

# 10

# Smithfield



## Almirola Finishes 29<sup>th</sup> at Bristol

*Smithfield Ford Driver Races as High as Second; Involved in Lap-464 Accident*

**Date:** May 31, 2020  
**Event:** Food City presents the Supermarket Heroes 500 (Round 9 of 36)  
**Series:** NASCAR Cup Series  
**Location:** Bristol (Tenn.) Motor Speedway (.533-mile oval)  
**Format:** 500 laps, broken into three stages (125 laps/125 laps/250 laps)  
**Start/Finish:** 2<sup>nd</sup>/29 (Accident, completed 470 of 500 laps)  
**Point Standing:** 11<sup>th</sup> (240 points, 130 out of first)

**Race Winner:** Brad Keselowski of Team Penske (Ford)  
**Stage 1 Winner:** Chase Elliott of Hendrick Motorsports (Chevrolet)  
**Stage 2 Winner:** Chase Elliott of Hendrick Motorsports (Chevrolet)

### Stage 1 Recap (Laps 1-125):

- Aric Almirola started second and finished fourth, earning seven stage points.
- The Smithfield Ford driver started on the bottom groove and fell to sixth before a caution on lap six.
- Almirola drove to fourth before the competition caution.
- He restarted fourth and drove the No. 10 Ford to second-place before the second competition caution.
- Almirola pitted for four tires, fuel and adjustments to restart third.
- Starting on lap 110, Almirola tapped the No. 2 car's bumper multiple times to ultimately make the pass. He noted tight-handling conditions during the run and held the No. 10 Ford inside the top-five.
- He pitted at the end of the stage for four tires, fuel and air pressure adjustments.

### Stage 2 Recap (Laps 126-250):

- Almirola started sixth and finished 21<sup>st</sup>.
- Almirola raced the No. 10 Ford to fourth by lap 177.
- He was scored second after a caution on lap 199. He said his car was good on the long runs and tight on the restarts.
- Almirola pitted for four tires, fuel and air pressure adjustments to restart fifth.
- After a red flag on lap 229, Almirola was scored eighth. On the restart, he said he may have a tire going down and pitted for four tires, fuel and adjustments.

### Final Stage Recap (Laps 251-500):

- Almirola started 10<sup>th</sup> and finished 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Almirola advanced the Smithfield Ford six positions on the restart before a caution on lap 269.
- He raced to third before a caution on lap 329. He pitted for four fresh tires, fuel and adjustments to restart third.
- After another caution on lap 355, Almirola reported a loose wheel and pitted for four tires, fuel and chassis adjustments to restart 10<sup>th</sup>.
- Almirola was contacted by the No. 2 car on the restart and dropped to 13<sup>th</sup>.
- He rejoined the top-10 on lap 393.
- Almirola pitted under caution on lap 433 from eighth-place for four tires, fuel and more chassis adjustments after noting loose-handling conditions. He came off pit road in seventh.
- Another caution was called with 43 laps to go. Almirola opted not to pit with 19 laps on his tires.
- During the restart, Almirola was involved in an accident and hit the outside wall. He was forced to pit to repair damage and returned to the track two laps down. He retired the No. 10 Smithfield Ford on lap 470 due to unrepairable damage.

### Notes:

- Brad Keselowski won the Food City presents the Supermarket Heroes 500 to score his 32<sup>nd</sup> career NASCAR Cup Series victory, his second of the season and his third at Bristol. His margin of victory over second-place Clint Bowyer was .471 of a second.
- This was Ford's series-best fifth win of the season and its 691<sup>st</sup> all-time NASCAR Cup Series victory.
- This was Ford's 38<sup>th</sup> NASCAR Cup Series victory at Bristol. The last Ford driver to win at Bristol was Kurt Busch in August 2018 while a member of SHR.
- There were 17 caution periods for a total of 102 laps.
- Only 22 of the 40 drivers in the race finished on the lead lap.

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- Harvick remains the championship leader after Bristol with a 24-point advantage over second-place Joey Logano.

**Aric Almirola, driver of the No. 10 Smithfield Ford Mustang for Stewart-Haas Racing:**

“Man. We had such a good car today. We would have had a shot at a top-three finish. That’s Bristol. I felt like I had a tire going down at one point, so we pitted and even came back to the top-10 from that pretty quickly. We had a loose-wheel later and had to pit under caution that put us 10<sup>th</sup>. We were definitely making our way back towards the front and had a promising finish if we didn’t get caught up there. It looked like the 19 got into me. The car just took off towards the wall and we were done. I hate it for this Smithfield Ford team. We’re flirting on the edge of some really good runs. The good news is we came to Bristol with a setup that can win, so we’ll have confidence coming back.”

**Next Up:**

The next event on the NASCAR Cup Series schedule is the Folds of Honor 500 on Sunday, June 7 at Atlanta Motor Speedway. The race starts at 3 p.m. EDT with live coverage provided by FOX and SiriusXM NASCAR Radio.

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