



## **Harvick Opens Playoffs with Southern 500 Win at Darlington** ***Busch Beer Throwback Ford Mustang Driver Advances to Round of 12***

**Date:** Sept. 6, 2020  
**Event:** Cook Out Southern 500 (Round 27 of 36)  
**Series:** NASCAR Cup Series  
**Location:** Darlington (S.C.) Raceway (1.366-mile oval)  
**Format:** 367 laps, broken into three stages (115 laps/115 laps/137 laps)  
**Start/Finish:** 8<sup>th</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> (**Running, completed 367 of 367 laps**)  
**Point Standing:** (1<sup>st</sup> with 2,106 points, advances to Round of 12 by virtue of win)

**Race Winner:** Kevin Harvick of Stewart-Haas Racing (Ford)

**Stage 1 Winner:** Martin Truex Jr. of Joe Gibbs Racing (Toyota)

**Stage 2 Winner:** Martin Truex Jr. of Joe Gibbs Racing (Toyota)

### **Stage 1 Recap (Laps 1-115):**

- Harvick started eighth and finished 10<sup>th</sup> and earned one bonus point.
- Harvick, driver of the No. 4 Busch Beer Throwback Ford Mustang, said his car was loose and pitted on lap 27 for four tires, fuel and a track bar adjustment. Was in sixth-place and exited pit lane in fifth.
- On lap 73, Harvick pitted for four tires, fuel and a chassis adjustment to tighten the car up as it was very loose.
- Harvick pitted on lap 84 for four tires, fuel and a chassis and tire pressure adjustment. Said car was still too loose.

### **Stage 2 Recap (Laps 116-230):**

- Harvick started eighth and finished third and earned eight bonus points.
- Harvick, driver of the No. 4 Busch Beer Throwback Ford Mustang pitted on lap 118 for four tires, fuel and a major chassis adjustment. Said car was still too loose.
- On lap 157, Harvick pitted for four tires, fuel and a chassis adjustment. The crew made an adjustment to the left front as Harvick said the car was still too loose. Was in ninth-place.
- Harvick pitted on lap 183 for four tires, fuel and a chassis adjustment. He was leading, but said the car was better, but still too loose.

### **Final Stage Recap (Laps 231-367):**

- Harvick started third and finished first.
- On lap 232, Harvick pitted for four tires, fuel and a chassis adjustment. The handling was improving.
- Harvick pitted on lap 247 for four tires, fuel and a chassis adjustment. Said cars handling was improving even more.
- On lap 287, Harvick pitted for four tires, fuel and a tire and chassis adjustment. He was fourth and said the car was still a tick loose.
- Harvick was in second place when he pitted on lap 232 for four tires, fuel and a tire pressure adjustment. Came in second and left in second.
- He was in third place with 15 laps to go when Chase Elliott and Martin Truex Jr., were battling for the lead and both cars got into the outside SAFER Barrier in turn one. Both cars were damaged and Harvick was able to pass each driver and win his second Southern 500.

### **Notes:**

- Harvick's margin of victory over second-place Austin Dillon was .343 of a second.
- There were seven caution periods for a total of 34 laps.
- Twenty of the 39 drivers in the race finished on the lead lap.
- Harvick earned his series-leading eighth victory of the season and his third victory in 26 career NASCAR Cup Series starts at Darlington.
- Harvick's eight wins ties his own mark for the most victories in a single season. He won eight races in 2018.
- This was Harvick's third straight top-three at Darlington. He has not finished outside the top-10 at Darlington since a 16<sup>th</sup>-place drive in May 2012.
- Harvick has nine top-fives in the last 10 races at Darlington.
- Since joining SHR in 2014, Harvick has only one finish outside the top-five at Darlington – ninth in the 2017 Southern 500.
- Harvick's 11 top-fives and 15 top-10s at Darlington are the most among active drivers.
- Harvick led three times for 32 laps to increase his laps-led total at Darlington to 782, the most among active drivers.
- Harvick has now led 10,757 laps since joining SHR in 2014. He has led 15,183 laps in his entire NASCAR Cup Series career.

**Notes (continued):**

- Harvick has led 1,149 laps in the 27 races held this season. He is the only driver to hit the 1,000 laps led mark this year. Next best is Denny Hamlin with 790 laps led.
- Harvick's victory in the Cook Out Southern 500 marked the 86<sup>th</sup> overall win for SHR. It was the organization's 64<sup>th</sup> points-paying NASCAR Cup Series victory, its ninth of the season and its third at Darlington.
- SHR scored both of its previous Darlington wins with Harvick. He won the 2014 Southern 500 in his first season with SHR and earned a second win at the "Track Too Tough To Tame" on May 17 when NASCAR returned to racing amid the COVID-19 pandemic.
- This was SHR's 28<sup>th</sup> NASCAR Cup Series victory with Ford. The team won its first race with Ford when former driver Kurt Busch captured the 2017 Daytona 500.
- Harvick has now won 22 NASCAR Cup Series races with Ford, which makes him one of only 13 drivers to win 20 or more races with the manufacturer. He is just one win away from tying Rusty Wallace, Carl Edwards and Joey Logano for 10<sup>th</sup> all time.
- This was Ford's series-leading 15<sup>th</sup> NASCAR Cup Series win of the season and its 701<sup>st</sup> all-time Cup Series victory.
- This was Harvick's 57<sup>th</sup> career NASCAR Cup Series win. He is now ninth on the all-time NASCAR Cup Series win list after passing Kyle Busch, who has 56 wins. Next on the all-time win list is NASCAR Hall of Famer Dale Earnhardt with 76 victories.
- This was Harvick's 34<sup>th</sup> NASCAR Cup Series victory since joining SHR in 2014.

**Kevin Harvick, driver of the No. 4 Busch Beer Throwback Ford Mustang for Stewart-Haas Racing:****Was this one of those nights you didn't have the best car and showed what this team is made of?**

"First thing I want to say is welcome back, fans. This interview is a hell of a lot more fun with you guys up there. I just want to say thank you to everybody from NASCAR, all of you fans here in South Carolina. I've got to thank Busch Beer, Mobil 1, Hunt Brothers Pizza, Jimmy John's, Ford Mustang, everybody at Stewart-Haas Racing. We just wound up fighting all night long. This Busch Beer Ford Mustang wasn't where we wanted it to be, but the leaders got tangled up there and the next thing you know we were racing for the win."

**How big is this win for the 4 team?**

"Anytime you can win the Southern 500 is a good day. This is one of the most prestigious races in our sport and this is one the most prestigious racetracks in our sport, so anytime you can win at Darlington it's a big deal, but, man, Southern 500!"

**What did you see with Truex and Elliott?**

"Obviously, those guys had trouble. I didn't see what happened. I just heard my spotter tell me that something had happened. I've just got to thank everybody on our Busch Beer Ford Mustang. They did a heck of a job tonight just keeping us in the game. Our car wasn't very good, but we just kept fighting and kept ourselves up in the front with some great pit strategy and were able to stay up there and fight and wound up in the right spot."

**You short pitted several times. Was that what you had to do?**

"We kept having a lot of trouble with the right-rear tire cording. The car was really loose all night long for whatever reason and would cord the right-rear tire, so I think that was probably about as far as they felt like we were comfortable of going and wound up being the right strategy in the end."

**Playoff Standings:**

1. **Kevin Harvick (2,106 points) 1 win**
2. Denny Hamlin (2,087 points) +54 points
3. Joey Logano (2,060 points) +27 points
4. Brad Keselowski (2,055 points) +22 points
5. Alex Bowman (2,052 points) +19 points
6. Martin Truex Jr. (2,049 points) +16 points
7. Chase Elliott (2,045 points) +12 points
8. Austin Dillon (2,043 points) +10 points
9. William Byron (2,042 points) +9 points
10. Kyle Busch (2,040 points) +7 points
11. Kurt Busch (2,037 points) +4 points
12. **Aric Almirola (2,033 points) +0 points**
13. **Clint Bowyer (2,033 points) -0 points**
14. **Cole Custer (2,030 points) -3 points**
15. Matt DiBenedetto (2,016 points) -17 points
16. Ryan Blaney (2,016 points) -17 points

**Next Up:**

The next event on the NASCAR Cup Series schedule is the Federated Auto Parts 400 on Saturday, Sept. 12 at Richmond (Va.) Raceway. It is the second race in the 10-race NASCAR Playoffs starts and it starts at 7:30 p.m. EDT with live coverage provided by NBCSN and SiriusXM NASCAR Radio.