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## CLINT BOWYER

### It's Still Kansas

KANNAPOLIS, North Carolina (July 20, 2020) – This week won't be the type of homecoming he expected, but Clint Bowyer returns to his home track of Kansas Speedway in Kansas City Thursday night ready to compete in a race that means as much to him as any in the NASCAR Cup Series.

"I think every driver in our sport would say they want to win the Daytona 500 more than any other race but, for me, Kansas would be right up there," said Bowyer, who owns three top-five finishes but has never won at Kansas.

The Emporia, Kansas native expects trips back to Kansas to include family visits, as well as a busy track schedule meeting and greeting fans and sponsors. But COVID-19 will curtail those plans, leaving the grandstands empty, the sponsors at home and Bowyer wishing it was like the pre-virus days.

"Certainly, going back home isn't going to feel like home," said Bowyer, who finished 11th Sunday at Texas Motor Speedway in Fort Worth. "I can't go and have dinner with 20 people like I have been accustomed to, and go back and have family and friends and people who have followed my career tailgating in the infield and go have a beer with them or whatever the case may be. I won't be able to do that this time around. It is not going to be the same."

Thursday night's race is the NASCAR Cup Series' 15th since its return May 17 from a 10-week hiatus due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. As it did at the previous 14 races, NASCAR series and team personnel in the infield will continue to operate under a comprehensive health and safety plan at Kansas that permits limited crew, strict social distancing, and mandated personal protective equipment and health screenings for all.

Unlike the most recent two races at Bristol (Tenn.) Motor Speedway and Texas, there will be no fans in the stands at Kansas, but that won't lessen what is at stake Thursday. When the green flag flies, Bowyer is going to do his best to bring home a trophy from Kansas.

"There is still a lot of pride in running and racing in the Cup Series of NASCAR at home at Kansas Speedway that means so much to you," he said. "That pride is still there, but it is going to be different this time around, just like it has been everywhere else."

Bowyer also has a lot of pride carrying the One Cure decals that will be adorn his No. 14 Ford Mustang Thursday night at Kansas.

The One Cure project is led by the Flint Animal Cancer Center at Colorado State University. It is founded on the principle that cancer affects all creatures and that treatment breakthroughs come through collaboration between scientists and doctors working with people and animals. This approach is known as comparative oncology and it is the guiding concept of One Cure and the Flint Animal Cancer Center. The center works to improve prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cancer in pets, and teams with the human medical field to translate research findings that will help people with cancer.

The center, located in Colorado State's James L. Voss Veterinary Teaching Hospital, sees more than 1,500 new animal cancer patients every year, with approximately 130 of them enrolled in carefully monitored clinical trials specific to their cancer type. The canine and feline patients are helping pioneer cancer research, moving cutting-edge treatments out of the laboratory and into clinical practice, ultimately providing hope for the next generation of animal and human cancer patients.

One Cure has been one of Bowyer's partners at SHR since he climbed into the No. 14 racecar in 2018. The program's goal is to direct fans to [www.OneCure.com](http://www.OneCure.com), where they can learn about the research and to offer financial support.

Kansas is not only important to Bowyer personally, but key to securing a playoff spot with just eight races left in the regular season. He is 13th in in the driver standings, but in the playoff standings he is 15th with a 36-point cushion over the final transfer spot in the 16-driver playoff field. A win at Kansas secures a spot in NASCAR's postseason, but a good run helps in padding his points cushion.

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“We’ve just got to go and compete the way we’re capable of competing,” he said.

And if he does that Thursday night and finally wins that Kansas trophy, it will be a homecoming like no other.

***CLINT BOWYER, Driver of the No. 14 One Cure Ford Mustang for Stewart-Haas Racing:***

**What will Kansas Speedway be like Thursday without fans?**

“Obviously, it is going to be drastically different not having fans. That is what put this sport on the map. That is what has kept it on the map all these years and, without that, it is just a void that can’t be replaced. Are we putting a product on the racetrack? Yes. Are there people at home watching? Yes, the ratings show that and these are the things keeping us alive and relevant. I think the rest of the sporting world is fixin’ to see firsthand just like we have experienced in the last few months the difference and challenges and impact of not having that fan presence there. It isn’t just the presence, it’s the atmosphere and your event. Without that, it isn’t quite the event it could be or should be or would be.”

**You race Thursday night, and then you get Sunday off. What are your plans?**

“My wife is on me nonstop, ‘What are we doing?’ And my plan, man, you get an idea and go down that path and that doesn’t work. I’ve been going over to the lake (Lake of the Ozarks) a lot and I enjoy that. But it’s like, ‘I want to go somewhere different, I want to take my family somewhere.’ The kids are fixin’ to go back to school or whatever the heck that’s going to look like. It’s just hard. Camping. I love to camp. We camp every weekend, anyway. And it’s kind of funny to say, ‘Oh, let’s take the bus and go camp somewhere.’ We were going to do that. Good luck finding a campground somewhere you can get into to do that. I would say we’ll probably end up back over at the lake. It makes the most sense. It’s two hours from Kansas City, or a three-hour drive over there. But who knows? We’re trying to figure it out. That’s a great question. And that’s a question that, when my eyes woke up this morning, she was staring at me saying, ‘What are we doing this weekend?’ I still don’t have an answer.”

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