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HAAS



CLINT BOWYER

'Back in (the Haas Red and) Black'

KANNAPOLIS, North Carolina (July 27, 2020) – It's been a while since Clint Bowyer carried the Haas Automation decals on his No. 14 Ford Mustang for Stewart-Haas Racing (SHR), but he'll get the chance once again Sunday when the NASCAR Cup Series races at New Hampshire Motor Speedway in Loudon.

Both of Bowyer's Cup Series victories since joining SHR in 2017 came driving the red-and-black Haas paint scheme. He led 215 laps on his way to dominating and winning the March 2018 race at Martinsville (Va.) Speedway, then led just eight laps in June 2018 at Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn, posting his 10th career and most recent victory.

"Those Haas Automation decals must be pretty fast," said Bowyer, who last raced a Haas liveried Ford in June last year.

Haas Automation, owned by SHR co-owner Gene Haas, is America's leading builder of CNC machine tools. Founded by Haas in 1983, Haas Automation manufactures a complete line of vertical and horizontal machining centers, turning centers and rotary tables and indexers. All Haas products are built in the company's 1.1 million-square-foot manufacturing facility in Oxnard, California, and distributed through a worldwide network of Haas Factory Outlets

"It's nice to do well for the 'Boss Man's' company," Bowyer said. "Gene does so much for us at Stewart-Haas Racing and racing in general, whether it's here in NASCAR or Formula One. I'd love nothing more than to get another trip to victory lane in one of his cars."

Bowyer could use a victory. He arrives in New Hampshire 12th in the season's point standing after a 14th-place finish at Kansas Speedway in Kansas City last Thursday night. He is 14th in the playoff standings with a 42-point cushion over the final transfer spot into the 16-driver playoff field. A win at New Hampshire secures a spot in NASCAR's postseason, but a good run helps in padding his points cushion.

Few places have shown Bowyer the hospitality like the "Magic Mile" has over his 16-year Cup Series career.

Two of Bowyer's 10 career victories and one of his two poles have come on the flat mile oval, including his first Cup Series victory in 2007.

Bowyer affectionately calls the New Hampshire track that's celebrating its 30th anniversary this season "a big Martinsville."

"I love New Hampshire," he said. "That place just fits my driving style. We don't get up to that part of the country a lot, so it's good to see the race fans there. They have so many tracks and they love their racing, from Modified to Late Models to our stuff."

A look at Bowyer's record makes it easy to understand why he likes racing in the Granite State.

At the September 2007 race weekend, he earned his second career pole Friday, then led 222 of 300 laps Sunday en route to his maiden Cup Series win. Attrition played no role in the victory as, for the first time in the sport's modern era, the entire 43-car field finished the race.

Fast-forward to September 2010, when Bowyer started second and led the most laps before fading back. A series of caution periods put him behind now-boss Tony Stewart during the closing laps. With both drivers trying to nurse their sputtering fuel tanks to the finish, Bowyer found himself in position to pounce when Stewart's tank ran dry a lap from the checkered flag.

It was Bowyer's turn to run out of gas with two laps remaining in the September 2011 race at New Hampshire, giving the victory to – you guessed it – Tony Stewart.

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“We still laugh about running out of gas and giving each other the victories,” Bowyer said, “whether it’s fuel mileage or those late restarts where everyone starts beating and banging. It seems like there is always an interesting finish there.”

Bowyer has made quite the impression on New Hampshire, as well.

Then-Gov. Maggie Hassan declared Sept. 5, 2013 “Rockin’ with Clint Day” in New Hampshire. Bowyer took her for a burnout, used a 250-foot crane to dig up a personalized, 7,500-pound piece of granite at a local quarry, and took part in a rock-climbing race.

“There aren’t many states where I’ve gotten to do burnouts with the governor,” Bowyer said with a laugh.

With approval from now-Gov. Chris Sununu, New Hampshire Motor Speedway plans to allow fans to attend Sunday’s race. The grandstands and suites at the Loudon track will be open to fans with social-distancing requirements and other health protocols in place. The number of fans will be limited, however the Foxwoods Resort Casino 301 is still expected to be the largest fan event in New England since the onset of the pandemic.

“I hope we can put on a good show for the fans this Sunday,” Bowyer said. “These folks deserve a good race. I’d like to win and hold that big lobster up in victory lane.”

He’ll have the right paint scheme for the pictures.

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

What is the secret to getting into the playoffs?

“It is all about the racecars and making them as fast as possible. That goes for aerodynamics, having the right setup underneath with (computer) simulation and everything. Everything has to be perfect. It is so much more competitive than when I came into this sport. You can’t have a down area. You can’t have a weak link. It is all across the board that you have to be 100-percent perfect.”

You were a commentator on FOX Xfinity broadcasts this season. Is that something you are interested in pursuing in the future?

“I’m a racecar driver man. I love doing the broadcasts and things like that but, you know, I think that time will come and I don’t know when that’ll be. I want to race and I want to be in a racecar. I love competing. I love being pissed off at the end of the race. I love being happy at the end of the race. I love that adrenaline of lining up next to that guy and wondering how in the hell you’re going to come off the turn two ahead of him and that’s a feeling that can’t be replaced.

“That being said, I feel like I really have appreciated the relationship with FOX this year. I feel like that’s something. It’s not up to me whether that happens or not. It’s a ton of fun, I can tell you that. I mean, it’s relatively easy for me. I mean, everybody’s always asked, ‘How do you get up and do that.’ I mean, I don’t know. Let me get this straight, you want me to go up there and bench race with a bunch of my buddies and talk racing about a race, like I’ve done since I was 4 years old at the dinner table? That’s what you want me to go do? Yeah, I got that, I can handle that. It is a ton of fun and I have a huge amount of respect for everybody who puts on the production of our sports. And then you start looking at production, when you watch a football game or a baseball game, differently. Once you know how that product comes to play and what we see on television, it’s a whole different respect for all the individuals who make that happen, from the cameraman to the producers. The lead guys, like Adam Alexander, and Mike Joy, those guys are just crazy talented. They keep these maniacs who grew up racing and talk racing and doing that bench racing like we do up there, for those guys to get up there and to control all of that and to make that go smooth as silk is just amazing. So, yeah, I appreciate that. And, hopefully, that opportunity will come someday. I don’t know when that day will be.”

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