

10

Smithfield



ARIC ALMIROLA

Racing for Eighth Consecutive Talladega Top-10

KANNAPOLIS, North Carolina (June 16, 2020) – Aric Almirola and his No. 10 Smithfield Ford team for Stewart-Haas Racing (SHR) head to Talladega (Ala.) Superspeedway on a mission this weekend to become the only active NASCAR Cup Series driver to have earned eight consecutive top-10s at the 2.66-mile oval.



“Talladega has just been a great track for me,” Almirola said. “It’s a track I’ve seen a lot of success at in my years. The consistency we’ve brought there is encouraging and motivating coming off our first top-five finish of the year last Sunday.”

On the last lap of the fall 2018 Cup Series race at Talladega, Almirola held off his teammates Clint Bowyer and Kurt Busch to win what turned out to be the most important win of his racing career. When he crossed the finish line, he secured his spot in the Round of 8 of the NASCAR playoffs and went on to finish fifth in the season-ending standings – the best of his career.

Sunday night at Homestead-Miami Speedway, Almirola started 21st and ran in and around the top-five for the entire race and finished fifth. It was his first top-five of the season and second at Homestead. He and the No. 10 Ford team were particularly proud of their top-five finish after enduring multiple mechanical and electrical issues over the previous four races.

“Finally, we stopped the bleeding,” Almirola said after the race. “This last month has been so tough on us. Everything that could go wrong seems to have gone wrong in the last month. Finally, a solid night for the Smithfield Ford Mustang team. I felt like I could have squeezed a little more speed out of it running on the fence with a car that good, but I didn’t want to risk it after the month we had. Proud of our guys and proud of our team. Now we’re heading to Talladega, one of my favorite tracks, to hopefully continue this momentum.”

In his last seven starts at the 2.66-mile Talladega oval, all top-10s, Almirola has earned three other top-five finishes in addition to last October’s win. In his 20 career Cup Series starts there, an accident ended his day prematurely just once. In the typically accident-mired event, he’s led a total of 46 laps. Almirola’s first career Cup Series victory was captured in 2014 at Talladega’s sister track, Daytona (Fla.) International Speedway.

The Tampa native has also found his way to victory lane at the Alabama track in the NASCAR Xfinity Series. In 2017, he led 13 laps before going on to capture the victory while piloting the No. 98 Ford for Biagi-DenBeste Racing.

Almirola has career totals of two wins, two poles, 19 top-five finishes, 65 top-10s and 562 laps led in 328 starts. He’s collected four top-10 finishes in the first 12 races this season.

His No. 10 Ford will again sport the iconic black, white and gold of partner Smithfield Foods Inc., at Talladega. 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 they 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.

Fans can watch Almirola Saturday on FS1 as he makes his debut as an Xfinity Series race analyst at Talladega.

“I’m excited to join the FOX team this weekend,” Almirola said. “Talladega is probably my most familiar track, so I hope it comes naturally to give fans a new perspective on superspeedway racing. This will be fun.”

Almirola arrives at Talladega 13th in the season standings with 303 points – 160 behind leader and SHR teammate Kevin Harvick.

ARIC ALMIROLA, Driver of the No. 10 Smithfield Ford Mustang for Stewart-Haas Racing:

You have found the most success in your career at superspeedways. Why is that?

“I always had to go to these races and be aggressive because, back in the day, they were our only realistic options to win races. It was the only way I could make it into the playoffs and we were able to do that in 2014. They’ve been good to me. I’ve always gone into those races with that mindset.”

What did it mean to finally win a race in 2018 after nearly winning multiple races but just coming up short?

“The win at Talladega was clutch. Going through the season and really being consistent from summer to the playoffs was great. We didn’t really have any devastating races throughout those months and never were a threat to really win races. Then, all of the sudden when the playoffs started, our performance really ramped up. We went into the first few races with chances to win, leading laps and running up front. Even right before that, you look at races like New Hampshire, where we led a lot of laps and felt like we had the potential to win. We kind of pointed our way into the playoffs.”

ARIC ALMIROLA’S TALLADEGA PERFORMANCE PROFILE

Year	Date	Event	Start	Finish	Status/Laps	Laps Led	Earnings
2019	4/28	Geico 500	2	9	Running, 188/188	27	N/A
	10/14	1000Bulbs.com	5	4	Running, 188/188	3	N/A
2018	4/29	Geico 500	7	10	Running, 188/188	0	N/A
	8/14	1000Bulbs.com	4	1	Running, 193/193	1	N/A
2017	5/7	◊Geico 500	22	4	Running, 191/191	0	N/A
	10/15	Alabama 500	26	5	Running, 188/188	0	N/A
2016	10/23	◊Hellman’s 500	26	8	Running, 192/192	0	N/A
	5/1	Geico 500	23	27	Accident, 180/188	1	N/A
2015	5/3	Geico 500	28	15	Running, 188/188	0	\$142,146
	10/25	×CampingWorld.com 500	25	16	Running, 196/196	0	\$129,886
2014	5/4	Aaron’s 499	15	13	Running, 188/188	0	\$143,821
	10/19	Geico 500	17	39	Running, 166/194	0	\$109,521
2013	5/5	†×Aaron’s 499	18	10	Running, 192/192	1	\$146,226
	10/20	Camping World RV Sales 500	1	22	Running, 188/188	8	\$122,046
2012	5/6	×Aaron’s 499	4	12	Running, 194/194	0	\$137,716
	10/7	Good Sam Roadside Assistance 500	18	19	Running, 189/189	0	\$118,346
2010	10/31	AMP Energy Juice 500	37	20	Running, 188/188	2	\$118,938
2008	4/27	Aaron’s 499	28	33	Running, 186/188	0	\$114,808
	10/5	×AMP Energy 500	3	13	Running, 190/190	3	\$117,783
2007	10/7	UAW-Ford 500	38	30	Engine, 156/188	0	\$82,450

* 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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