The Derrick.
WHEELS
Thursday, July 23, 2026

TRUCKS RECAP

• **Saturday's** FAITHFEST 250, North Wilkesboro Speedway



WINNER: CHANDLER SMITH

Last year at North Wilkesboro, Chandler Smith led one lap in winning the Truck Series over Front Row Motorsports teammate Layne Riggs.

In sharp contrast, Smith was the quintessence of dominance on Saturday, leading the final 105 laps to claim victory in the FaithFest 250 presented by Mercer Transportation, again with series leader Riggs securing second place.

Last year's race ended under caution, after the trucks of Riggs and Corey Heim collided on the last lap. On Saturday, Smith ran away with the race in the final stage, beating Riggs to the finish line by 8.479 seconds—a record margin on a short track in Truck Series history.

"We're ready to rip," Smith said after a race run in extreme heat on the 0.625-mile asphalt surface. "If the Lord wills it, we don't plan on backing down from here going forward. We were just biding our time, keeping the fenders clean and taking what (the No. 38 Ford) would give me."

Smith took the lead off pit road for a Lap 152 restart to begin the final stage and never looked back. Riggs restarted eighth and worked his way to second on Lap 210 but had nothing for his teammate over the final 40 circuits.

The race ran without a caution for the final 99 laps.

"Part of me wanted to have a restart," Riggs said. "Part of me knew if that happened there was probably going to be some carnage. So I was very happy just finishing the race there, knowing our teammate got the win. Congratulations to Chandler. He did a great job."

Riggs, who won the opening stage and led 25 laps, had to overcome the heat to hold second over third-place NASCAR Cup Series regular Shane van Gisbergen, who matched his best NASCAR national series finish on an oval track.

"It was hot today," Riggs acknowledged. "I ice-bagged on every stop. My cool shirt was on—I took it off already. It was probably one of the hottest races I've ever been in. I think we need to add some heat shields to these things...

"But my mind stayed sharp, and I stayed in the game."

Riggs extended his series lead to 59 points over 11th-place finisher Kaden Honeycutt.

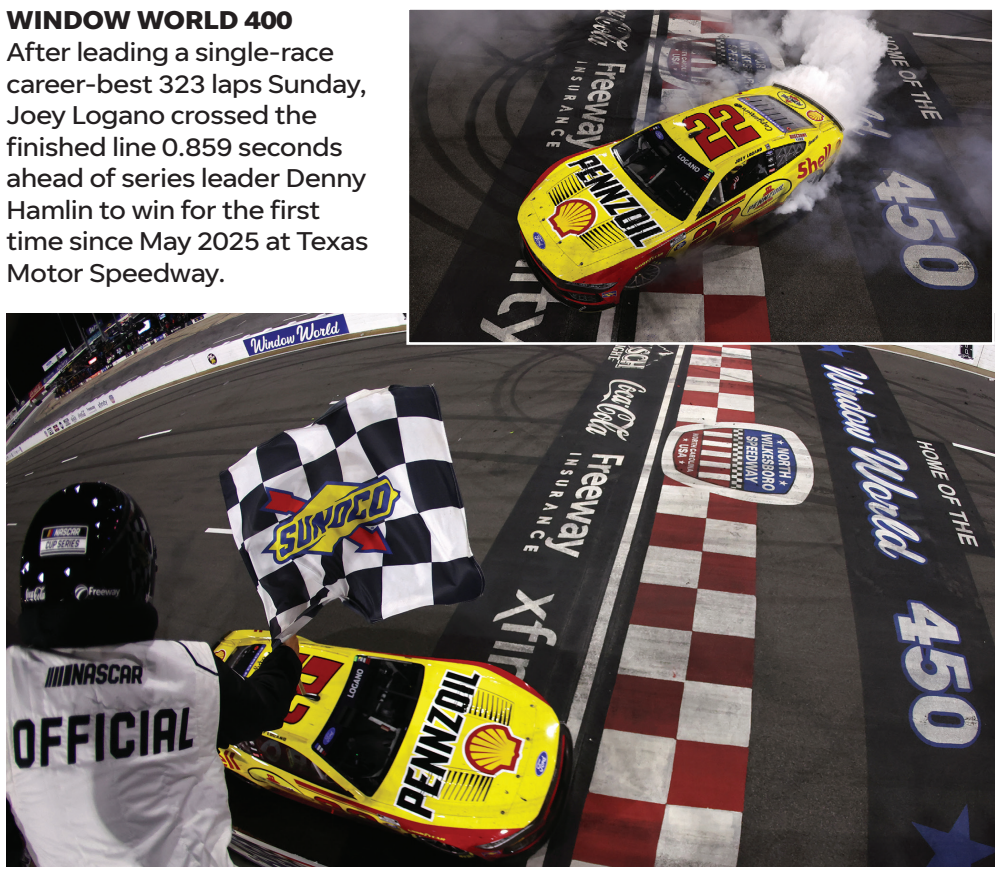
Christian Eckes finished fourth, followed by Landen Lewis, who scored his second straight top-five finish after a runner-up run last Saturday at Lime Rock Park.

Giovanni Ruggiero, Chase Elliott, Stewart Friesen, Heim and Stage 2 winner Ty Majeski completed top 10.

The race for the final spots in the postseason Chase tightened on Saturday. With three races left to set the Chase field, Friesen and 19th-place finisher Tyler Ankrum are tied for the 10th and final postseason berth, with Jake Garcia just 11 points back in 12th place after coming home 13th at North Wilkesboro.

Cup Series driver Carson Hocevar led 74 laps but couldn't recover from a cut tire that dropped him two laps down and relegated him to 27th-place.

WINDOW WORLD 400
After leading a single-race career-best 323 laps Sunday, Joey Logano crossed the finished line 0.859 seconds ahead of series leader Denny Hamlin to win for the first time since May 2025 at Texas Motor Speedway.



Joey Logano, driver of the #22 Shell-Pennzoil Ford, takes the checkered to win the Cup Series Window World 450 at North Wilkesboro Speedway on Sunday.
(David Jensen/Getty)

Good to see J. Logano back in Victory Lane

NORTH WILKESBORO, N.C.—Joey Logano had a gleam in his eye and a lilt in his voice as he readied to climb into the No. 22 Team Penske Ford for the start of Sunday night's Window World 450.

"I think we have a fast car," Logano opined optimistically before taking the green flag in the first Cup Series points race at North Wilkesboro Speedway in 30 years.

Logano was right, but his assessment turned out to be a massive understatement. After leading a single-race career-best 323 laps, Logano crossed the finished line 0.859 seconds ahead of series leader Denny Hamlin to win for the first time since May 2025 when he triumphed at Texas Motor Speedway.

The victory was Logano's first in a points race at the 0.625 short track, though he also won the 2024 NASCAR All-Star Race at revitalized North Wilkesboro. In front of an enthusiastic sell-out crowd, Logano recorded the 38th Cup victory of his career, 23rd-most all-time.

"It's good to get back into Victory Lane," Logano said. "It's been a tough year. So getting the Shell-Pennzoil Mustang doing some big, smoky doughnuts around this place felt really good."

The victory was a distinct bright spot in a troublesome season for the three-time Cup Series champion, who vaulted from 17th to 15th in the series standings, 49 points clear of the current cut line for the postseason Chase.

"(Crew chief) Paul (Wolfe) put together a good car," Logano said. "I think I know exactly what I need to go fast around this place. He's able to give it to me.

"I knew coming into this weekend, we've got to capitalize on the points. A win was great, but we really need the points. Really capitalized on those tonight."

Hamlin was able to stay close to Logano in the final stage, but the race winner worked traffic adroitly and never gave Hamlin a chance to close within striking distance.

The critical juncture came during a green-flag pit stop cycle in the final stage, with Hamlin steering his No. 11 Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota to pit road on Lap 359 of 450. Logano followed a lap later and exited the pits roughly a half-second ahead of Hamlin.

That pit cycle proved decisive.

"Yeah, the pressure was there, for sure," Logano said. "Denny got really good there the last run. Honestly, it was whoever was out front was going to win the race.

"We were pretty dominant. But as the race went along, Denny got better at the last run. Just did a decent job keeping up with the track. They did a good job keeping up."

Though his extended pursuit of Logano proved fruitless, Hamlin expanded his series lead over s Tyler Reddick to 68 points, with five races left before the Chase is set.

"You just have to compliment them on a great day and a great drive," Hamlin said of Logano's effort. "They were really good. There were a lot of times that I felt like my car was really close to where it needed to be; it was just a smidge off.

Chase Briscoe ran third and Ty Gibbs fourth, despite an early pit road speeding penalty. Shane van Gisbergen, who maintained a presence in the top 10 for the entire race and led 49 laps (second most to Logano), placed fifth and climbed one position to 14th in the standings, 54 points above the current Chase cutoff.

In the semifinal of the Cup Series In-Season Challenge, Todd Gilliland continued his unlikely march to the winner-take-all $1-million payday with an eighth-place finish to Chase Elliott's 17th.

Elliott was buried two laps down when caution for a collision between the Chevrolet of Alex Bowman and the Toyota of Reddick—as Bowman turned across traffic trying to enter pit road on Lap 183—interrupted a cycle of green-flag stops.

Elliott finished three laps down after a late pit stop.

Ryan Blaney, who finished 11th, two laps down, after a speeding penalty, ousted Christopher Bell from the In-Season Challenge. Like Elliott, Bell was a victim of the Lap 183 caution after pitting early in the cycle. He finished 19th, three laps down.

Blaney will face Gilliland for the In-Season title in Sunday's Brickyard 400 at Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

The race featured five cautions for 43 laps, with the final stage running caution-free for 175 green-flag laps. There were 17 lead changes among nine drivers, the majority during green-flag pit cycles.

Gibbs won the first stage before drawing his speeding penalty, with Logano exerting his dominance in winning Stage 2.

Sixth-place Bubba Wallace was the last driver to finish on the lead lap. Brad Keselowski, Gilliland, Daniel Suarez and Ryan Preece—all one lap down—completed the top 10.

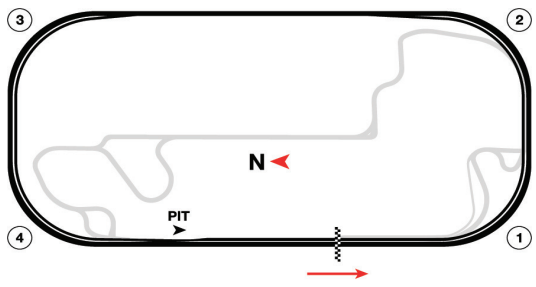
N. WILKESBORO WINNER QUOTE

"It's good to get back into Victory Lane. It's been a tough year. So getting the Shell-Pennzoil Mustang doing some big, smoky doughnuts around this place felt really good. (Crew chief) Paul (Wolfe) put together a good car. I think I know exactly what I need to go fast around this place. He's able to give it to me."
— Joey Logano, who grabbed his first win of the season Sunday at North Wilkesboro



Joey Logano in Victory Lane Sunday at North Wilkesboro.
GETTY

NEXT: BRICKYARD 400



Indianapolis Motor Speedway
2 p.m. ET Sunday, TNT

• **NASCAR history:** On June 22-23, 1992, NASCAR made its debut at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Nine drivers conducted the first official NASCAR test in the track's history. The participants: Rusty Wallace, Dale Earnhardt, Ricky Rudd, Mark Martin, Bill Elliott, Darrell Waltrip, Ernie Irvan, Davey Allison and Kyle Petty. Top speed was 168.767 mph by Elliott.
The inaugural Brickyard 400 took place Aug. 6, 1994. In preparation for the race, 31 NASCAR drivers participated in a test session. Elliott was fastest again, at 167.467 mph.
The following year, 23-year-old Jeff Gordon, who had moved to nearby Pittsboro, Indiana, at a young age, won the inaugural Brickyard 400, the first non-Indy 500 event held at IMS since 1916. The event still holds the record as the largest-attended NASCAR race in history with a crowd estimated at 250,000.
• **Capacity:** 250,000+
• **Most driver wins:** Jeff Gordon, 5
• **Most team wins:** Hendrick Motorsports, 11
• **Most manufacturer wins:** Chevrolet, 18
• **Surface:** Asphalt
• **Length:** 2.5 miles
• **Turns:** 4
• **Of note:** More than 110 years old, Indianapolis Motor Speedway is the oldest continually operating racetrack in the United States and is known as "The Greatest Race Course in the World." With more than 250,000 permanent seats, it is the world's largest sports seating facility and hosts the largest single-day sporting event in the world, the Indianapolis 500.
Built in the spring of 1909, IMS was the result of a creative vision of Carl G. Fisher and his three partners in the venture, James Allison, Arthur Newby and Frank Wheeler. The track, which was originally paved in crushed stone and tar, had an original purpose to serve as a common testing facility for the rapidly growing local automobile industry. In the fall of 1909, the 2.5-mile oval was repaved with 3.2 million bricks, helping it to become known as "The Brickyard."

2026 CUP SERIES STANDINGS

Top 30 as of July 19

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1 D. Hamlin Toyota	842	16 A. Cindric Ford	495
2 T. Reddick Toyota	774	17 E. Jones Toyota	462
3 R. Blaney Ford	755	18 R. Preece Ford	447
4 T. Gibbs Toyota	708	19 B. Keselowski Ford	437
5 C. Elliott Chevrolet	634	20 M. McDowell Chevrolet	412
6 K. Larson Chevrolet	616	21 R. Chastain Chevrolet	412
7 C. Hocevar Chevrolet	598	22 AJ Allmendinger Chevy	397
8 C. Briscoe Toyota	587	23 T. Gilliland Ford	384
9 C. Buescher Ford	585	24 Z. Smith Ford	371
10 C. Bell Toyota	574	25 R. Herbst Toyota	369
11 D. Suárez Chevrolet	558	26 J. Nemechek Toyota	350
12 W. Byron Chevrolet	546	27 R. Stenhouse Jr. Chevy	347
13 D. Wallace Jr. Toyota	531	28 A. Dillon Chevrolet	341
14 S. v Gisbergen Chevy	516	29 A. Bowman Chevrolet	292
15 J. Logano Ford	511	30 T. Dillon Chevrolet	259

2026 O'REILLY AUTO PARTS STANDINGS

Top 20 as of July 11

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1 Justin Allgaier #7	966	11 Brent Crews #19	540
2 Jesse Love #2	726	12 Taylor Gray #54	539
3 Sheldon Creed #00	693	13 Rajah Caruth #88	522
4 Corey Day #17	689	14 William Sawalich #18	518
5 Carson Kvapil #1	682	15 Ryan Sieg #39	473
6 Brandon Jones #20	664	16 Anthony Alfredo #96	423
7 Austin Hill #21	659	17 Brennan Poole #44	386
8 Sammy Smith #8	639	18 Dean Thompson #26	368
9 Parker Retzlaff #99	593	19 Jeremy Clements #51	362
10 Sam Mayer #41	555	20 Harrison Burton #24	319

NEXT RACE: PENNZOIL 250 PRES. BY TAKE 5, Indianapolis Motor Speedway, 4 p.m. ET Saturday, CW

2026 CRAFTSMAN TRUCK STANDINGS

Top 20 as of July 18

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1 Layne Riggs #34	640	11 Tyler Ankrum #18	336
2 Kaden Honeycutt #11	581	12 Jake Garcia #98	325
3 Chandler Smith #38	514	13 Brenden Queen #12	313
4 Christian Eckes #91	483	14 Corey Heim #5	309
5 Gio Ruggiero #17	467	15 A. Perez De Lara #44	305
6 Ty Majeski #88	400	16 Tanner Gray #15	296
7 Ben Rhodes #99	386	17 Justin Haley #16	295
8 Daniel Hemric #19	376	18 Dawson Sutton #26	240
9 Grant Enfinger #9	356	19 Mini Tyrrell #14	223
10 Stewart Friesen #52	336	20 Cole Butcher #13	219

NEXT RACE: SERIES RACE, Lucas Oil Indianapolis Raceway Park, 8 p.m. ET Friday, FS1

