



RACING THIS WEEK

O'REILLY BURNOUT ALERT! Jesse Love celebrates after winning Saturday's Nu Way 225 at WWT Raceway.
C. Graythen/Getty



O'REILLY RECAP

• **Saturday's** NU WAY 225 Powered by Bobcat, Sourced by Blues Hog, WWT



WINNER: JESSE LOVE

In a race that kindled the rivalry between Corey Day and William Sawalich to full flame, Jesse Love showed the form that made him a O'Reilly Series champion last year.

Wresting the lead from Carson Kvapil with a gentle rub on Lap 165 of 180, Love held the top spot the rest of the way in winning Saturday night's Nu Way 225 Powered by Bobcat Sourced by Blue Hog at World Wide Technology Raceway at Gateway.

Love crossed the finish line 0.896 seconds ahead of last week's Darlington winner, Sheldon Creed, who moved into first place in the Chase standings by three points over top-seeded Justin Allgaier.

Kvapil, who faded to fifth in the closing laps, is third in the standings, nine points behind Allgaier. Love climbed two positions to fourth, 16 points back. Chase drivers Sam Mayer and Taylor Gray came home third and fourth, respectively, in Saturday's race.

Parker Retzlaff, Brent Crews, Sammy Smith, Kyle Sieg and Jeb Burton completed the top 10.

Love was convinced a chance for his first victory of the season would come if he maintained his grit and work ethic.

The win was Love's first at Gateway and the fourth of his career.

Love avoided the pitfalls that eventually hurt other Chase drivers—specifically, a blockaded pit road and the latest in a violent string of incidents between Day and Sawalich.

After a restart on Lap 133, Day and Sawalich were racing side-by-side, with Day to the inside, when Allgaier made a move to the bottom of the track with a push from Gray's Toyota.

With Gray on his bumper, Allgaier moved Day up the track into the driver's side of Sawalich's Toyota. Sawalich turned left into Day's Chevrolet, knocking it down the track into a spin that ended with hard contact with the inside wall.

The accident knocked Day out of the race in 33rd place and left him eighth in the standings, 69 points behind Creed.

The pyrotechnics between two drivers, who also sparred last week at Darlington, followed a bizarre pileup as drivers tried to access their pit boxes.

On Lap 49, during the Stage 1 break, a chain-reaction wreck just beyond the entrance to pit road scrambled the field and damaged several Chase cars.

With Day already in the first pit stall after the entrance, Rajah Caruth's No. 88 Chevrolet turned off the bumper of Nick Sanchez's No. 87 Chevy as the field compressed behind them.

Sanchez's car slid toward the No. 19 Toyota of Brent Crews, as the pit crew already was servicing Crews' vehicle. The 10-car melee blocked pit road and trapped Day's Chevy in its pit stall. No crew members were hurt.

Allgaier escaped the accident on pit road, only to leave his stall with a loose wheel. A return trip to the pits left the Chase's top seed 19th in the running order; Allgaier had clawed his way back to ninth. By the end of Stage 2, won by Love, he had worked his way up to sixth. But Allgaier sustained damage to the right front of his Camaro, and his 13th-place finish cost him the series lead.

ENJOY ILLINOIS 300

Holding off pole winner Joey Logano and Hendrick Motorsports teammate Alex Bowman on a succession of late restarts, Kyle Larson won in two overtimes Sunday to affirm his status as a contender for a third series championship.



Kyle Larson, driver of the #5 HendrickCars.com Chevrolet, takes the checkered flag to win the Cup Series Enjoy Illinois 300 at WWT Raceway in Madison, Illinois, on Sunday. (Jeff Curry/Getty)

Larson emerges from the chaos with big Playoff win

MADISON, Ill.—In a cauldron of chaos, with Chase drivers wrecking and brake rotors exploding through the bodies of Cup Series cars, Kyle Larson's 51-race winless streak ended Sunday at World Wide Technology Raceway at Gateway.

Holding off pole winner Joey Logano and Hendrick Motorsports teammate Alex Bowman on a succession of late restarts, Larson won the Enjoy Illinois 300 in two overtimes to affirm his status as a contender for a third series championship.

With top seed Denny Hamlin running ninth after a problematic pit stop on Lap 199 of 247, Larson, defending series champion, gained five positions to second in the Chase standings, nine points behind Hamlin.

The victory was the first for the driver of the No. 5 Chevrolet since May 11, 2025, at Kansas Speedway. Larson, who led 80 laps and won the second stage, prevailed for the first time at WWT Raceway and for the 33rd time in his career.

In a race that featured a track-record 18 cautions for 87 laps, Larson passed Logano to the inside moments after a Lap 228 restart that followed a four-car wreck involving Chase drivers Bubba Wallace, Christopher Bell and Tyler Reddick.

Three more cautions and two attempts at overtime later, Larson took the checkered flag 0.333 seconds ahead of Bowman, who grabbed the second position from Logano on a Lap 242 restart.

Larson had superior speed at the end of the race, thanks to a four-tire call by Larson himself on the team's final stop on Lap 203. Logano's crew chief, Paul Wolfe, opted for right-side tires on the No. 22 Ford's last trip to pit road, and Larson's tire advantage, along with strong pushes from Bowman on consecutive restarts, proved decisive.

"Just proud of my team for working so hard, being so patient through all the tough times, the winless streak, all that," said Larson, who ended a nine-race drought for Chevrolet. "Thanks to the fans, my fans, for also being patient with us, letting us get it figured out."

"How about Hendrick Motorsports? Alex Bowman, can't ask for a better teammate than him. Gave me the pushes I needed to get clear. Want to dedicate this win to him—and his dog just passed away a couple days ago."

Bowman, who will retire from full-time Cup racing after next season, executed a

solid race, avoiding the pitfalls that caused consternation among other competitors.

"Yeah, super happy for Kyle. Was a really hard weekend just to get on the plane and be here," Bowman said. "So, yeah, ready to go home. But proud of everybody on this Ally 48 team for helping me through the weekend. Yeah, life is hard sometimes."

"Yeah, I lost my best friend, so just ready to go home."

Logano, who led a race-high 96 laps and finished third, had mixed feelings about the outcome for the No. 22 Team Penske Ford.

"The restart where Larson took the lead—that's where I lost it obviously," Logano said. "He just rolled the bottom really good and cleared me, which is really surprising."

"His first, like, three laps of every run was pretty spectacular. You had a bunch of three-lap runs there at the end. Once he got there, then the 48 (Bowman) got there, the 24 (William Byron) got there. Had no homies with me. No more friends. On my own ..."

Logano, who won the first stage and finished second in Stage 2, leaves Greater St. Louis seventh in the Chase standings, having trimmed his deficit to Hamlin from 72 points to 51.

William Byron recovered from a Lap 141 accident to finish fourth, with Ross Chastain in fifth posing his second top five of the season. Austin Dillon was sixth, followed by Connor Zilisch, Carson Hocevar, Hamlin and Austin Cindric.

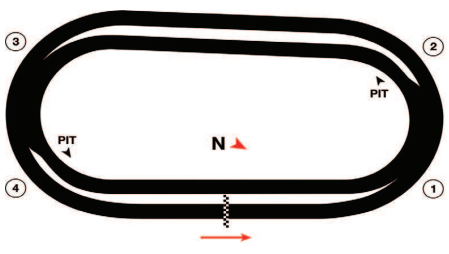
If Logano was somewhat disappointed with his third-place result, his dissatisfaction paled in comparison with the calamities that befell a succession of Chase drivers. Ryan Blaney blew a brake rotor and fell out in 35th place, falling 33 points behind Hamlin.

Five Chase drivers—Blaney, Daniel Suarez, Chris Buescher, Chase Elliott and Chase Briscoe—had gone to the garage before the race ended. Buescher and Elliott both suffered from exploding rotors, with Elliott collecting Briscoe after his No. 9 Chevrolet spiraled out of control.

Bell, last Sunday's winner at Darlington Raceway, finished 19th and fell one spot to third in the standings, 18 points behind Hamlin.

The bottom five drivers in the Chase standings—Byron, Cindric, Buescher, Ryan Preece and Suarez—all are more than 100 points out of first place and losing touch with the top contenders, although there are eight races left before the title is decided.

PLAYOFF 3: BASS PRO NIGHT RACE



Bristol Motor Speedway
7:30 p.m. ET Sunday, USA

- **Location:** 151 Speedway Boulevard, Bristol, Tennessee
- **Capacity:** 146,000
- **Owner:** Speedway Motorsports (January 1996–present)
- **Opened:** July 23, 1961
- **Course:** Oval (1961–present)
- **Surface:** Concrete
- **Length:** 0.533 mi (0.858 km)
- **Turns:** 4
- **Banking:** Turns, 24–28°; Straights, 4–8°
- **Fastest Cup lap:** 0:14.945; Kyle Larson, Chevrolet SS, 2018
- **Nicknames:** World's Fastest Half-Mile, The Last Great Colosseum, Thunder Valley, Holy Grail of Short Tracks



Earlier this year at Bristol, Ty Gibbs beat Ryan Blaney to the finish line by 0.055 seconds to claim his first career Cup Series victory. (Getty)

2026 CUP SERIES STANDINGS

Top 30 w/ Playoff 16 as of Sept. 13

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1 Denny Hamlin #11	2168	16 Daniel Suárez #7	2049
2 Kyle Larson #5	2159	17 Shane v. Gisbergen #97	630
3 Christopher Bell #20	2150	18 Brad Keselowski #6	591
4 Ryan Blaney #12	2135	19 Ross Chastain #1	560
5 Tyler Reddick #45	2126	20 Michael McDowell #71	554
6 Ty Gibbs #54	2117	21 Erik Jones #43	544
7 Joey Logano #22	2117	22 Todd Gilliland #34	502
8 Chase Briscoe #77	2109	23 AJ Allmendinger #16	499
9 Carson Hocevar #77	2080	24 Austin Dillon #3	474
10 Bubba Wallace #23	2078	25 Zane Smith #38	468
11 Chase Elliott #9	2075	26 Josh Berry #21	463
12 Austin Cindric #2	2060	27 Alex Bowman #48	454
13 Chris Buescher #17	2057	28 John H. Nemechek #42	453
14 Ryan Preece #60	2055	29 Ricky Stenhouse Jr #47	443
15 William Byron #24	2054	30 Riley Herbst #35	412

2026 O'REILLY AUTO PARTS STANDINGS

Top 20 w/ Playoff 12 as of Sept. 12

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1 Sheldon Creed #00	2175	11 Taylor Gray #54	2089
2 Justin Allgaier #7	2172	12 Rajah Caruth #88	2057
3 Carson Kvapil #1	2166	13 Brent Crews #19	668
4 Jesse Love #2	2159	14 William Sawalich #18	638
5 Austin Hill #21	2114	15 Ryan Sieg #39	612
6 Sam Mayer #41	2114	16 Anthony Alfredo #96	574
7 Sammy Smith #8	2111	17 Brennan Poole #44	491
8 Corey Day #17	2106	18 Dean Thompson #26	479
9 Brandon Jones #20	2099	19 Jeremy Clements #51	422
10 Parker Retzlaff #99	2092	20 Harrison Burton #24	419

NEXT RACE: FOOD CITY 300, Bristol Motor Speedway, 7:30 p.m. ET Friday, CW

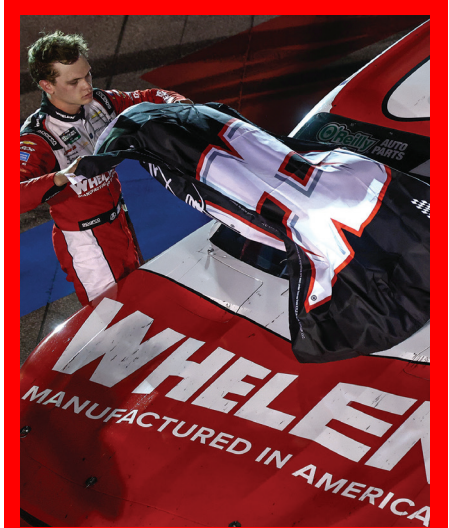
2026 CRAFTSMAN TRUCK STANDINGS

Top 20 w/ Playoff 10 as of August 22

Rank/Driver	Points	Rank/Driver	Points
1 Layne Riggs #34	2100	11 Stewart Friesen #52	408
2 Kade Honeycutt #11	2075	12 Jake Garcia #98	404
3 Chandler Smith #38	2065	13 Brenden Queen #12	364
4 Christian Eckes #91	2060	14 A. Perez De Lara #44	355
5 Gio Ruggiero #17	2055	15 Justin Haley #16	352
6 Ty Majeski #88	2050	16 Tanner Gray #15	351
7 Grant Enfinger #9	2045	17 Corey Heim #5	346
8 Daniel Hemric #19	2040	18 Dawson Sutton #27	283
9 Ben Rhodes #99	2035	19 Cole Butcher #13	268
10 Tyler Ankrum #18	2030	20 Mini Tyrell #14	255

NEXT RACE: UNOH 250, Bristol Motor Speedway, 8 p.m. ET Thursday, FS1

BONUS O'REILLY PIC



Jesse Love, driver of the #2 Whelen Chevrolet, drapes an "B" flag in honor of the late Kyle Busch on his car after winning Saturday's Nu Way 225 Powered by Bobcat and Sourced by Blues Hog at WWT Raceway in Madison, Illinois.
G. Graythen/Getty

WWT WINNER QUOTE

"Just proud of my team for working so hard, being so patient through all the tough times, the winless streak, all that. Thanks to the fans, my fans, for also being patient with us, letting us get it figured out,"

— Kyle Larson, who grabbed his first Cup win of the season in Sunday's Playoff race at WWT Raceway



Kyle Larson in Victory Lane Sunday at WWT Raceway.
AMY KONTRAS/GETTY

2026 CUP SCHEDULE & WINNERS

FEB. 4, 3 PM, FOX: Cook Out Clash at Bowman Gray (**R. Preece**)
FEB. 12, 7 PM, FS1: America 250 Florida Duel 1 at DAYTONA (**J. Logano**)
FEB. 12, 8:45 PM, FS1: America 250 Florida Duel 2 at DAYTONA (**C. Elliott**)
FEB. 15, 2:30 PM, FOX: DAYTONA 500 (**T. Reddick**)
FEB. 22, 3 PM FOX: AutoTrader 400 at ECHOPARK ATLANTA (**T. Reddick**)
MARCH 1, 3:30 PM, FOX: DuraMax Grand Prix at COTA (TX) (**T. Reddick**)
MARCH 8, 3:30 PM, FS1: Straight Talk Wireless 500 at PHOENIX (**R. Blaney**)
MARCH 15, 4 PM, FS1: Pennzoil 400 at LAS VEGAS (**D. Hamlin**)

MARCH 22, 3 PM, FS1: Goodyear 400 at DARLINGTON (**T. Reddick**)
MARCH 29, 3:30 PM, FS1: Cook Out 400 at MARTINSVILLE (**C. Elliott**)
APRIL 12, 3 PM, FS1: Food City 500 at BRISTOL (**T. Gibbs**)
APRIL 19, 2 PM, FOX: AdventHealth 400 at KANSAS (**T. Reddick**)
APRIL 26, 3 PM, FOX: Jack Link's 500 at TALLADEGA (**C. Hocevar**)
MAY 3, 3:30 PM, FS1: Würth 400 at TEXAS (**C. Elliott**)
MAY 10, 3 PM, FS1: Go Bowling at the Glen at WATKINS GLEN (**S. v. Gisbergen**)
MAY 17, 3 PM, FS1: NASCAR All-Star Race at DOVER (**D. Hamlin**)
MAY 24, 6 PM, PRIME: Coca-Cola 600 at CHARLOTTE (**D. Saurez**)
MAY 31, 7 PM, PRIME: Cracker Barrel 400 at NASHVILLE (**D. Hamlin**)
JUNE 7, 3 PM, PRIME: FireKeepers Casino 400 at MICHIGAN (**D. Hamlin**)

JUNE 14, 3 PM, PRIME: Great American Getaway 400 at POCONO (**D. Hamlin**)
JUNE 21, 4 PM, PRIME: Anduril 250 at NAVAL BASE CORONADO (**C. Heim**)
JUNE 28, 3:30 PM, TNT: Toyota/Save Mart 350 at SONOMA (**S. v. Gisbergen**)
JULY 5, 6 PM, TNT: eero 400 at CHICAGOLAND SPEEDWAY (**C. Briscoe**)
JULY 12, 7 PM, TNT: Quaker State 400 at ECHOPARK ATLANTA (**R. Blaney**)
JULY 19, 7 PM, TNT: Window World 400 at NORTH WILKESBORO (**J. Logano**)
JULY 26, 2 PM, TNT: Brickyard 400 at INDIANAPOLIS (**C. Heim**)
AUG. 9, 3:30 PM, USA: Iowa Corn 350 at IOWA (**T. Gibbs**)
AUG. 15, 7 PM, USA: Cook Out 400 at RICHMOND (**J. Logano**)
AUG. 23, 3 PM, USA: Dollar Tree 301 at NEW HAMPSHIRE (**R. Blaney**)
AUG. 29, 7:30 PM, NBC: Coke Zero Sugar 400 at DAYTONA (**R. Preece**)

2025 winners in parenthesis; 2026 winners in bold as the schedule unfolds; times ET

PLAYOFFS ROUND OF 16
SEPT. 6, 5 PM, USA: Southern 500 at DARLINGTON (**C. Bell**)
SEPT. 13, 3 PM, USA: Enjoy Illinois 300 at WORLD WIDE TECH (**K. Larson**)
SEPT. 19, 7:30 PM, USA: Bass Pro Shops Night Race at BRISTOL (**C. Bell**)
PLAYOFFS ROUND OF 12
SEPT. 27, 3 PM, USA: Hollywood Casino 400 at KANSAS (**C. Elliott**)
OCT. 4, 5:30 PM, USA: South Point 400 at LAS VEGAS (**D. Hamlin**)
OCT. 11, 3 PM, USA: BoFA ROVAL 400 at CHARLOTTE (**S. v. Gisbergen**)
PLAYOFFS ROUND OF 8
OCT. 18, 3 PM, USA: Freeway Insurance 500 at PHOENIX (New)
OCT. 25, 2 PM, NBC: YellaWood 500 at TALLADEGA (**C. Briscoe**)
NOV. 1, 2 PM, NBC: Xfinity 500 at MARTINSVILLE (**W. Byron**)
PLAYOFFS CHAMPIONSHIP 4
NOV. 8, 3 PM, NBC: Championship at MIAMI (**K. Larson** title; **R. Blaney** race)



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