



# CLINT BOWYER

## Talladega Wild Card

KANNAPOLIS, North Carolina (Sept. 28, 2020) – Combine the tension of four- and five-wide racing at 200 mph on a NASCAR superspeedway with the importance of the Cup Series’ 2020 playoffs and the ingredients are in place for a memorable 500-mile race Sunday at Talladega (Ala.) Superspeedway.

Clint Bowyer, driver of the No. 14 Ford Mustang for Stewart-Haas Racing (SHR), says he welcomes having a “wild-card” race like Talladega in the middle of the most important stretch of the season.

“This is an opportunity,” he said. “When you have a track that you say is a wild-card race, that’s an opportunity. And, in the situation we’re in, you’ve got to be able to look forward to those opportunities at hand because we need one.”

Bowyer arrives for the second of three Round of 12 playoff races 10th in points. He is just 20 markers behind the eighth and final transfer spot to the Round of 8 with only Talladega and the Charlotte (N.C.) Motor Speedway “roval” remaining in the round.

After earning three bonus points and finishing 12th in Sunday’s opening Round of 12 race at Las Vegas Motor Speedway, Bowyer knows more bonus points and a good finish are mandatory at Talladega this weekend and on the Charlotte roval next week.

“Honestly, with the situation you’re in with those guys having such a (points) pad on you anyway, you’ve got to go there and race and try to get stage points and try to do it all,” he said. “I like the next two races. You can’t go out there and feel like you have to, it ain’t Hail Mary time. Twenty points can fall in your lap pretty easily at a track like Talladega and the roval. You’ve got to go out there and be smart and we’ll do that, do the best we can, and that just might be enough.”

Part of the reason Bowyer welcomes Talladega this weekend is his past success on the high-banked, 2.66-mile track. In 30 career Cup Series starts there, he’s won twice, posted seven top-five finishes and 13 top-10s.

“Talladega – it’s been good to us, but I know you have to respect the track and you’ve got to get to the end of them,” said Bowyer, whose Talladega wins came in 2010 and 2011. “Obviously, you’ve got to have a little bit of luck not to get caught up in things and, more importantly, be careful not to cause them yourself.”

Bowyer’s race at Talladega in June might best illustrate the fine line between success and failure on its high banks. After starting 10<sup>th</sup>, he ran at the back of the pack through the first two stages while showing the ability to get to the front of the field when needed. As the laps wound down, he moved himself into position to battle for the victory, but an accident on the final lap left him with a 25<sup>th</sup>-place finish.

He’ll be riding at the front on Sunday hoping to collect bonus points in the first two stages. Bowyer said while a Talladega race might look chaotic on television and from the grandstands, the action is just as frenetic driving the car.

“There’s so much going on inside the car, whether you’re listening to the spotter, or you’re looking at – as you’re listening to him, you’re following along to – that story in the mirror, right?” he said. “You’re living it through the windshield. I mean, there are so many things that are going on, you just – you flat out – don’t take it all in. I mean, your brain is registering so many things that, at the end of the race, you don’t even remember half of it.”

Bowyer’s No. 14 Ford Mustang will carry the colors of Rush Truck Centers and BlueDEF Platinum Sunday at Talladega.

Rush Truck Centers has been the primary partner for the No. 14 team since Bowyer arrived at SHR in 2017 and has been with the organization since 2010. With Bowyer’s background working in his dad’s towing service in Emporia, Kansas, Bowyer understands the importance of keeping trucks up and running. That is why Rush is proud to partner with Bowyer and support the trucks that haul the racecars, as well as customers across the country with its total service management package, RushCare Complete. This all-inclusive solution provides dedicated concierge service, vehicle telematics, mobile service, express routine maintenance, real-time service updates and a comprehensive source for all-makes parts.

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BlueDEF Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF) is one of the key elements in the process used by diesel engine builders to meet environmental regulations. DEF is not a fuel or fuel additive. Instead, when injected into the exhaust stream and passed over a catalyst, DEF helps convert harmful gasses into nitrogen gas and water vapor – two harmless and natural components of the air we breathe. Platinum is a new DEF product that addresses the problem of deposit buildup, which has plagued vehicle owners since the inception of selective catalytic reduction emissions-reduction systems that require DEF.

Who knows what will happen Sunday in Talladega, but those final laps are sure to be some of the best racing of the season. Bowyer hopes he'll be at the front of the field at the time, and another step closer to advancing in the 2020 playoffs.

***CLINT BOWYER, Driver of the No. 14 Rush Truck Centers/Blue DEF Platinum Ford Mustang for Stewart-Haas Racing:***

**The Round of 12 is pretty unpredictable with Talladega and the roval. How do you feel the round shapes up for your team?**

“I like it. I’m ready. Talladega is a crapshoot. The roval is a lot of fun. But again, things can happen. At the end of the day, I’ve had a different approach to the whole thing this year. This whole damned year has been chaotic and everything else and you’ve just got to go out there and do the best you can do and not worry about or panic about anything else. That’s all you can do, anyway, just taking it race by race, and I’m looking forward to this round, too. These are some of my best finishes, coming at these tracks right here.”

**Is it difficult to hold back at Talladega?**

“You get a little bit excited and antsy to get up into the pack and, even with 50, 60 laps to go, you’re like, ‘How am I going to get up there?’ They get three-wide and there’s just literally no place to go. At Talladega, you can go four-wide, and I’ve seen when it goes five-wide you get into a wreck. We see that quite a bit there – somebody attempting it – and that’s when it gets this place exciting. Looking forward to hopefully getting to the end and, more importantly, getting a win.”

**What is the key to success?**

“Attitude is a big part of this, but it goes toward being a student while you’re out there, learning as much as you can. That’s the tricky thing about these situations at these racetracks.”

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