



ARIC ALMIROLA

A Winning Combination at Martinsville

KANNAPOLIS, North Carolina (June 8, 2020) – Aric Almirola and the No. 10 Smithfield Ford team for Stewart-Haas Racing (SHR) head just two hours north to Martinsville (Va.) Speedway, where Almirola will battle it out for the iconic grandfather clock trophy during Wednesday night’s NASCAR Cup Series Blue-Emu Maximum Pain Relief 500.

His new crew chief Mike Bugarewicz knows what it takes to cross the finish line first at the .526-mile paperclip-shaped oval. In the March 2018 race there, Bugarewicz and Almirola’s SHR teammate Clint Bowyer led 215 of the 500 laps run that day to earn their first grandfather clock. It was a dominant performance from the duo and the No. 10 Ford team is confident to bring that same speed back on Wednesday.

“We have a lot of work to do to get where we need to be, but heading to Martinsville, where I like to race and ‘Buga’ has had success at, is great,” Almirola said. “Knowing we had a car to win at Bristol (two Sundays ago) gives me some confidence in our short-track program, too. We just haven’t been able to put it all together, yet.”

In last year’s spring Martinsville race, Almirola qualified second and ran inside the top-five for the first two stages until contact with the No. 18 car demoted him to a ninth-place finish. In the fall Martinsville race, Almirola qualified fourth and ran in and around the top-five until another incident with the No. 18 car ended his day 135 laps early.

In 22 career starts at Martinsville, the 36-year-old Almirola has four top-10 finishes, one top-five and has led 56 laps. SHR drivers have combined four victories, 10 top-five finishes and 28 top-10s and have led 720 laps in 64 starts there.

Almirola has career totals of two wins, two poles, 18 top-five finishes, 64 top-10s and 543 laps led in 326 starts. His last win came in October 2018 at Talladega (Ala.) Superspeedway. Almirola has collected three top-10 finishes in the first 10 races this season.

His No. 10 Ford will sport the iconic black, white and gold of partner Smithfield Foods Inc., at Martinsville. Smithfield, which is sponsoring Almirola’s car at the majority of races this season, is an American food company with agricultural roots and a global reach. Its 40,000 U.S. employees are dedicated to producing “Good Food. Responsibly®,” and have made it one of the world’s leading vertically integrated protein companies.

Almirola continues to provide fans with content from his documentary series Beyond the 10, where fans can get VIP, behind-the-scenes access by subscribing to his YouTube channel. Episodes showcase never-before-seen footage of Almirola at the racetrack, on family trips, and “A Day in the Life” during the week, as well as all that goes into a NASCAR Cup Series driver’s season. Click [here](#) to subscribe on YouTube and watch the latest episode.

Almirola is scored 11th in the season standings with 260 points – 161 behind leader and SHR teammate Kevin Harvick. He is in the same points position through 10 races as he was after the first 10 races of 2018. He finished fifth in the championship that year.

“I’ve had Martinsville on the calendar since the beginning of the year as one of the races I look forward to the most with Buga,” Almirola said. “I’m excited to see what we can do and I’m glad we were able to stay inside the top-12 in points to get us a decent starting position.”

ARIC ALMIROLA, Driver of the No. 10 Smithfield Ford Mustang for Stewart-Haas Racing:**What is it like racing at Martinsville?**

“Martinsville is a really challenging racetrack. It’s the smallest racetrack we go to on the circuit. One of the most challenging parts about Martinsville is that the tires wear out pretty rapidly and, when that happens, you really struggle to get the power down to the ground.”

What does it take to run well at short tracks?

“No matter what the situation is, we as racers always love going to short tracks. It’s what we grew up doing and it puts the outcome in the driver’s hands more than the superspeedway races. You can’t pass much there, so it’s extremely important that you stay mentally and physically focused throughout the entire run.”

ARIC ALMIROLA’S MARTINSVILLE PERFORMANCE PROFILE

Year	Date	Event	Start	Finish	Status/Laps	Laps Led	Earnings
2019	3/24	STP 500	2	9	Running, 500/500	0	N/A
	10/27	First Data 500	3	37	Accident, 365/500	0	N/A
2018	3/26	STP 500	10	14	Running, 500/500	0	N/A
	10/28	First Data 500	5	11	Running, 500/500	0	N/A
2017	4/2	STP 500	18	18	Running, 500/500	0	N/A
	10/29	×First Data 500	10	18	Running, 505/505	0	N/A
2016	4/3	STP 500	20	40	Engine, 206/500	0	N/A
	10/30	Goody’s Headache Relief 500	16	15	Running, 499/500	0	N/A
2015	3/29	STP 500	18	12	Running, 500/500	0	\$123,811
	11/1	Goody’s Headache Relief 500	8	16	Running, 500/500	0	\$125,201
2014	3/30	STP 500	20	8	Running, 500/500	0	\$126,106
	10/26	Goody’s Headache Relief 500	27	21	Running, 500/500	0	\$119,201
2013	4/7	STP Gas Booster 500	34	20	Running, 500/500	0	\$121,436
	10/27	Goody’s Headache Relief Shot 500	18	20	Running, 499/500	0	\$119,871
2012	4/1	×Goody’s Fast Relief 500	19	8	Running, 515/515	3	\$121,196
	10/28	TUMS Fast Relief 500	10	4	Running, 500/500	0	\$131,421
2010	3/29	×Goody’s Fast Relief 500	37	41	Brakes, 43/508	0	\$68,075
	10/24	TUMS Fast Relief 500	35	21	Running, 498/500	0	\$112,690
2009	3/29	†Goody’s Fast Relief 500	37	37	Running, 490/500	0	\$77,950
2008	3/30	Goody’s Cool Orange 500	3	42	Engine, 379/500	0	\$102,973
	10/19	×TUMS QuikPak 500	15	20	Running, 502/504	53	\$107,683
2007	10/21	Goody’s Cool Orange 500	28	26	Electrical, 111/506	0	\$67,940

* Race cut short due to weather.

× Race length extended due to green-white-checkered finish.

= Qualifying canceled due to weather, starting position set via practice speed.

◇ Race length was extended due to overtime finish

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