

# 10

## Smithfield

Hometown Proud Since 1936



# Almirola Finishes Seventh at New Hampshire

## *Smithfield Ford Driver Earns Ninth-Straight Top-10*

**Date:** Aug. 2, 2020  
**Event:** Foxwoods Resort Casino 301 (Round 20 of 36)  
**Series:** NASCAR Cup Series  
**Location:** New Hampshire Motor Speedway in Loudon (1.058-mile oval)  
**Format:** 301 laps, broken into three stages (75 laps/110 laps/116 laps)  
**Start/Finish:** 1<sup>st</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> (Running, completed 301 of 301 laps)  
**Point Standing:** 8<sup>th</sup> (614 points, 189 out of first)

**Race Winner:** Brad Keselowski of Team Penske (Ford)  
**Stage 1 Winner:** Denny Hamlin of Joe Gibbs Racing (Toyota)  
**Stage 2 Winner:** Brad Keselowski of Team Penske (Ford)

### **Stage 1 Recap (Laps 1-75):**

- Aric Almirola started first and finished 10<sup>th</sup> to earn one bonus point.
- Almirola led the first two laps of the race.
- The No. 10 Smithfield Ford driver pitted during the lap-30 competition caution for four tires, fuel and chassis adjustments to correct loose-handling conditions.
- He restarted 17<sup>th</sup> with fresher tires than most of the competitors ahead of him.
- Almirola pitted on lap 63 for four tires, fuel and more chassis adjustments to restart 15<sup>th</sup>.
- He battled his way inside the top-10 before the stage concluded.

### **Stage 2 Recap (Laps 76-185):**

- Almirola started eighth and finished fourth to earn seven bonus points.
- He pitted for four tires, fuel and adjustments on lap 96 to loosen the Smithfield Ford's handling conditions.
- Almirola was scored fourth by lap 150.
- He pitted on lap 172 under caution for four tires and fuel to restart fourth, where he ultimately finished the stage.

### **Final Stage Recap (Laps 186-301):**

- Almirola started fourth and finished seventh.
- Almirola pitted for four tires and fuel under a lap 204 caution and was demoted to 14<sup>th</sup> due to multiple cars staying out.
- He raced back to sixth by lap 263 and fell one position to teammate Kevin Harvick before the checkered flag waved.

### **Aric Almirola, driver of the No. 10 Smithfield Ford Mustang for Stewart-Haas Racing:**

"Well the streak continues. Nine top-10s in a row. So proud of this Smithfield Hometown Heroes Ford Mustang team. We ran up front a little bit in the beginning and were just off a bit on balance of our car. It was a solid day. We continue to build a points gap back to the cutoff line to the guys in the playoffs and we just continue the consistency. One of these days we're going to get us a win."

### **Notes:**

- Almirola earned his 12<sup>th</sup> top-10 of the season and his fourth top-10 in 18 career NASCAR Cup Series starts at New Hampshire.
- This was Almirola's ninth straight top-10, and it is the longest top-10 streak of his career. He finished fifth June 14 at Homestead-Miami Speedway, third June 22 at Talladega (Ala.) Superspeedway, third June 27 at Pocono (Pa.) Raceway, fifth June 28 at Pocono, third July 5 at Indianapolis Motor Speedway, eighth July 12 at Kentucky Speedway in Sparta, 10<sup>th</sup> July 19 at Texas Motor Speedway in Fort Worth, and sixth in the series' last race at Kansas Speedway in Kansas City. His previous best streak was a run of six consecutive top-10s in 2019 that began with the second race at Atlanta Motor Speedway and lasted through the series' seventh race at Texas.
- Since joining SHR in 2018, Almirola has never finished worse than 11<sup>th</sup> at New Hampshire. He earned his best career result at the track when he finished third in 2018.
- Almirola led once for two laps to increase his laps-led total at New Hampshire to 56.
- Brad Keselowski won the Foxwoods Resort Casino 301 to score his 33<sup>rd</sup> career NASCAR Cup Series victory, his third of the season and his second at New Hampshire. His margin of victory over second-place Denny Hamlin was 1.647 seconds.

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- This was Ford's series-leading 11<sup>th</sup> NASCAR Cup Series win of the season and its 697<sup>th</sup> all-time Cup Series victory.
- This was Ford's 15<sup>th</sup> NASCAR Cup Series victory at New Hampshire and its third straight. Harvick won the past two races at New Hampshire (2018 and 2019).
- There were 11 caution periods for a total of 52 laps.
- Twenty of the 38 drivers in the race finished on the lead lap.
- Harvick remains the championship leader after New Hampshire with an 81-point advantage over second-place Keselowski.

**Next Up:**

The next event on the NASCAR Cup Series schedule is a doubleheader Aug. 8-9 at Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn. The FireKeepers Casino 400 starts at 4 p.m. EDT on Saturday, Aug. 8 and the Consumers Energy 400 begins at 4:30 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 9. Live coverage of both will be provided by NBCSN and SiriusXM NASCAR Radio.

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