



COLE CUSTER

Returning to Texas

KANNAPOLIS, North Carolina (Oct. 21, 2020) – Cole Custer will make his 37th career NASCAR Cup Series start in his No. 41 AutodesK Fusion 360/HaasTooling.com Ford Mustang for Stewart-Haas Racing (SHR) during Sunday’s Autotrader EchoPark Automotive 500 on the 1.5-mile oval at Texas Motor Speedway in Fort Worth.

Last week at Kansas Speedway in Kansas City, Custer started 13th and the No. 41 crew worked on his Mustang’s handling throughout the day. Unfortunately, late in the final stage, Custer received a pit road speeding penalty, which forced him to restart at the rear of the field. The rookie driver was able to work his way back up to a 14th-place finish.

Custer made his first Cup Series start at Texas earlier this year. The Ford driver started the July race 19th but, on lap 219 of the 334-lap event, he was involved in a multi-car accident that ended his day prematurely.

In the NASCAR Xfinity Series at Texas, Custer has six starts and, with the exception of an accident in March 2019, the young driver started and finished in the top-10. The 22-year-old earned a Texas win in November 2018 after leading 16 laps. In total, Custer has an average starting Xfinity Series position of 5.3 and an average finishing position of 9.5 at Texas.

In the NASCAR Gander RV & Outdoors Truck Series at Texas, Custer made two starts in 2016 with a best finish of ninth. Custer has a Truck Series average starting position of 14 and an average finishing position of 11.5 at Texas.

In his last 10 starts at intermediate tracks, Custer has one win – Kentucky Speedway in Sparta – and one other top-10 to bring his average finishing position to 16.7.

Looking ahead to next season, Custer’s former Xfinity Series teammate at SHR will be joining him in the Cup Series. Tuesday, SHR announced Chase Briscoe will drive the No. 14 Ford Mustang in 2021. “I’m really excited to work with Chase next year,” Custer said. “We had a lot of success when we ran Xfinity together. He’s been a friend of mine for several years now. I’ve been to the Chili Bowl with him and done other things with him away from the track. He’s an awesome guy and is very competitive and pushes everybody to be better.”

Even though Custer is out of contention for this year’s Cup Series championship, he still has three more opportunities to capture his second win of the season. This weekend, a limited number of fans will be allowed to attend the 500-mile event while following social distancing guidelines.

So far this season, Ford has won 18 races, and Custer and his SHR teammate Kevin Harvick have both earned wins for the Blue Oval – one for Custer and nine for Harvick. Ford’s milestone 700th win in the Cup Series came at the hands of Harvick on Aug. 23 at Dover (Del.) International Speedway. Ford captured its first victory on June 25, 1950. Ford drivers made up 50 percent of this year’s starting playoff field. SHR’s driver Harvick advanced to the playoffs’ Round of 8, of which Texas is the second of three races.

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

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Autodesk Fusion 360 will share the No. 41 Mustang's livery with HaasTooling.com this weekend at Texas. Autodesk is a leading designer and supplier of software for the architecture, engineering, construction, media and entertainment, and manufacturing industries. [Autodesk's Fusion 360](#) cloud-based 3D CAD, CAM, CAE, and PCB software brings enterprise-grade capabilities, data services, and a support network to teams of any size, uniting people, products, and processes across the product development process. The company empowers customers, like SHR, to push their boundaries and shape a thriving future.

Team co-owner Gene Haas' newest holding, [Haas Tooling](#), 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.

SHR has 74 starts at Texas with four wins – team co-owner Tony Stewart in November 2011, and Harvick with three wins in November 2017, 2018 and 2019. SHR has eight pole awards with 16 top-fives and 34 top-10s at the 1.5-mile track. In total, SHR has an average starting position of 13.2 and an average finishing position of 14.6 along with 1,286 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.

Custer, who had a trio of starts in the Cup Series in 2018, clinched 2020 Rookie of the Year honors in his official rookie season in NASCAR's most prestigious series. Competing against fellow rookie notables Christopher Bell and Tyler Reddick, he was the only rookie to clinch a playoff spot this season.

Cole Custer, Driver of the No. 41 Autodesk Fusion 360/HaasTooling.com Mustang for Stewart-Haas Racing:

Gene Haas and Tony Stewart have both said if the Xfinity Series drivers win and prove themselves on the track, they'll earn promotions to the Cup Series. You are proof of that, and now, so is Chase Briscoe. What does that say about your team owners and how nice is it to be validated based on your ability to compete?

"I think it shows what the Xfinity program has really come to be. To start an Xfinity team three or four years ago and to be one of the top, or the top organization in the series, is pretty amazing. I've been fortunate to be moved through it, and now Chase, and people in the shop, too. It's all about our owners who have invested their time and effort in it, and moved people up through it. We've seen it work and hopefully there are other drivers who get the same opportunity."

What do you think about the Texas victory lane celebration?

"I think Texas has one of the coolest victory lanes. All of the flames, the cowboy hats, it's a really unique place to win because they always do a good job. They do a good job of promoting the race and it's obviously an important race in the playoffs."

What in the Cup Series was your big "ah-ha, this is the Cup Series" moment?

"Just being around the guys who I've watched on TV since I was 5 years old. Jimmie Johnson, Harvick, all of those guys I watched and glorified as a little kid. Racing with the No. 48 car with Jimmie behind the wheel is pretty unimaginable, especially when it was early in the season. That was definitely cool."

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