

# 41



## COLE CUSTER

### Gearing Up for Michigan Doubleheader

KANNAPOLIS, North Carolina (Aug. 4, 2020) – This weekend, Cole Custer, driver of the No. 41 HaasTooling.com/Jacob Construction Mustang for Stewart-Haas Racing (SHR) and his fellow NASCAR Cup Series competitors head to Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn for a doubleheader at the 2-mile track. The world's best stock car drivers are scheduled to complete over 600 miles combined Saturday and Sunday in the backyard of manufacturer Ford, which is located approximately 65 miles northeast of the track in Dearborn.

HaasTooling.com will share the No. 41 machine this weekend with Jacob Construction. Jacob adorned Custer's Ford Mustang earlier this season at Martinsville (Va.) Speedway and Homestead-Miami Speedway. Jacob is a multifaceted firm with a focus on construction, development, design and technology services. Jacob provides clients with a wide range of services in the design build and construction management sectors of the construction industry. In conjunction with these services, Jacob self performs structural concrete, architectural and structural precast erection.

So far this season, the Mustang has earned 11 wins for Ford. Custer and his SHR teammate Kevin Harvick have both earned wins for the Blue Oval this season. A win this weekend would be huge for Ford and SHR. Not only because it's close to Ford headquarters, but this weekend's events have a unique trophy. The Michigan Heritage Trophy was created in 2013 and is awarded to the winning manufacturer of each race.

Custer heads into this weekend coming off of an eighth-place finish in last Sunday's race at New Hampshire Motor Speedway in Loudon. Custer was able to work through a tight-handling Mustang and race his way up through the field. The top-10 finish marked his fourth top-10 in his last five starts. He was also the highest finishing rookie in the race.

The Ford driver has three starts in the Xfinity Series at Michigan. All three resulted in finishes of 12th or better, with a best of third earned in June 2018. In total, he has an average Michigan Xfinity starting position of 5.7 and an average finish of 8.3, along with 35 laps led.

In the NASCAR Gander RV & Outdoors Truck Series, Custer has one start at the Brooklyn track. In August of 2016, Custer started 18th and finished 22nd.

With Custer's Cup Series July 12 win at Kentucky Speedway in Sparta, he became one of 10 drivers who have won in each of NASCAR's top three national series, as well as in ARCA and NASCAR's developmental K&N Pro Series.

Team co-owner Gene Haas' newest holding, [Haas Tooling](http://HaasTooling.com), was launched 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 at HaasTooling.com are even more important during the current COVID-19 pandemic as CNC machines have become vital to producing personal protective equipment.

There are six races left in the regular season before the playoffs start Sept. 6 at Darlington (S.C.) Raceway, and Custer's win at Kentucky earned him one of the coveted playoff spots. Harvick also owns a playoff spot after multiple wins this season.

In 70 starts at the Brooklyn track, SHR has four victories – Kurt Busch and Clint Bowyer each with one win, and Harvick with two. In total at Michigan, SHR has 17 top-fives, 28 top-10s and 512 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 Tyler 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/Jacob Construction Mustang for Stewart-Haas Racing:***

**How has your relationship with your crew chief Mike Shiplett progressed?**

"This is our second year working together. We worked together last year in the Xfinity Series and we moved up together this year in the Cup Series. It has been great. Mike has a lot of experience and a lot of success. He is really level-headed and keeps us guided in the right direction. I think that's one of his biggest strong suits. We also brought our lead engineer Davin (Restivo) with us from the Xfinity Series."

**When you go to a track you haven't been to before in the Cup Series, what is the process you do to get ready?**

"I think I have a good rhythm down for going to a track I haven't been to before. You really have to work into it. That first run up until the competition caution is really important. You have to make sure you put yourself in a good spot and don't put your car at risk. Once you get to the competition caution, then you really go racing. You try and adapt as fast as you can and make sure you're paying attention to what is working and what is not. In my opinion, the race starts right after the competition caution."

**With a win that locked you into the playoffs, is your rookie season a success at this point?**

"For a rookie season, I look at it as a success with a win. I feel like we are getting to the point where we are consistently running competitively. At the same time, I'm not going to be satisfied if we get to the playoffs and we get knocked out in the first round and don't run well. I want to go in the playoffs and make a run at it, not just be part of it. If the end of the season doesn't work out, I don't think I'll be satisfied."

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