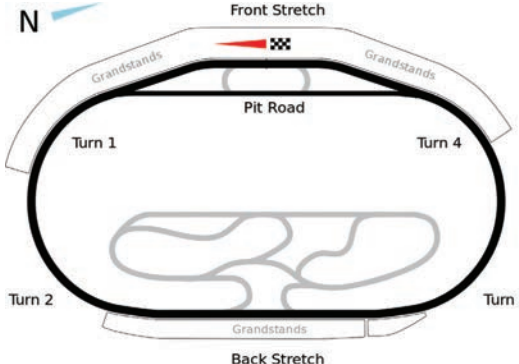
The owner-driver of the No. 6 Ford, Keselowski, who was already mired in a disappointing early season, finished 38th and is now ranked 32nd in the championship standings.

Blaney, who drives the No. 12 Penske Racing Ford, was scored 39th, last in the field. It marked his fourth DNF in the 10-race season, and the 2023 Cup Series champion now ranks ninth in the standings.

"Another DNF — it just sucks," Blaney said. Just when we were kind of getting our momentum and didn't even get to race today. We'll just move on to Texas."

With his fourth-place finish, Byron continues to lead the championship standings, now 32 points ahead of his teammate Larson. Joe Gibbs Racing's Denny Hamlin, who had been second in points going into Talladega, is now ranked third, 53 points behind Byron.

WÜRTH 400



Texas Motor Speedway
3:30 p.m. ET Sunday, FS1

Surface: Asphalt

Length: 1.5 mi (2.4 km)

Turns: 4 - 750-foot radius

Oval: 1.5 miles

Width: 58 feet (minimum)

Banking: 20 degrees in Turns 1 & 2, 24 degrees in Turns 3 & 4, 5 degrees in straightaways

Frontstretch: 2,250 feet long

Backstretch: 1,330 feet long

Pit road: 45 pit stalls for NASCAR

More than racing: Anchored by the newly renamed Cup Series WÜRTH 400 pres. by LIQUI MOLY, the weekend also features the Truck Series SpeedyCash.com 250 on Friday and the Xfinity Series Andy's Frozen Custard 300 on Saturday. But between the checkered flags, Texas Motor Speedway is transforming into a high-energy fiesta-themed celebration in honor of Cinco de Mayo—and the Fan Zone is the heart of the party.

Fan Zone highlights

- **Speedway Experience** puts you in the driver's seat with immersive exhibits and hands-on activities designed for race fans of all ages.
- **Funkanometry** – This high-octane dance duo will bring the funk to the Fan Zone stage.
- **Lucha Libre** – Masked warriors fly from the top rope in a wrestling spectacle that's as theatrical as it is thrilling.
- **Robo Cars & Rock-IT the Robot** – These roaming robots will dance, interact, and dazzle as they roll through the crowd, bringing sci-fi charm to every corner of the Fan Zone.



Chase Elliott took the flag at Texas last year. (Getty)

2025 CUP SERIES STANDINGS

Top 30 as of April 27

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1 W. Byron Chevrolet	388	16 A. J. Allmendinger Ch.	213
2 K. Larson Chevrolet	356	17 Ky. Busch Chevrolet	208
3 D. Hamlin Toyota	335	18 R. Stenhouse Chevy	207
4 C. Elliott Chevrolet	315	19 M. McDowell Chevy	199
5 C. Bell Toyota	306	20 C. Hocevar Chevrolet	192
6 T. Reddick Toyota	299	21 J. Berry Ford	189
7 D. Wallace Jr. Toyota	294	22 T. Gibbs Toyota	189
8 J. Logano Ford	286	23 A. Dillon Chevrolet	180
9 R. Blaney Ford	276	24 Z. Smith Ford	179
10 A. Bowman Chevrolet	272	25 D. Suárez Chevrolet	177
11 R. Chastain Chevrolet	244	26 J. Nemecek Toyota	176
12 R. Preece Ford	241	27 J. Haley Chevrolet	174
13 C. Briscoe Toyota	233	28 T. Gilliland Ford	172
14 C. Buescher Ford	228	29 T. Dillon Chevrolet	159
15 A. Cindric Ford	218	30 E. Jones Toyota	156

2025 XFINITY SERIES STANDINGS

Top 20 as of April 26

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1 Justin Allgaier #7	449	11 Ryan Sieg #39	284
2 Austin Hill #21	370	12 Harrison Burton #25	276
3 Sam Mayer #41	347	13 Daniel Dye #10	267
4 Jesse Love #2	340	14 Nicholas Sanchez #48	251
5 Carson Kvapil #1	306	15 Taylor Gray #54	249
6 Connor Zilisch #88	299	16 Dean Thompson #26	239
7 Brandon Jones #20	293	17 Christian Eckes #16	237
8 Sammy Smith #8	293	18 Brennan Poole #44	218
9 Jeb Burton #27	291	19 Jeremy Clements #51	209
10 Sheldon Creed #00	290	20 Josh Williams #11	206

NEXT RACE: ANDY'S FROZEN CUSTARD 300, Texas Motor Speedway, 2 p.m. ET Saturday, CW

2025 TRUCK SERIES STANDINGS

Top 20 as of April 18

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1 Corey Heim #11	312	11 Gio Ruggiero #17	181
2 Chandler Smith #38	290	12 Ben Rhodes #99	179
3 Tyler Ankrum #18	250	13 Tanner Gray #15	161
4 Daniel Hemric #19	239	14 Rajah Caruth #71	159
5 Layne Riggs #34	232	15 Jack Wood #91	147
6 Ty Majeski #98	228	16 A. Perez De Lara #77	140
7 Jake Garcia #13	224	17 Matt Crafton #88	139
8 Grant Enfinger #19	218	18 Connor Mosack #81	131
9 Kaden Honeycutt #45	215	19 Dawson Sutton #26	123
10 Stewart Friesen #52	185	20 Matt Mills #42	122

NEXT RACE: SPEEDYCASH.COM 250, Texas Motor Speedway, 8 p.m. ET Friday, FS1

TALLADEGA WINNER QUOTE

"I'm just so proud of this team from the [pit] cycles to the fast cars to the fuel-only stops. ... It definitely wasn't easy. I give a lot of credit, Kyle [Larson] did a lot to take care of me, pushing me at the right times in the tri-oval."

- Austin Cindric, who grbbed his first Cup Series win of the season Sunday at Talladega



Austin Cindric celebrates in Victory Lane Sunday at Talladega.

SEAN GARDNER/GETTY IMAGES

SEAS THE DAY

Reel in your hunger with this fresh catch! Creamy tuna salad with chopped celery piled high on a fresh-baked roll.



TUNA SALAD sub

Country Fair