



NCTS Race Recap: Tyler Ankrum breaks 130-winless streak with victory at Rockingham

April 19, 2025

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**By Reid Spencer
NASCAR Wire Service**

ROCKINGHAM, N.C. — It had been so long since Tyler Ankrum won his first NASCAR CRAFTSMAN Truck Series race that the driver of the No. 18 McAnally-Hilgemann Chevrolet couldn't find Victory Lane after winning Friday's Black's Tire 200 at Rockingham Speedway.

After a prodigious effort at saving fuel, Ankrum coasted across the finish line 6.657 seconds ahead of pole winner and runner-up Jake Garcia to break a 130-race drought dating to July 11, 2019.

Ankrum's last win was so long ago that the track that gave him his maiden victory — Kentucky Speedway — has long since fallen off the NASCAR national series schedule.

In the series' return to "The Rock" after an 11-year absence, Ankrum had to battle back from damage sustained during an accident on Lap 2, an incident that put him a lap down. Ankrum got his lap back as the beneficiary under caution for Stage 2 break after Lap 90 and embarked on a heroic drive to the front.

The trophy wasn't the only reward Ankrum got for the victory. He also earned a \$50,000 check for winning the final Triple Truck Challenge race.

"It's strange — I didn't know where Victory Lane was at," Ankrum said after climbing from his truck. "The way this day started, going a lap down and (crew chief) Mark (Hillman) making a pit call to get the track position back..."

"Just saving fuel, man. I knew we were five (laps) short. I was hoping I had saved enough, and we did... I just found something there where I was pretty much lifting 60 percent down the straightaway, and I was able to draft off of (Matt) Crafton and a couple of other guys, and I was able to save that way.

"It's just surreal. I feel like this is pretty much the way it went down at Kentucky in 2019."

Ankrum took the lead for good on Lap 172 after Corey Heim and Gio Ruggiero came to pit road. The two TRICON Garage drivers stayed on the track during consecutive cautions early in the final stage and were running 1-2 before having to come to pit road for fuel.

Heim seemed confused by the strategy that kept him on the track while other top contenders pitted for the fuel they hoped would carry them to the end of the race.

"I felt like if we had the track position we would have been in really good shape from the very start," said Heim, who started 15th and finished eighth. "Just didn't have a good qualifying effort on my end. It was kind of an uphill battle from there all day.

"I didn't exactly know what happened there the last 40 laps there, but we pitted, and it seems like some of the other guys didn't run of fuel. Unfortunate. Just a weird deal in that last stage but have to be better on my part to qualify better and have the track position."

Even though the Front Row Motorsports Fords of Layne Riggs and Chandler Smith pitted after Heim's final stop, both ran short of fuel and had to bring their trucks to pit road in the closing laps.

Daniel Hemric, Rajah Caruth and Grant Enfinger benefited from the Fords' gas shortage, finishing third, fourth and fifth, respectively.

Trouble continued to follow reigning series champion Ty Majeski, whose truck broke loose from the inside lane in Turn 1 while he was racing Enfinger on Lap 109. Majeski's No. 98 ThorSport Ford backed into the outside wall and was eliminated from the race.

He finished 31st after a 13th-place run at Martinsville and a 33rd-place result at Bristol in the previous two races.

“I can’t really blame Grant,” Majeski said. “He held me tight, obviously took the air off my right side. Yeah, just embarrassed, honestly. These last three weeks isn’t who I am as a driver. I feel so bad for everybody at ThorSport—(owners) Duke and Rhonda (Thorson) — yeah, I just need to be better.”

Heim, who led a race-high 52 laps compared to 43 for Garcia and 29 for Ankrum, held the top spot in the series standings by 22 points over Chandler Smith and 62 points over Ankrum in third. Kaden Honeycutt, Jack Wood, Corey Heim, Connor Mosack and Gio Ruggiero finished sixth through 10th, respectively, in Saturday’s race.

NASCAR CRAFTSMAN Truck Series Race – Black’s Tire 200
Rockingham Speedway
Rockingham, North Carolina
Friday, April 18, 2025

1. (16) Tyler Ankrum, Chevrolet, 200.
2. (1) Jake Garcia, Ford, 200.
3. (17) Daniel Hemric, Chevrolet, 200.
4. (21) Rajah Caruth, Chevrolet, 200.
5. (19) Grant Enfinger, Chevrolet, 200.
6. (7) Kaden Honeycutt, Chevrolet, 200.
7. (24) Jack Wood, Chevrolet, 200.
8. (15) Corey Heim, Toyota, 199.
9. (4) Connor Mosack #, Chevrolet, 199.
10. (8) Giovanni Ruggiero #, Toyota, 199.
11. (5) Layne Riggs, Ford, 199.
12. (14) Andres Perez De Lara #, Chevrolet, 199.
13. (2) Chandler Smith, Ford, 199.
14. (28) Nathan Byrd, Chevrolet, 198.
15. (31) Spencer Boyd, Chevrolet, 198.
16. (11) Sammy Smith(i), Chevrolet, 197.
17. (29) Brandon Jones(i), Toyota, 196.
18. (27) Toni Breidinger #, Toyota, 196.
19. (25) Dawson Sutton #, Chevrolet, 196.
20. (6) Bayley Currey, Chevrolet, 195.
21. (26) Timmy Hill, Toyota, 195.
22. (18) Corey Day(i), Chevrolet, 194.
23. (30) Frankie Muniz #, Ford, 176.
24. (23) Matt Crafton, Ford, 156.
25. (22) Parker Kligerman, Chevrolet, Suspension, 147.
26. (12) Luke Fenhaus, Ford, Engine, 136.
27. (35) Cody Dennison, Ford, 131.

28. (10) Tanner Gray, Toyota, Accident, 117.
29. (20) Stewart Friesen, Toyota, Accident, 117.
30. (13) Matt Mills, Chevrolet, Accident, 117.
31. (9) Ty Majeski, Ford, Accident, 109.
32. (3) Ben Rhodes, Ford, Steering, 71.
33. (33) Stephen Mallozzi, Ford, Suspension, 41.
34. (32) Justin Carroll, Toyota, Too Slow, 34.
35. (34) Norm Benning, Chevrolet, Too Slow, 17.

Average Speed of Race Winner: 102.904 mph.

Time of Race: 1 Hrs, 49 Mins, 37 Secs. Margin of Victory: 6.657 Seconds.

Caution Flags: 5 for 33 laps.

Lead Changes: 11 among 9 drivers.

Lap Leaders: J. Garcia 1-43; L. Riggs 44-50; K. Honeycutt 51-55; G. Enfinger 56-70; K. Honeycutt 71-77; L. Riggs 78-94; C. Smith 95-115; D. Hemric 116; C. Smith 117-118; C. Heim 119-170; G. Ruggiero # 171; T. Ankrum 172-200.

Leaders Summary (Driver, Times Lead, Laps Led): Corey Heim 1 time for 52 laps; Jake Garcia 1 time for 43 laps; Tyler Ankrum 1 time for 29 laps; Layne Riggs 2 times for 24 laps; Chandler Smith 2 times for 23 laps; Grant Enfinger 1 time for 15 laps; Kaden Honeycutt 2 times for 12 laps; Daniel Hemric 1 time for 1 lap; Giovanni Ruggiero # 1 time for 1 lap.

Stage #1 Top Ten: 34,13,45,38,11,17,98,15,07,66

Stage #2 Top Ten: 34,45,13,38,11,98,9,17,75,15

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