# IS FORMULA 1 TOO PREDICTABLE?

**by Alex Klancko**
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT
HE/HIM/HIS
lvb24001@uconn.edu

Formula 1 has been around since 1950 and has always been about making the best car, whether through pushing the rules or bringing new ideas to the table. But has F1 become too predictable?

Since 2010, Mercedes' first year in F1, there have been 352 races and of those races, only five races have been won by teams not named Red Bull, McLaren, Mercedes and Ferrari.

In 2010 and 2011, Ferrari, McLaren and Red Bull won all 38 races that took place across the two years.

In each of 2012 and 2013, Kimi Raikkonen won a race with Lotus, but Red Bull, Ferrari and Mercedes won the other 39.

Between 2014 and 2019, Mercedes, Red Bull and Ferrari won all 121 races with Mercedes winning the most with 89 Grand Prix's won.

The first year since 2009 where a team outside the big four won a race was 2020, when Pierre Gasly won the Italian Grand Prix with AlphaTauri, and Sergio Perez won the Sakhir Grand Prix with Racing Point.

The most recent year a team won besides Mercedes, Red Bull, McLaren and Ferrari was 2021, when Esteban Ocon and Alpine won the Hungarian Grand Prix. Since then, it has been all the big four. Red Bull, Mercedes and Ferrari won all 22 races in 2022 and in 2023, Red Bull won 21 of the 22 races with Ferrari winning the Singapore Grand Prix to prevent a Red Bull sweep.

In 2024, Mercedes, Ferrari, Red Bull and McLaren won all 24 races and in 2025, McLaren, Red Bull and Mercedes won every race. Despite the regulation change in 2026, this trend hasn't changed, with Mercedes winning 12 of the first 18 races while Ferrari, Red Bull and McLaren have won two each.

To find the first-year Red Bull, McLaren, Mercedes or Ferrari didn't win the most races, you have to go back to 2009 when Brawn GP, who was bought by Ross Brawn for £1, won eight races before Mercedes bought the team in 2010 for around £110 million.

Since 2010, F1 has had a power balance problem. The big teams thrive and continue to dominate while the smaller teams have to fight for scraps and in the current cost cap era of F1, things will most likely not change.

The current cost cap rules are set up so the team who wins the Constructors Title gets the most money towards the next season, while getting the least amount of wind tunnel hours. Meanwhile, the team who finished at the bottom gets the least amount of money, but the most wind tunnel hours.

This may not seem bad, but the big teams like Mercedes, Red Bull, McLaren and Ferrari bring massive amounts of money which help them meet their cost cap while teams like Haas F1, struggled to get funding and until last year, didn't get enough money to fill their cost cap.

What F1 should do is have first place in the Constructors Title get the least amount of cost cap and wind tunnel hours, while the worst team gets the most amount of cost cap and wind tunnel hours.

This would make it so the bottom teams could spend the money to catch up to the bigger teams and fight for points, podiums and wins so there is more parity. F1 having the same four teams winning races year in and year out isn't fun for the fans, and it isn't good for F1.

If F1 doesn't fix this, the racing product will continue to go downhill, fans of midfield and back marker teams might leave the to flock to other series that provide a closer and more exciting on track product, like the World Rally Championship, IndyCar or endurance racing like IMSA and WEC.




**F1 driver Esteban Ocon takes the raceway at the Azerbaijan Grand Prix. The main race was held on Saturday, September 26, 2026.**
PHOTO COURTESY OF F1 ON FACEBOOK




**F1 drivers take the raceway at the Azerbaijan Grand Prix. The main race was held on Saturday, September 26, 2026.**
PHOTO COURTESY OF F1 ON FACEBOOK




**Kyle Larson wins the YellaWood 500 at Talladega Superspeedway. The race took place on Sunday, Oct. 25.**
PHOTO COURTESEY OF KYLE LARSON RACING ON FACEBOOK

# NASCAR: Kyle Larson wins controversial Talladega race

**by Alex Klancko**
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT
HE/HIM/HIS
lvb24001@uconn.edu

Kyle Larson won the YellaWood 500 at Talladega Superspeedway, after a controversial finish that had the NASCAR community up in arms.

"I got ate up off of [turn] two and had no run and finally just settled into where I was and I thought they were gonna crash," Larson said about the finish. "The 33 I think ran out of fuel here and the 33 drug everyone up and I went down and had a huge run and thankfully Ricky [Stenhouse Jr] wasn't able to close it off."

This was Larson's first win on a drafting track in 67 tries. He also leads the NASCAR Cup Series Chase standings by 73 points after winning, with Denny Hamlin, Christopher Bell and Chase Briscoe all within 79 points of the Hendrick Motorsports driver.

Following Larson, William Byron finished in second while Ricky Stenhouse Jr, who led nine laps, finished in third. Meanwhile, Ross Chastain, who was a lap down until lap 185 and Cole Custer rounded out the top five. This was also Custer's first top five of the season.

Rounding out the top 10, Carson Hocevar, Todd Gilliland, Denny Hamlin, Alex Bowman and Michael McDowell finished in sixth through 10th.

Chris Buscher won stage one, as Ryan Preece and Brad Keselowski followed behind to make it a RFK Racing 1-2-3. Following 17.5 seconds behind the RFK trio was Larson, Byron, Riley Herbst, Chase Briscoe, Ryan Blaney, Joey Logano and Austin Cindric to make up the rest of the top 10.

Logano won the second stage followed by Larson, Briscoe, Cindric, Byron, Chris Buescher, Connor Zilisch, Shane Van Gisbergen, Erik Jones and Austin Hill in second through 10th.

Over the 189-lap race, there were two "big ones" that shook up the field. The first came on lap 131 when Ryan Blaney made a late block on a charging Bubba Wallace who couldn't check up in time, sending Blaney into the wall and collecting Wallace, Chase Elliott, Tyler Reddick, Daniel Suarez, Christopher Bell, Casey Mears, John Hunter Nemechek and Ty Gibbs.

Blaney, Nemechek and Mears were the only ones who couldn't finish the race from that wreck. Reddick ended up coming back on the track late in the race, completing 137 laps in total while Elliott did the same, completing 147 laps out of 188.

The second "big one" took place with six laps to go when Chastain checked up, causing Logano to lose control and collecting Carson Hocevar, Herbst, Jones, Brad Keselowski, Zilisch, Bowman, AJ Allmendinger, Cindric, Buescher, Josh Berry and Van Gisbergen.

The biggest hit of the wreck was Riley Herbst, who hit the inside wall at 160 mph. Herbst did not respond on the radio after the wreck and the AMR Safety Team took quite a bit to get to him, instead attending to Logano who flipped upside down during the wreck. After the wreck, Herbst was ok although he was seen with a cast on his left wrist, after leaving the medical center.

The other bad wreck of the second "big one" was Logano's who flipped upside down almost immediately after the impact with Chastain. Logano came out of the wreck ok and had no major injuries.

With the field decimated after those two wrecks, Stenhouse took the lead on the final lap, but in the final corner Larson turned on the jets and went from 10th to first to win. This was controversial as many fans accused the other Chevrolet's of lifting to give Larson the win.

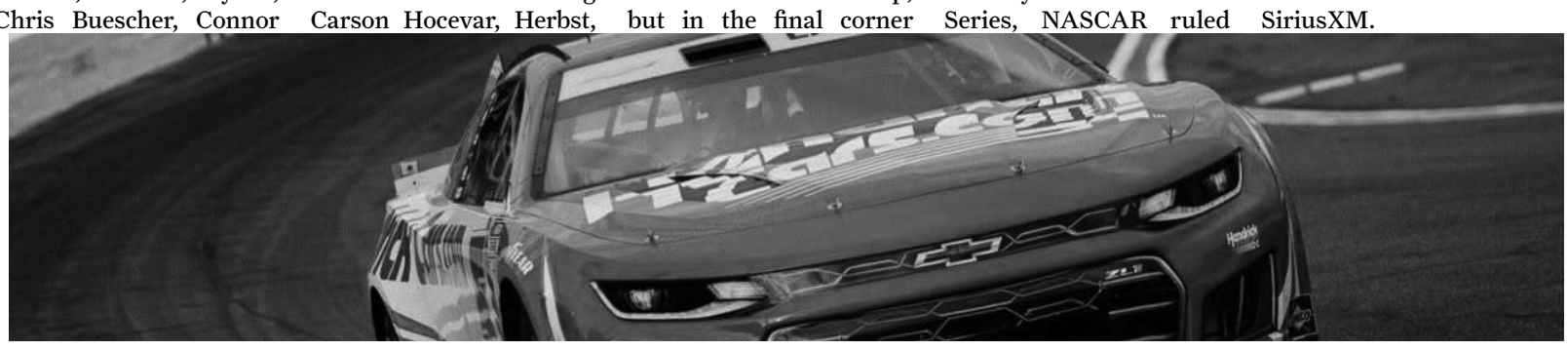
NASCAR came out and said nobody lifted but has refused to release the SMT data to back that up. With that being said, fans online have speculated that the run Larson got was fabricated due to the field being too spread out to get a real draft.

Fans also pointed out that on the final lap, Larson went below the yellow line which on superspeedway's is prohibited because of how dangerous it is. NASCAR rebutted by saying that Larsons tires weren't fully over the yellow line, but fans again pointed out that past precedent says that doesn't matter.

At Daytona International Speedway on July 6, 2018, in the O'Reilly Auto Parts Series, NASCAR ruled that Justin Haley went below the yellow line and disqualified him from the race, giving Larson the win. Looking back at the video, and like Larson on Sunday, Haley's tires did not fully cross the yellow line which is what NASCAR says is how they decide if a disqualification is needed. Yet Haley was disqualified and Larson wasn't.

The no-call has led Larson to a 73, 74 and 79-point lead over Hamlin, Bell and Briscoe, meaning if Larson gains just four points on Hamlin and three points on Bell at Martinsville next week, Larson will be crowned champion with a race to spare.

The NASCAR Cup Series will continue the Chase with the Xfinity 500, this Sunday, Nov. 1, at Martinsville Speedway for the penultimate race of the season. To watch the Xfinity 500, fans can watch on NBC or listen on SiriusXM.



**Kyle Larson races in the YellaWood 500 at Talladega Superspeedway. He won first place after a controversial finish.**
PHOTO COURTESY OF KYLE LARSON RACING ON FACEBOOK