

# RACING THIS WEEK

**TRUCKS BURNOUT ALERT!**  
Christopher Bell celebrates after winning Friday's Army National Guard 250 at Bristol.  
J. Bachman/Getty



## O'REILLY RECAP

• **Saturday's** SUBURBAN PROPANE 300, Bristol Motor Speedway



**WINNER: CONNOR ZILISCH**

Connor Zilisch rediscovered his identity on Saturday — as a winner.

Thanks to a bold call from crew chief Rodney Childers, Zilisch stayed out on older tires with 28 laps left in the Suburban Propane 300 at Bristol Motor Speedway and took the checkered flag.

With track position at the front of the field, Zilisch was able to hold off the dominant Kyle Larson, who had to settle for second place after leading 230 of 300 laps and sweeping the first two stages in the ninth O'Reilly Auto Parts Series race of the 2026 season.

For Zilisch, his first victory on a short track was a welcome respite from the struggles he had faced as a rookie in the Cup Series.

Zilisch picked up his first win of the season, his first at Bristol and the 12th of his career. He was one of four JRM drivers in the top five, a group that included Larson, Justin Allgaier (fourth) and Carson Kvapil (fifth). Joe Gibbs Racing driver Brent Crews crashed that party with a third-place finish.

For the eighth time in his career, Allgaier collected a \$100,000 bonus in the O'Reilly Auto Parts Dash 4 Cash program as the highest finisher among four eligible drivers (the top four in last Saturday's race at Rockingham).

A three-time winner this year, Allgaier retained his series lead by 130 points over second-place Sheldon Creed, who ran sixth at Bristol.

## TRUCKS RECAP

• **Friday's** TENNESSEE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD 250, Bristol



**WINNER: CHRISTOPHER BELL**

Full-time Cup Series driver Christopher Bell was thrilled to have an opportunity to drive the No. 62 Halmar Friesen Toyota in Friday night's Tennessee Army National Guard 250 at Bristol Motor Speedway.

After crossing the finish line first, he had reason to be positively elated.

Corey Heim, on the other hand, had 350,000 reasons to be disappointed, after his dream of completing the Triple Truck Challenge — and earning a \$350,000 bonus — ended prematurely against the Turn 1 wall.

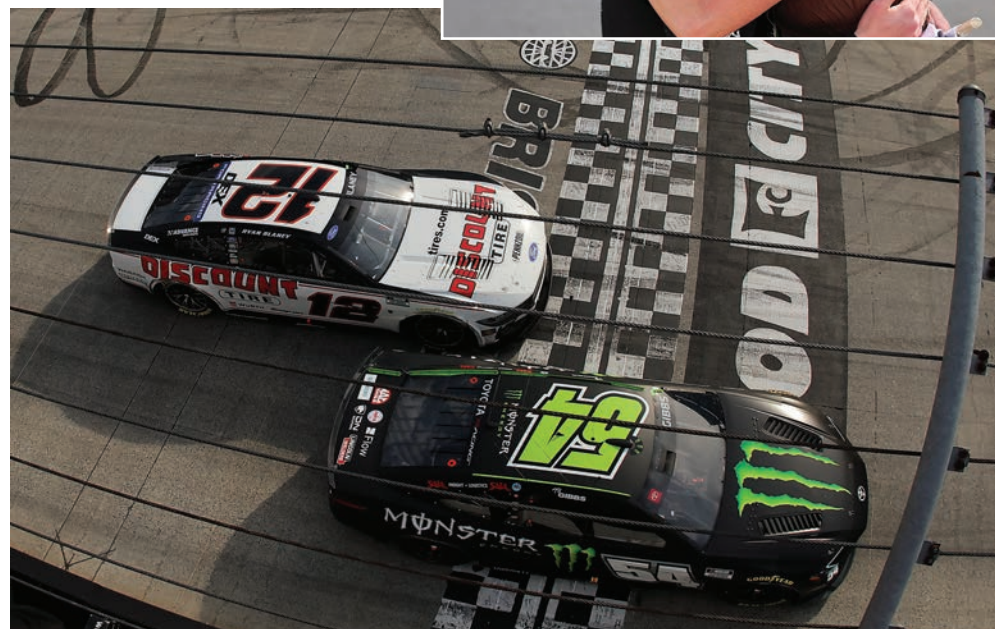
Bell grabbed the lead from Christian Eckes on Lap 188 of 250 and held it the rest of the way, with Chandler Smith moving into second after a subsequent restart on Lap 224 and chasing Bell to the checkered flag.

Finishing 0.330 seconds ahead of Smith's No. 38 Front Row Motorsports Ford, Bell scored his first Trucks victory since 2017, his first on the 0.533-mile short track and the eighth of his career.

After losing ground on the final restart, Christian Eckes finished fifth behind Bell, Smith, Gio Ruggiero and Cup driver Ross Chastain. Jake Garcia, Dawson Sutton, Kyle Busch, Carson Hocevar and rookie Brenden Queen completed the top 10.

## FOOD CITY 500

Ty Gibbs beat Ryan Blaney to the finish line by 0.055 seconds to claim his first career Cup Series victory. The margin of victory was the closest at Bristol since Rusty Wallace beat Ernie Irvan by one foot in April of 1991.



Above: Ty Gibbs, driver of the #54 Monster Energy Toyota, crosses the finish line ahead of Ryan Blaney, driver of the #12 Discount Tire Ford, to win the Cup Series Food City 500 at Bristol Motor Speedway on Sunday. Top: Gibbs celebrates the win with his mom, Heather Gibbs. (Jonathan Bachman/Getty)

# Gibbs grabs first Cup win in OT thriller at Bristol

**B**RISTOL, Tenn. — When Chase Elliott spun to cause the eighth caution in Sunday's Food City 500 at Bristol Motor Speedway, driver Ty Gibbs had an emphatic message for crew chief Tyler Allen.

"I don't want to give up track position — at all," Gibbs asserted over the team radio.

Allen acquiesced, and Gibbs restarted in the lead on Lap 486. He held that track position through a ninth caution that sent the race to overtime and beat Ryan Blaney to the finish line by 0.055 seconds to claim his first career Cup Series victory.

The margin of victory was the closest at Bristol since Rusty Wallace beat Ernie Irvan by one foot in April of 1991.

One of four leaders in the eighth race of the season, Gibbs was out front for only the final 25 laps, as reigning series champion Kyle Larson and Ryan Blaney combined to dominate the proceedings before the decisive caution.

But it was Gibbs' No. 54 Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota that found its way to Victory Lane at the 0.533-mile short track — the first Cup victory for a car numbered 54 since Lennie Pond won the only race of his career in 1979 at Talladega.

After he climbed from the car, Gibbs' immediate thoughts turned to his father, Coy Gibbs, who passed away the night after Ty won the O'Reilly Auto Parts Series (then Xfinity Series) championship in 2022.

"Yeah, it's awesome," Gibbs said. "It's awesome to be with great people. To be in this position is great. I'd love for my father to have seen this. I knew he knew it was going to happen and expected it as well."

"Yeah, it was great day for us. My boys didn't give up. Pit crew is just amazing. This is our family. It's been great. So it's just such great deal. Very honored to be in this situation."

Under the caution that proved decisive, Gibbs, Carson Hocevar, Chase Briscoe, Denny Hamlin and Tyler Reddick stayed out on old tires — an option Allen said he had discussed with Gibbs as they considered possible scenarios during the final stage.

Larson restarted sixth after a two-tire call and Blaney took the green flag in seventh on four new tires.

With the benefit of fresh rubber, Blaney and Larson charged into second and third, with Gibbs holding the lead from the top lane. Gibbs was still in front on Lap 497 of a scheduled 500 when Kyle Busch spun Riley Herbst in payback for an earlier incident to cause the final caution.

Gibbs held his own on the two-lap overtime shootout and narrowly beat Blaney to the finish line, with Larson just 0.229 seconds behind in third.

"Gave it my best shot the last restart," said Blaney, who started from the pole position, led 190 laps and posted his best career finish in Thunder Valley. "Got a good restart. Was close, but just couldn't get it done. Proud of the effort by all the (No.) 12 (Team Penske) folks. Gave me a real fast car, fast car in qualifying. Got it better through the race, honestly. Halfway through the race, I thought we got to be the best car, which is really good."

"Gosh, I really wanted to win at Bristol here. I came close. But congrats to Ty. He's been really close. Nothing is more special than your first Cup win. It's pretty cool to win at this place."

Larson led 284 laps and swept the first two stages at Bristol for the third time in his career, but saw his winless streak grow to 32 races, dating to May 11, 2025, at Kansas Speedway.

"Blaney had by far the best car," Larson acknowledged. "His pit crew just kept putting him behind all day."

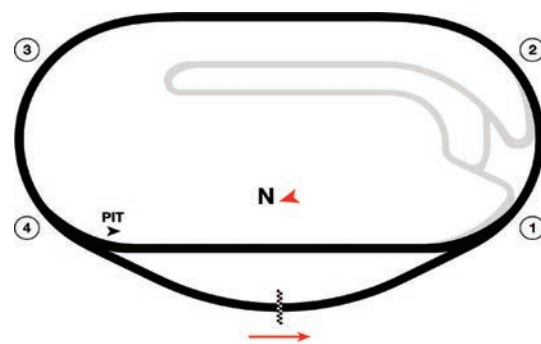
Reddick finished fourth but saw his series lead over Blaney shrink to 62 points. Chase Briscoe was fifth, followed by Todd Gilliland, who parlayed a two-tire call into his sixth-place finish.

Joey Logano ran seventh, followed by Ryan Preece, Hamlin and Hocevar.

Alex Bowman's return from a four-race absence because of a vertigo diagnosis came to an early end when Shane van Gisbergen spun in Turn 4 and collected the cars of John Hunter Nemechek and Bowman. Bowman exited the race in 37th place after completing 163 laps.

Christopher Bell, who ranked among the pre-race favorites after his Bristol win last fall, finished 27th after a pair of issues in the race's first half.

## NEXT: ADVENT HEALTH 400



## Kansas Speedway

2 p.m. ET Sunday, FS1

• **Location:** 400 Speedway Boulevard, Kansas City, Kansas

• **Capacity:** 48,000

• **Owner:** NASCAR (2019–present)

• **Inaugural Cup race winner:** Jeff Gordon, September 30, 2001

• **Course:** Tri-oval

• **Surface:** Asphalt

• **Length:** 1.5 miles

• **Turns:** 4

• **Banking:** Turns, 17–20 degree variable banking; Frontstretch, 9–11 degrees variable banking; Backstretch, 5 degrees

• **Fastest Cup lap:** 0:28.857 Kyle Larson, SpongeBob SquarePants 400, 2015



Kyle Larson won last year's Spring race at Kansas in dominating fashion. GETTY



Chase Elliott won last September's Playoff race at Kansas in come-from-behind fashion.

## 2026 CUP SERIES STANDINGS

Top 30 as of April 12

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1 Tyler Reddick 23XI	386	16 S v Gisbergen Track	177
2 Ryan Blaney Penske	324	17 Chase Briscoe JGR	176
3 Denny Hamlin JGR	300	18 Austin Cindric Penske	172
4 Ty Gibbs JGR	281	19 Mike McDowell Spire	171
5 Chase Elliott Hendrick	264	20 AJ Allmendinger Kaulig	156
6 Kyle Larson Hendrick	260	21 Ross Chastain Track	153
7 William Byron Hendrick	245	22 Zane Smith Front Row	144
8 Bubba Wallace 23XI	236	23 Erik Jones Legacy	133
9 Christopher Bell JGR	231	24 Kyle Busch RCR	131
10 Chris Buescher RFK	230	25 Josh Berry Wood	128
11 Brad Keselowski RFK	229	26 Todd Gilliland Fr. Row	127
12 Joey Logano Penske	218	27 Austin Dillon RCR	124
13 Carson Hocevar Spire	209	28 J. H. Nemechek Legacy	111
14 Ryan Preece RFK	209	29 Riley Herbst 23XI	109
15 Daniel Suárez Spire	192	30 R. Stenhouse Hyak	107

## 2026 O'REILLY AUTO PARTS STANDINGS

Top 20 as of April 11

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1 Justin Allgaier #7	470	11 Rajah Caruth #88	238
2 Sheldon Creed #00	340	12 Taylor Gray #54	230
3 Jesse Love #2	324	13 Ryan Sieg #39	202
4 Corey Day #17	304	14 Sam Mayer #41	195
5 Carson Kvapil #9	300	15 Brennan Poole #44	181
6 Austin Hill #21	293	16 Jeb Burton #27	163
7 Sammy Smith #8	284	17 Anthony Alfredo #96	158
8 Brandon Jones #20	275	18 Brent Crews #19	155
9 Parker Retzlaff #99	257	19 Blaine Perkins #31	137
10 William Sawalich #18	254	20 Patrick Staropoli #48	129

**NEXT RACE:** KANSAS LOTTERY 300, Kansas Speedway, 7 p.m. ET Saturday, CW

## 2026 CRAFTSMAN TRUCK STANDINGS

Top 20 as of April 10

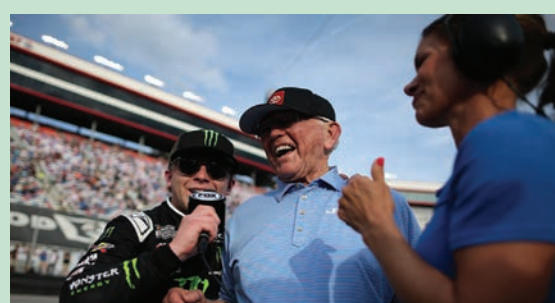
Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1 Chandler Smith #38	208	11 Stewart Friesen #52	140
2 Kaden Honeycutt #11	207	12 Tyler Ankrum #18	137
3 Corey Heim #1	204	13 Tanner Gray #15	123
4 Layne Riggs #34	204	14 Brenden Queen #12	120
5 Christian Eckes #91	191	15 Grant Engfer #9	119
6 Giovanni Ruggiero #17	187	16 Daniel Hemric #19	116
7 Ty Majeski #88	182	17 A. Perez De Lara #44	115
8 Ben Rhodes #99	181	18 Cole Butcher #13	104
9 Jake Garcia #98	146	19 Dawson Sutton #26	89
10 Justin Haley #16	144	20 Kris Wright #81	83

**NEXT RACE:** SPEEDYCASH.COM 250, Texas Motor Speedway, 8 p.m. ET Friday, May 1, FS1

## BRISTOL WINNER QUOTE

"Yeah, it was great day for us. My boys didn't give up. Pit crew is just amazing. This is our family. It's been great. So it's just such great deal. Very honored to be in this situation."

— Ty Gibbs, who got past Ryan Blaney in overtime to win Sunday's Food City 500



Ty Gibbs and Hall of Famer and JGR team owner Joe Gibbs share a laugh during an interview in Victory Lane Sunday at Bristol.

CHRIS GRAYTHEN/GETTY

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