

# 14



## Bowyer 23rd in Auto Club 400

### No. 14 Rush Truck Centers/Haas Automation Ford Leads Opening Laps

**Date:** March 1, 2020  
**Event:** Auto Club 400  
**Series:** NASCAR Cup Series  
**Location:** Auto Club Speedway in Fontana, California (2-mile oval)  
**Format:** 200 laps, broken into three stages (60 laps/60 laps/80 laps)  
**Start/Finish:** 1<sup>st</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> (Running, completed 199 of 200 laps)  
**Point Standing:** 16<sup>th</sup> with 70 points, 52 out of first

**Race Winner:** Alex Bowman of Hendrick Motorsports (Chevrolet)  
**Stage 1 Winner:** Alex Bowman of Hendrick Motorsports (Chevrolet)  
**Stage 2 Winner:** Ryan Blaney of Team Penske (Ford)

#### Stage 1 Recap (Laps 1-60):

- Clint Bowyer started first and finished 16<sup>th</sup>.
- The No. 14 Rush Truck Centers/Haas Automation Ford Mustang led the first 10 laps of the race.
- Bowyer reported his car was tight and began fading back through the field.
- Bowyer pitted from 14th on lap 27.
- Bowyer held that position before falling to 16<sup>th</sup> to end the stage.
- During the stage break the No. 14 crew made several adjustments to improve the car's handling.

#### Stage 2 Recap (Laps 81-120):

- Started 18<sup>th</sup>, finished 24<sup>th</sup>.
- Bowyer drove to 12th in the opening laps of the stage before reporting his car was tight again.
- Bowyer pitted on lap 90 under green for a routine stop.
- Seconds after returning to the track, his left front tire went flat because of a broken inner valve stem.
- Bowyer's shredded tire brought out the caution, but he managed to get the No. 14 Rush Truck Centers/Haas Automation Ford Mustang back to the pits.
- The crew repaired the damaged bodywork, but Bowyer reported the car was difficult to turn as he raced at the end of the lead lap.

#### Final Stage Recap (Laps 121-200):

- Started 26<sup>th</sup>, finished 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- The No. 14 Rush Truck Centers/Haas Automation Ford Mustang made a scheduled green-flag stop on lap 165 of the 200-lap race.
- "She just won't turn," Bowyer told the crew during the final stage.
- Bowyer stayed on the lead lap until 34 laps remained in the race.

#### Notes:

- Bowyer led once for 10 laps to increase his laps-led total at Fontana to 57.
- Alex Bowman won the Auto Club 400 to score his second career NASCAR Cup Series victory, his first of the season and his first at Fontana. His margin of victory over second-place Kyle Busch was 8.904 seconds.
- There were three caution periods for a total of 13 laps.
- Only 17 of the 38 drivers in the Auto Club 400 finished on the lead lap.
- Ryan Blaney remains the championship leader after Fontana with an 11-point advantage over second-place Joey Logano.

#### Clint Bowyer, driver of the No. 14 Rush Truck Centers/Haas Automation Ford Mustang for Stewart-Haas Racing:

"That was a lot of fun to be out front at the start of the race, but she got tight and we started to struggle. That tire deal kind of ended our hopes for a good finish. It just wouldn't turn after that."

#### Next Up:

The next event on the NASCAR Cup Series schedule is the FanShield 500k on Sunday, March 8, at Phoenix Raceway. The race starts at 3:30 p.m. EDT with live coverage provided by FOX and SiriusXM NASCAR Radio.