

Chase Elliott wins Cup Series race at Talladega

It's the first win of the season for Chevy

By JOHN ZENOR
Associated Press

TALLADEGA, Ala. — Chase Elliott felt right at home, embraced by fans at a track a few hours from home and one where his father celebrated victory a couple of decades before.

This time it was Chase's turn.

Elliott won the Cup Series race Sunday at Talladega Superspeedway, giving Chevrolet its first victory of the season. He finished well in the clear from a race-ending crash that flipped Kyle Larson a half-dozen times.

Elliott took the lead after a restart with four laps to go and worked with three other Chevy drivers to hold off the rest of the field. He won



Chase Elliott celebrates after winning a NASCAR Cup Series auto race at Talladega Superspeedway on Sunday in Talladega, Ala.

for the first time since October and went to victory lane about 150 miles from his hometown in Georgia.

His Hall of Fame father Bill Elliott won twice at Talladega in the 1980s.

“Dad’s history, obviously very cool,” Chase Elliott said. “To me the biggest piece of today was just how much of a home race it

felt like after the race. I was blown away by the people and how fired up everybody was. That was an unbelievable experience. We are close to home, so that’s cool, and they made me feel that way.

“I couldn’t ask for much more there.”

His father was back in Georgia driving in a vintage cars race. (He won, too),

Hendrick Motorsports teammate Alex Bowman finished second, followed by rookie Ryan Preece, Joey Logano and another rookie, Daniel Hemric.

Elliott is the sixth driver to win through 10 Cup races this season and locked up a playoff spot.

Elliott credited a meeting with all Chevy drivers for the late-race teamwork.

The race ended under caution after David Ragan hit William Byron, who tagged Kyle Larson and sent him sliding across the track. Larson then flipped half a dozen times before coming to a stop.

“That was probably the longest flip I’ve ever had,” Larson said. “I haven’t seen a replay of it. I didn’t know if it would ever stop. I knew I was flipping and was just hoping that I wasn’t going to get any closer to the catch fence, so it was a little bit scary, but thankfully I’m all right.”

The 2019 aerodynamics package had cars reaching higher speeds than NASCAR wanted in practice, so officials tried to slow them down with a late rules tweak. But the changes made the cars go even faster, leaving many veterans wary of the closing speeds and potential for chaos and high-speed crashes.

But the race was mostly wreck-free — until the final lap.

Missed calls mar Warriors-Rockets game

By JANIE MCCAULEY
Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Before Golden State’s group film session, Stephen Curry made a point Monday morning of studying on his own all 16 3-pointers James Harden attempted in Game 1 of the Western Conference semifinals.

He wants to be better prepared to defend the Houston star who has such a knack of drawing his man in to generate contact as he jumps forward to release the ball from long range.

Who knew a debate about landing space would be all the talk going into Game 2 on Tuesday night?

“It sucks that that is the narrative coming out of it, because we literally could exhaust our energy on that as well. So what are you going to do about it?” Curry said.

“Hopefully, Game 2, it’s about the game and how we play and making shots and the energy and intensity that we need to play with, knowing what’s at stake, and that becomes the conversation for sure.”

A day after the Houston Rockets complained about the officiating following a 104-100 loss in the opener of the best-of-seven series, the NBA’s Last-Two Minute Report confirmed a no-call when Draymond Green defended Harden’s 3-point try with 10.1 seconds left that could have tied the game.

The NBA said, “Green jumps in front of Harden and would have missed him if Harden hadn’t extended his legs.” The league said

there were three missed calls total in the final two minutes on a day the officiating crew took constant criticism at Oracle Arena.

Also Monday, the NBA said Houston’s Chris Paul was ejected with 4.4 seconds left “for aggressively confronting and recklessly making contact with a game official.” Josh Tiven. Paul was later fined \$35,000.

Curry said the Warriors must understand the “tendencies” of a shooter like Harden to avoid putting themselves in a position where it’s a tough call for the referee on whether the Warriors have encroached on someone’s landing space.

Harden referenced a play two years ago during which Kawhi Leonard was lost for the season with a left ankle injury in Game 1 of the Western Conference finals against the Warriors. Leonard came down on the foot of then-Golden State center Zaza Pachulia.

“That can change the entire series,” Harden said after Sunday’s game. “Just call the game the way it’s supposed to be called and we’ll live with the results. It’s plain and simple.”

Curry had five fouls and the report showed there were two incorrect calls where he fouled, one against Harden and the other against Eric Gordon.

“I got five of ‘em yesterday so I got my fair share. I’m good,” Curry said. “It’s the same conversation with every NBA game that happens regular season or not, you can literally go possession by possession and say what was supposed to be a foul, what was not. And both teams on most nights are going to have grievances on how things are called, but at the end of the day basketball decides the game.”

The Warriors are surprised the Rockets have made their grievances quite so public, with coach Steve Kerr saying it’s unfortunate this became the focus in a series



Houston Rockets guard James Harden, right, shoots against Golden State Warriors guard Klay Thompson during the second half of Game 1 of a second-round NBA basketball playoff series in Oakland, Calif., on Sunday.

between the two powerhouses of the Western Conference.

“I thought we were going to talk about the game,” Kerr said. “Watching the tape, both teams just got after it and competed. But we just watched the tape upstairs. You don’t think there were 10 calls that we thought we got fouled? This is how it goes. And every coach in the league will tell you the same thing: You watch the tape and you go, ‘Man, that’s a foul, that’s a foul.’ It’s the nature of the game. It’s very, very difficult to officiate an NBA game. There’s all kinds of gray area, and in the modern game a lot of players have gotten really good at deception, creating contact. I don’t remember people falling down on 3-point shots all the time when I played.”

PREP ROUNDUP

Hermiston softball takes down Suns, but falls to Lake City

East Oregonian

Hermiston made easy work of Southridge on Saturday before meeting its match against Lake City Junior Academy in Richland.

The Bulldogs took down the Suns in a five-inning, 17-3 blow-out to start the day, but suffered a five-inning loss when Lake City shut them out 11-0.

Against Southridge, Samantha Atilano went 2-for-2, driving in four runs and scoring two..

Hermiston buried the Suns early, scoring 10 runs in the first inning. The high-scoring streak was highlighted by Grace Studer’s two-run double and Ashley Cameron’s three-run home run.

Suns pitcher Kendra Monteith couldn’t contain the Bulldogs, giving up 15 runs on 14 hits in just 2½ innings. Hermiston Janelle Almaguer threw four innings and tallied six strikeouts, walking just one.

Bailee Noland went 3-for-4 with a double, a triple and two RBIs. Sydney Stefani hit two doubles, and Halle Pennington drove in three runs.

Lake City scored all of its runs in two innings, getting five in the second and six in the fifth.

Noland allowed 11 hits and five runs in three innings of work. The Timberwolves had 18 hits in the game. Ashlynn Allen led Lake City with a two-run homer in the fifth inning, and a double. She drove in four runs.

Hermiston (13-5, 10-4 MCC) returns to Richland on Tuesday for a Mid-Columbia Conference doubleheader against the league-leading Bombers. It will be the Bulldogs’ final games of the regular season. First pitch is at 4 p.m.

Softball

MAC-HI 17-18, BAKER/POWDER VALLEY 3-1 (5) — The Pioneers claimed their second doubleheader in a row after two Greater Oregon League games at home on Saturday.

The Pioneers were quick to get things started when Rikki Mark hit a solo homer in the first inning of the first game. They tallied six runs in the third — Courtney Cain, Graci Bullock, and Ashlyn

Marly all scored for the Pioneers.

Marly went 4-for-4 with five RBIs and two runs scored. Mark was 2-for-3 with four runs scored, while Bullock went 3-for-4 with four RBIs.

In the second game, Bullock hit two home runs in the fourth innings, driving in four runs.

Baker jumped out to an early 1-0 lead in the first, but Mac-Hi scored seven runs in the third and eight in the fourth to put the game away in five innings.

The Pioneers (13-5, 5-2 GOL), second in the GOL, host Ontario on Saturday in a GOL doubleheader.

WESTON-MCEWEN 5-19, PILOT ROCK/NIXYAAWII/UKIAH 1-1 — The TigerScots posted two Blue Mountain Conference wins over the visiting Rockets on Saturday.

Pilot Rock held a 1-0 advantage for the first five innings in the first game. Ayana Aguilar kept Weston-McEwen’s bats quiet from the circle, allowing just seven hits, and striking out seven TigerScots.

Weston-McEwen put five runs on the board in the bottom of the

sixth to rally for the win. McKenna Stallings pitched seven innings, giving up one run and striking out 14.

The TigerScots scored 10 runs in the second inning of Game 2. Madison Shell went 4-for-6 with four RBIs and three runs scored. Tyree Burke added four hits and two RBIs, while Skyler Uptain went 3-for-5 with three RBIs.

Kate Evans scored for the Rockets.

Weston-McEwen (11-3, 6-2 BMC) travels to Enterprise for a nonleague doubleheader Tuesday. Pilot Rock/Nixyaawii/Ukiah (3-10, 1-3 BMC) host Grant Union/Prairie City for a pair of league games Wednesday.

STANFIELD/ECHO 5-12, HEPPNER/IONE 0-5 — The Cougars swept the Mustangs in a Blue Mountain Conference home doubleheader on Saturday.

Stanfield/Echo (11-5, 4-5 BMC) travels to Umatilla for a nonleague game Tuesday. Heppner/Ione (4-6, 1-5 BMC) hit the road to Grant Union/Prairie City for a doubleheader Saturday.

Baseball

HANFORD 14-16, HERMISTON 6-6 — The Bulldogs closed out their first season in the Mid-Columbia Conference on Friday with a pair of losses to the visiting Falcons.

Hermiston used four pitchers in an attempt to contain the high-scoring Falcons. Jordan Ramirez allowed six runs, and Chase Elliott five.

Hermiston (1-15 MCC) tied the score at 3-3 in the bottom of the second inning in the second game, but Hanford pulled away for good with five runs in the third and six more in the fourth.

Seth Prewitt gave up 11 runs over three innings. Trevor Wagner belted a home run in the third inning, but it would not be enough to keep up with Hanford.

BAKER/POWDER VALLEY 14-11, MAC-HI 1-0 (5) — The Pioneers were taken down by the Bulldogs for the second time this season in a Greater Oregon League doubleheader Saturday.