



4



KEVIN HARVICK: Driver, No. 4 Chevrolet

Birthdate: Dec. 8, 1975
Hometown: Bakersfield, California
Residence: Charlotte, North Carolina
Spouse: DeLana
Children: Keelan Paul

In his 14th season in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series, Kevin Harvick made 2014 his own. In his first year as the driver of the No. 4 Budweiser/Jimmy John's Chevrolet SS for Stewart-Haas Racing (SHR), Harvick won the 2014 Sprint Cup title in convincing fashion. It began with a dominating preseason test at Charlotte (N.C.) Motor Speedway and ended with an emphatic victory in the season finale at Homestead-Miami Speedway.

With a new team built from scratch by crew chief Rodney Childers, Harvick won five races, tying his season-best effort. He won a career-high eight poles, two more than he scored in his 13 previous seasons *combined*. He led 2,137 laps, becoming only the third driver to lead more than 2,000 laps in a single season since 2000. The most laps Harvick led in a single Sprint Cup season prior to 2014 was 895 laps in 2006. Of the 24 track qualifying records set during the 2014 Sprint Cup season, Harvick accounted for six of them. No other driver had more than four. Lastly, the title allowed Harvick to become only the third driver to earn both a Sprint Cup championship and a NASCAR Xfinity Series championship, joining Bobby Labonte and Brad Keselowski. Harvick is a two-time Xfinity Series champion (2001 and 2006).

After finishing among the top-five in the Sprint Cup championship standings six times prior to 2014 – his previous career-high point finish was third, which he did three times (2010, 2011 and 2013) – Harvick now enjoys a title he's never had before: reigning NASCAR Sprint Cup Series champion.

While the title is new, the championship-caliber effort Harvick displays is not. The Bakersfield, California-native has 28 career Sprint Cup victories, including wins in such crown-jewel events as the Daytona 500 at Daytona (Fla.) International Speedway, the Brickyard 400 at Indianapolis Motor Speedway and the Southern 500 at Darlington (S.C.) Raceway. Long before 2014, Harvick had proven to be an elite driver in NASCAR's elite series.

In addition to his impressive performance on the Sprint Cup side, Harvick has two Xfinity Series championships, 44 Xfinity Series wins and 14 NASCAR Camping World Truck Series victories.

Harvick's drive to win was set into motion at age 5 thanks to a go-kart he received from his parents for his kindergarten graduation. After gaining experience in his go-kart, Harvick began racing at local tracks at age 7. For 10 years he was a force on the karting circuit, earning seven national championships and two Grand National championships.

With an impressive resume of wins in the karting ranks, Harvick made the move to full-bodied stock cars in 1992. He competed at local racetracks in the Late Model division and in 1993, won the Late Model track championship at his hometown track, Mesa Marin Speedway in Bakersfield.

When not wrestling a stock car, Harvick competed on the wrestling team at Bakersfield's North High School. Upon graduation, Harvick followed his dreams and pursued a professional racing career.

He advanced to the NASCAR Featherlite Southwest Tour full-time in 1995, earning Rookie of the Year honors and finishing 11th in points. Harvick also made his first career Camping World Truck Series start on Oct. 15, 1995 at Mesa Marin where he started and finished 27th in his family-owned No. 72 truck.

Harvick drove four more Camping World Truck Series races for his family-owned team in 1996, but in 1997 he took over the wheel of the No. 75 Spears Motorsports entry in the Camping World Truck Series for the second half of the season, scoring two top-10 finishes.

In 1998, Harvick kept a busy racing schedule as he drove the Spears truck full-time in the Camping World Truck Series while also competing full-time in the NASCAR K&N Pro Series West. Harvick's commitment to his racing career paid off as he won five races en route to the K&N Pro Series West championship.

Harvick moved to Jim Herrick Racing in 1999 and drove the No. 98 truck to 11 top-10 finishes and a 12th-place point standing in the Camping World Truck Series.

Harvick's hard-charging style and success behind the wheel caught the eye of NASCAR team owner Richard Childress. Harvick was selected as the driver of Richard Childress Racing's No. 2 Chevrolet in the Xfinity Series for the 2000 season.

In his first full season, Harvick scored three wins and finished third in the championship while claiming Rookie of the Year honors. Along the way, he gained a reputation for being aggressive on the track, but off track his affable attitude and ever-present smile earned him the nickname "Happy."

Harvick was to compete full-time in the Xfinity Series in 2001 while making select Sprint Cup starts, driving Childress' No. 30 Chevrolet. But his career path was forever altered on Feb. 18, 2001 when Hall of Fame driver Dale Earnhardt lost his life in an accident on the final lap of the Daytona 500.

Following the tragedy, Childress appointed Harvick to drive the famed GM Goodwrench Chevrolet – renumbered from No. 3 to No. 29 – on a full-time basis beginning with the series' second race at North Carolina Speedway in Rockingham while simultaneously competing for the Xfinity Series championship.

Harvick quickly proved he was up to the daunting task of following a legend when, in his third Sprint Cup start, he scored his first win on March 11 at Atlanta Motor Speedway. As the season continued, so did Harvick's winning ways as he claimed the checkered flag in the inaugural race at Chicagoland Speedway in Joliet, Illinois. He earned Rookie of the Year honors en route to a ninth-place finish in the season-ending Sprint Cup point standings.

In addition to his success at the Sprint Cup level, Harvick scored five wins in the Xfinity Series that season as he claimed his first Xfinity Series championship.

Harvick set records in 2001 as he became the first driver in NASCAR history to compete full-time in the Sprint Cup Series and Xfinity Series. He also became the first driver to earn the Sprint Cup Rookie of the Year title while also claiming the NASCAR Xfinity Series championship.

Harvick's strong performance during his rookie season in Sprint Cup earned him a spot competing against all-star drivers from a variety of racing disciplines in the International Race of Champions (IROC), and the young driver did not disappoint. He scored a victory at Auto Club Speedway in Fontana, California, and tallied four top-10 finishes in the four-race series, which led him to the 2002 IROC title.

Harvick's second season in Sprint Cup produced his first Sprint Cup pole in July 2002 at Daytona (Fla.) International Speedway and a second consecutive victory at Chicagoland Speedway.

While hitting his stride in the Sprint Cup Series, Harvick started another venture. He fielded his own team in five Camping World Truck Series races in 2002. Harvick's team posted four top-10 finishes in five races and scored a victory in November at Phoenix International Raceway. It was Harvick's first Truck Series win and his first win in his equipment – signaling the beginning of Kevin Harvick, Inc. (KHI).

In 2003, Harvick became the first driver to win the Brickyard 400 at Indianapolis Motor Speedway from the pole position. Harvick posted 11 top-fives and 18 top-10s and finished the season fifth in points. Harvick also scored three Xfinity Series victories and one Camping World Truck Series win.

While Harvick was winless in Sprint Cup in 2004, he went to victory lane twice in the Xfinity Series. In 2005, Harvick earned one Sprint Cup win and four Xfinity Series wins.

Harvick enjoyed a breakout year in 2006, winning five races and scoring 20 top-10s en route to a fourth-place finish in the Sprint Cup championship. That same season, Harvick was on fire in the Xfinity Series, in which he competed full-time and earned his second title with nine victories, 23 top-fives and 32 top-10s.

He continued his winning ways in 2007 by edging veteran driver Mark Martin by .020 of a second to win the season-opening Daytona 500. Later that year, he scored another huge victory as he won the non-points NASCAR Sprint All-Star Race at Charlotte (N.C.) Motor Speedway and took home the \$1 million prize. He finished the season 10th in points.

Harvick also racked up six Xfinity Series victories in 2007. But Harvick the owner enjoyed the most success in 2007 as KHI earned its first Camping World Truck Series championship with driver Ron Hornaday Jr.

While Harvick didn't reach victory lane in the Sprint Cup Series in 2008, he produced strong enough performances to once again make the Chase for the NASCAR Sprint Cup before finishing fourth in the season-ending standings. He also earned a win in the Truck Series at Phoenix.

Harvick started the 2009 season with a win in the non-points Budweiser Shootout at Daytona, but he didn't get back to victory lane the rest of the year. He finished the season with nine top-10 finishes. While Harvick the driver didn't have the best season on track, Harvick scored his second Truck Series championship with Hornaday.

The 2010 season began just like 2009 – with a Harvick victory in the Budweiser Shootout. But that was the only similarity between the two campaigns. Harvick led the 2010 Sprint Cup standings for 20 weeks and battled for the series championship right through the season finale at Homestead-Miami Speedway. He finished third in the standings with three victories, 16 top-fives and 26 top-10s.

Harvick finished third in points for the second consecutive season in 2011 by scoring four wins, nine top-fives and 19 top-10s. He also celebrated KHI's third Camping World Truck Series owners' championship. It signaled the end of an era, however, as KHI ceased operations following the 2011 season.

While Harvick's 2012 season saw him score just a single victory, it was perhaps his most memorable year as Harvick and his wife, DeLana, welcomed their first child – Keelan Paul Harvick.

Harvick's focus was undeterred in 2013 despite announcing he and Childress would part ways at the end of the season. He established himself as a contender for the championship and amassed four victories, including one from the pole at Kansas Speedway in Kansas City. He scored nine top-fives and 21 top-10s while finishing third in points.

In addition to being a racer, Harvick is a dedicated philanthropist. He and DeLana formed the Kevin Harvick Foundation (KHF) in 2010 to support programs that positively enrich the lives of children throughout the United States.

Harvick resides in Charlotte, North Carolina, and in his spare time, enjoys golfing and hunting.

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