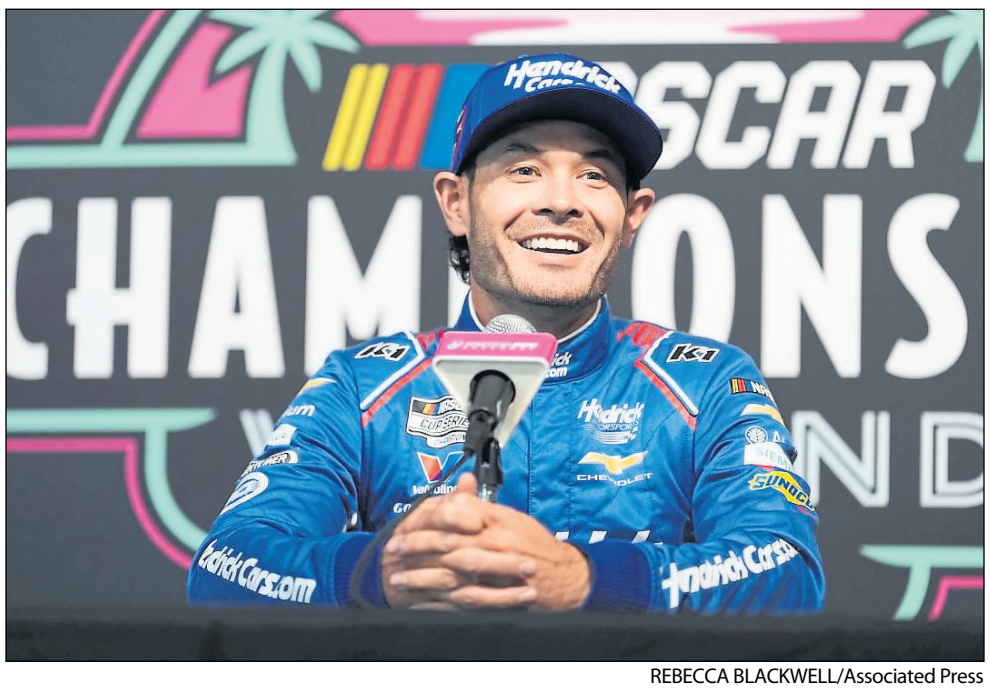
Larson in line for shot at third title

BY MARK LONG
ASSOCIATED PRESS



REBECCA BLACKWELL/Associated Press

Kyle Larson speaks to journalists Thursday during media day for the NASCAR Championship at Homestead-Miami Speedway.

HOMESTEAD, Fla. — Kyle Larson's championship media day at Homestead-Miami Speedway on Thursday could be summed up in one word: awkward.

Larson was the lone Cup Series "contender" on hand for the event. Christopher Bell and Denny Hamlin, both technically still in the mix for the title, were excused. So Larson was alone on the stage, the first time that's happened since NASCAR moved to a playoff format more than two decades ago.

"We've earned the right for it to be awkward," Larson quipped. "I like awkwardness."

Larson holds a 67-point lead over Bell heading into the season finale at Homestead and needs only nine points to secure his second consecutive Cup title and third in six years. He will get one point for starting the race and could earn more based on where he finishes the opening stage.

Even if Larson struggles — unlikely considering he has two wins and six top-five finishes in 12 starts at the track — either Bell or Hamlin would need to accumulate significant points to catch him. The maximum points for a race is 76.

That kind of cushion has removed most of the drama from the finale, which returned to Homestead this season after six years in Phoenix. But Larson insisted he's still feeling some pressure.

"Man, you've done such great work to this point to put yourself in position," Larson said. "I would just hate for something crazy to happen, to eliminate all the work that we've gone to get ourselves in a great position to where you don't have to score a ton of points.

"I think that's the pressure. Like, man, don't (screw) it up at this point."

He expects those butterflies to end once he slides into his No. 5 Chevrolet, locks in and forgets about "what's at stake."

"I foresee my race looking like any other Homestead race for me: try to get to the front and manage the race from there," he said. "Hopefully the first stage goes well and then you can really just race free after that. I still don't think it's going to change the approach of the race, but you can race with less worry at that point."

Larson essentially could end up turning hundreds of "victory laps."

He is trying to become the 11th driver in NASCAR history with three Cup titles, joining a list that includes seven-time champs Richard Petty, Dale Earnhardt and Jimmie Johnson. Jeff Gordon has four. Lee Petty, David Pearson, Cale Yarborough, Darrell Waltrip, Tony Stewart and Joey Logano have three.

"More people have walked on the moon than won three Cup championships," retired driver and current NBC Sports race analyst Jeff Burton said.

Burton and his partners in the broadcast booth, Leigh Duffy and Dale Jarrett, plan to spend time comparing Larson to other drivers considered the best to ever step foot in a race car.

Parnelli Jones, Mario Andretti, A.J. Foyt, and Stewart are widely regarded as racing royalty, guys who proved their worth by winning across various series.

Jones won in sprint cars and stock cars around the same time he won the 1963 Indianapolis 500. Andretti won four IndyCar titles, the 1967 Daytona 500 and the 1969 Indianapolis 500. Foyt won four Indy 500s and the 1972 Daytona 500. Stewart won the 1997 IndyCar championship, three Cup titles and is currently racing dragsters at the top level, the NHRA.

Larson raced twice at the Indy 500 and has won just about every dirt-racing event around the world.

"He's a renaissance man," Duffy said.

Added Burton: "It's so hard to compare drivers or athletes across different generations. Things are different than they were. ... Kyle Larson, I think he's the best race-car driver in the world. He wins in everything he does, and they're all completely different cars and tracks, and racing against the best in every discipline."

Larson clinched his first two Cup championships in vastly different ways.

He dominated the 2021 season in his first year at Hendrick Motorsports, winning four of the last five races – including the finale at Phoenix Raceway – while still dealing with questions about how his time at Chip Ganassi Racing ended.

He pulled off a stunner last year at Phoenix, using a late caution and pit strategy to vault sentimental favorite Denny Hamlin — an outcome few, if anyone, saw coming.

"They all both equally memorable," Larson said.

His third one might be the most unforgettable. He ranked 10th in the standings late this summer and carried a 50-race winless streak into the Chase. But then he got hot, winning three of the first nine playoff races and finishing in the top 10 a stunning eight times.

Justin Allgaier, a veteran driver who competes in the second-tier O'Reilly Auto Parts Series, called it "a generational run that I don't know if anyone will ever match again."

"This one I'll remember forever because of just the season that it was and the struggle that it was," Larson said. "Hopefully there's other championships down the road for us, and I think those will each mean something different. ... Hopefully we have more and we can keep comparing."



Dave Ekren / Ap Photo

Denver Broncos coach Dan Reeves is carried off the field by his players after Denver defeated the Seattle Seahawks to win the AFC Western Conference Championship NLF football game in Seattle on Dec. 15, 1984.

Bill Belichick again among coaching finalist for Hall of Fame

BY ROB MAADDI
AP PRO FOOTBALL WRITER

Bill Belichick again is among five coaching candidates for the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Tom Coughlin, Mike Holmgren, Dan Reeves and Mike Shanahan join Belichick in the Coach category for possible election into the Hall's Class of 2027.

The list was announced Thursday by the Canton, Ohio-based Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Members of the Hall's coaching subcommittee made their selections from an original field of 14 nominees. The subcommittee will select one candidate to be considered when the Hall's selection committee determines a new class of enshrinees in early 2027.

All five reached this stage last year when Belichick advanced in the process but the six-time Super Bowl champion head coach was not elected in his first year of eligibility. Belichick's snub was criticized intensely around the NFL.

"If he's not a first-ballot Hall of Famer, there's really no coach that should ever be a first-ballot Hall of Famer, which is completely ridiculous because people deserve it. He's incredible," Tom Brady said.

Belichick and Brady won six Super Bowls with the New England Patriots. Belichick also won two as a defensive assistant coach with the New York Giants.

Belichick's career included a sign-stealing scandal dubbed "Spygate" in the 2007 season. He was fined $500,000 after the team was caught filming defensive signals from the New York Jets during a game.

YOUR CUSTOMER JUST READ THIS AD.
ADVERTISE WITH US.

LEGAL NOTICE

SUMMARY AND NOTICE OF ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION

The Board of Directors of the Hardin County Public Health Taxing District (the "District"), at a special meeting held on October 28, 2026, adopted the following resolution:

A RESOLUTION OF THE HARDIN COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH TAXING DISTRICT APPROVING A LEASE FOR THE FINANCING OF A PROJECT; PROVIDING FOR THE PAYMENT AND SECURITY FOR THE LEASE; CREATING A SINKING FUND; AND AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF VARIOUS DOCUMENTS RELATED TO THE LEASE.

It is hereby certified that the foregoing resolution provides for approval of a lease with Kentucky Association of Counties Leasing Trust, as administrator, and the bank, financial institution, or finance corporation offering the lowest and best interest rate, as lessor for financing certain public improvements and provides a general obligation pledge to assess and levy sufficient taxes to comply with the obligations to make lease payments, establishes and maintains a sinking fund for the deposit and application of tax revenues, and makes certain designations regarding the Lease.

The Resolution pledges the full faith, credit, and taxing power of the District, and provision has been made for the collection of a tax to pay lease payments due on the Lease, subject to certain credits, in Section 2 of the Resolution, set forth below:

"Section 2. General Obligation Pledge. Under the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Kentucky and Chapter 66 of the Kentucky Revised Statutes, as amended (the "General Obligation Statutes"), the obligation of the Lessee created by the Lease shall be a full general obligation of the Lessee and, for the prompt payment of the Lease Payments, the full faith, credit, and taxing power of the Lessee are hereby pledged. During the period the Lease is outstanding, there shall be and there hereby is levied on all the taxable property in the Lessee, in addition to all other taxes, without limitation as to rate, a direct tax annually in an amount sufficient to pay the Lease Payments on the Lease when and as due, it being hereby found and determined that current tax rates are within all applicable limitations. The tax shall be and is hereby ordered computed, certified, levied, and extended upon the tax duplicate and collected by the same officers in the same manner and at the same time that taxes for general purposes for each of the years are certified, extended, and collected. The tax shall be placed before and in preference to all other items and for the full amount thereof; provided, however, that in each year to the extent that the other taxes of the Lessee are available for the payment of the Lease Payments and are appropriated for such purpose, the amount of such direct tax upon all of the taxable property in the Lessee shall be reduced by the amount of such other taxes so available and appropriated."

The foregoing Summary and Notice of Adoption of Resolution of the District was approved by the Board of Directors on the date indicated above and was further approved for publication following adoption according to law.

By: /s/ Lisa Pollock
Treasurer
Hardin County Public Health Taxing District

The undersigned, an attorney licensed to practice law in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, hereby certifies that the foregoing Summary and Notice of Adoption of Resolution of the Hardin County Public Health Taxing District was prepared by the undersigned and constitutes a general summary of the essential provisions of the Resolution, reference to the full text of which is hereby made for a complete statement of its provisions and terms.

By: /s/ Mark S. Franklin
Dinsmore & Shohl LLP
101 South Fifth Street, Suite 2500
Louisville, Kentucky 40202

LEGAL NOTICE

ALLISON BALL
AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Independent Auditor's Report

To the People of Kentucky
The Honorable Andy Beshear, Governor
Holly M. Johnson, Secretary
Finance and Administration Cabinet
The Honorable Keith Taul, Hardin County Judge/Executive
The Honorable John Ward, Hardin County Sheriff
Members of the Hardin County Fiscal Court

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statement

Opinions

We have audited the accompanying Hardin County Sheriff's Settlement - 2024 Taxes for the period September 1, 2024 through August 31, 2025 - Regulatory Basis, and the related notes to the financial statement, which collectively comprise the Hardin County Sheriff's financial statement as listed in the table of contents.

Unmodified Opinion on Regulatory Basis of Accounting

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statement presents fairly, in all material respects, the taxes charged, credited, and paid for the period September 1, 2024 through August 31, 2025 of the Hardin County Sheriff, in accordance with the basis of accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the Commonwealth of Kentucky as described in Note 1.

Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles

In our opinion, because of the significance of the matter discussed in the Basis for Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles section of our report, the financial statement does not present fairly, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the taxes charged, credited, and paid of the Hardin County Sheriff, for the period September 1, 2024 through August 31, 2025.

Basis for Opinions

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS) and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards,* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, and the *Audit Program for Sheriffs' Tax Settlements*. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statement section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Hardin County Sheriff and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.

Basis for Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles

As described in Note 1 of the financial statement, the financial statement is prepared by the Hardin County Sheriff on the basis of accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the laws of Kentucky to demonstrate compliance with the Commonwealth of Kentucky's regulatory basis of accounting and budget laws, which is a basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. The effects on the financial statement of the variances between the regulatory basis of accounting described in Note 1 and accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, although not reasonably determinable, are presumed to be material and pervasive.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statement

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statement in accordance with accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the laws of Kentucky to demonstrate compliance with the Commonwealth of Kentucky's regulatory basis of accounting and budget laws. Management is also responsible for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of a financial statement that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Hardin County Sheriff's ability to continue as a going concern for twelve months beyond the financial statement date, including any currently known information that may raise substantial doubt shortly thereafter.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statement

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statement as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinions. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not an absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgement made by a reasonable user based on the financial statement.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS, we:

• Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.

• Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statement, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statement.

• Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Hardin County Sheriff's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.

• Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statement.

• Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Hardin County Sheriff's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

The Honorable Andy Beshear, Governor
Holly M. Johnson, Secretary
Finance and Administration Cabinet
The Honorable Keith Taul, Hardin County Judge/Executive
The Honorable John Ward, Hardin County Sheriff
Members of the Hardin County Fiscal Court

Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards

In accordance with Government Auditing Standards, we have also issued our report dated August 26, 2026, on our consideration of the Hardin County Sheriff's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements, and other matters. The purpose of that report is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards in considering the Hardin County Sheriff's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.*

Respectfully submitted,

Allison Ball
Auditor of Public Accounts
Frankfort, Ky

August 26, 2026

State law requires the Auditor of Public Accounts to annually audit fiscal courts, county clerks, and sheriffs; and print the results in a newspaper having general circulation in the county. The complete audit and any other audit of state agencies, fiscal courts, county clerks, sheriffs, and property valuation administrators may be viewed in the reports section of the Auditor of Public Accounts' website at auditor.ky.gov or upon request by calling 1-800-247-9126.