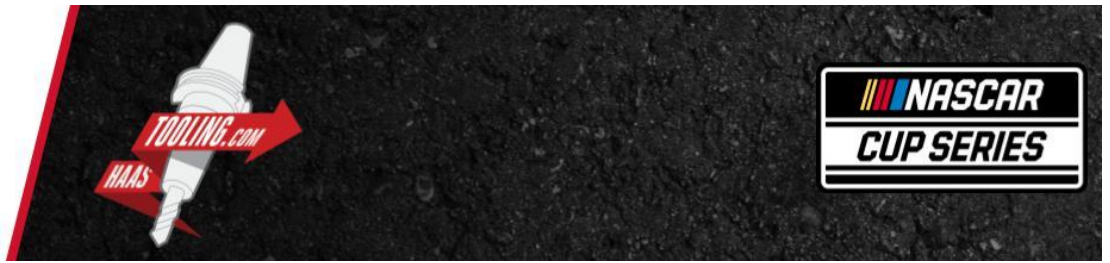


# 41



## COLE CUSTER

### Going for Second Cup Series Win

KANNAPOLIS, North Carolina (July 16, 2020) – Coming off his maiden NASCAR Cup Series victory last Sunday at Kentucky Speedway in Sparta, Cole Custer and the No. 41 HaasTooling.com Mustang for Stewart-Haas Racing (SHR) head to Texas Motor Speedway in Fort Worth for this Sunday’s O’Reilly Auto Parts 500. Sunday at Texas will mark Custer’s 21<sup>st</sup> career Cup Series race and his first at the 1.5-mile oval.

The No. 41 machine will sport the HaasTooling.com livery for Sunday’s 500-mile race. Team co-owner Gene Haas’ newest holding, [Haas Tooling](http://HaasTooling.com) was launched last month as a way for CNC machinists to purchase high quality cutting tools at great prices. Haas’ cutting tools are sold exclusively online at HaasTooling.com and shipped directly to end users. Beginning July 1, HaasTooling.com products became available nationally. The cutting tools available for purchase on HaasTooling.com are even more important during the current COVID-19 pandemic as CNC machines have become vital to producing personal protective equipment. To celebrate Custer’s win, [HaasTooling.com](http://HaasTooling.com) is offering 15% off purchases on their website by using the code “Kentucky.”

“Now I have a lot of confidence going into these next races,” Custer said. “I can go into each weekend without second-guessing myself. When you’re a rookie trying to learn a bunch of different things, and figure things out as fast as you can, you can start to second-guess yourself and not know if you’re doing things right. Now, we know the right steps and I’m not second-guessing myself.”

The California native’s win at Kentucky was the first by a Cup Series rookie at that 1.5-mile track. It also notched SHR’s first win in the Bluegrass State. The organization now has at least one win at every active track on the circuit with the exception of Charlotte (N.C.) Motor Speedway’s roval, which has only been on the schedule for two years. Sunday’s thrilling finish in Kentucky included Custer’s pass of teammate Kevin Harvick. “It was pretty crazy,” he said “I’ve watched a lot of the guys I passed as a little kid on television. To race them for the win was pretty surreal.”

The 22-year-old is also the first rookie to capture a non-weather-shortened race win since 2009. With just nine races left in the regular season, Custer’s ability to make the 16-driver playoff field is looking good. His teammate Harvick is already locked in with multiple wins this season, and teammates Aric Almirola and Clint Bowyer are currently in the top-16 based on points.

Custer is coming off back-to-back top-five finishes in the Cup Series as he heads to Texas. “Everyone has been so congratulatory,” he said. “I’m really lucky to be with the team I’m with and have the teammates I have. To have their support is huge. They’ve helped me a ton this year to try and get me going in my rookie year. It’s a real honor to be with the team I’m with.”

While Sunday marks his first Texas start in the Cup Series, the young driver has six NASCAR Xfinity Series starts there, with all but one resulting in top-10 finishes, including his November 2018 victory by a .162-of-a-second margin over Tyler Reddick after leading 16 laps.

In the NASCAR Gander & RV Outdoor Series, Custer has two starts at the Fort Worth track with a best finish of ninth in November 2016.

In 70 starts at Texas, SHR has four wins – team co-owner Tony Stewart in November 2011, and Harvick with a trio of consecutive wins in the November 2017, 2018 and 2019 races. In total at Texas, SHR has 15 top-fives, 32 top-10s and 1,211 laps led.

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

Even though Custer had a trio of starts in the Cup Series in 2018, 2020 officially marks his Rookie of the Year campaign in NASCAR's most prestigious series. He's competing for rookie honors with notables Christopher Bell and Reddick. The three have battled against each other in the Xfinity Series and are making the full-time transition to the Cup Series together. Custer is the first of the 2020 rookie class to earn a win this season.

***Cole Custer, Driver of the No. 41 HaasTooling.com Mustang for Stewart-Haas Racing:***

**Can you take us through the last couple of laps for you at Kentucky?**

"I knew I needed to get to the top to keep the momentum. It just worked out for me to get a good draft around those guys. I was able to get to their outside and that's when I kind of knew that I had it. I knew going into the restart that was the kind of move I wanted to make, but you never know if it's really going to play out."

**What were your expectations going into the Kentucky race weekend?**

"It was unimaginable to get the win at Kentucky. Going into the race as a rookie I was just trying to get some momentum built up going into the playoffs. Just try and get our team going in the right direction. To come out of there with a win is unimaginable. It's something I'll never forget the rest of my life."

**How cool was it to have a bunch of fans back at the All-Star Race Wednesday night at Bristol?**

"It was cool and strange at the same time. The fans are such a big part of our sport, they make our sport. To have them cheering and hyping us up before the race, everyone was pretty pumped up. We haven't seen them in a while and kind of got used to the silence, but it's really nice to have them back. Hopefully, we can have more back in the future."

**How do you hold your nerves together when you have those moments on the final laps and the cars are making contact with each other?"**

"I think you focus on the task at hand. You take it one step at a time. We kind of get used to it because that's what we do, we beat and bang at 200 miles per hour. It's definitely a day and restart I won't forget."

**-TSC-**

Contact Lauren Emling with True Speed Communication  
(704) 875-3388, ext. 811 or [Lauren.Emling@TrueSpeedCommunication.com](mailto:Lauren.Emling@TrueSpeedCommunication.com)  
[www.TrueSpeedCommunication.com](http://www.TrueSpeedCommunication.com) • Online Media Kit Available at: [www.TrueSpeedMedia.com](http://www.TrueSpeedMedia.com)