



AP Photo/Butch Dill
Bob Jenkins, owner of Front Row Motorsports and Co-Owner Michael Jordan, of 23XI Racing, pose before a NASCAR Cup Series auto race at Talladega Superspeedway, Oct. 6, 2024, in Talladega, Ala.

NASCAR says Jordan antitrust suit is to force permanent charter

BY JENNA FRYER
AP AUTO RACING WRITER

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — NASCAR argued in its latest court filing that Michael Jordan is suing the stock car series to earn a permanent charter that no other teams possess, and that neither 23XI Racing nor Front Row Motorsports has suffered any harm by racing as “open” entries.

NASCAR also indicated in its 34-page response filed late Monday that it has buyers interested in the six charters that have been set aside as a federal judge decides if the two teams can have them back for the remaining 11 races of this season. NASCAR is prepared to immediately begin the process of allocating the charters elsewhere.

These latest arguments are part of the ongoing federal antitrust lawsuit filed by 23XI and Front Row against NASCAR in a fight over charters, which are essentially franchise tags. 23XI, owned by basketball Hall of Famer Michael Jordan and three-time Daytona 500 winner Denny Hamlin, and Front Row, owned by entrepreneur Bob Jenkins, were the only two organizations out of 15 not to sign extensions on new charter agreements.

All the teams were fighting to have the charters made permanent during more than two years of extension negotiations, but NASCAR refused and its final offer was a seven-year extension with an additional seven-year

option beyond that. 23XI and Front Row won a temporary injunction to be recognized as chartered as the case heads toward a Dec. 1 trial date.

The injunction was eventually overturned and appealed by the teams. U.S. District Judge Kenneth Bell will hear arguments Aug. 28 on the matter. 23XI and Front Row as “open” teams do not receive the same financial percentages as chartered teams.

NASCAR asked in the filing that 23XI and Front Row return all money they were paid when they were recognized as chartered teams this season. NASCAR said the money would be redistributed to the 30 current chartered teams.

A rulebook change in July after the chartered status was stripped from the two organizations ensured that the six cars aren’t in danger of not qualifying for a race; starting spots are guaranteed to the 36 chartered cars in every 40-car field.

“Mr. Jordan has said he wants to use the litigation to grant him a permanent Charter that no other team has,” NASCAR alleged.

23XI and Front Row have maintained they will continue to race even if they must do so as open teams. NASCAR has argued that when the two organizations did not sign the extensions they lost all rights to charters and the sanctioning body should be free to move them.

“Plaintiffs’ theoretical

inability to obtain Charters post-trial also does not justify NASCAR from selling or transferring Charters, because Plaintiffs do not have Charters now because of their own strategic choice,” NASCAR said in its filing. “Plaintiffs had multiple opportunities to acquire 2025 Charters, and they squandered them.”

NASCAR also argued that a court cannot order the private company into a partnership with teams it is not interested in doing business with. Another argument by NASCAR is that 23XI and Front Row have not been harmed by not being chartered because their drivers have not left the team and the rule change protects them from missing races; Tyler Reddick of 23XI has clauses in his contract that he can leave if his car is not chartered.

Additionally, NASCAR said it pays teams a higher percentage than even Formula 1 does and that its payout structure to teams proves it is not a monopoly because it was increased first by 28% in the 2016 charter agreement, and then by 62% in the 2025 agreement.

“NASCAR pays Teams more than even Formula 1 as a percentage of profit,” NASCAR said. “Plaintiffs ignore the pay raises the Teams received. Instead, they focus on a text during negotiations for the 2025 Charter that said an internal version of the May 2024 draft contained ‘zero wins’ for Teams.

29 Kentucky players in the NFL ahead of roster cuts

BY JOSH EDWARDS
CATS PAUSE

The deadline for NFL teams to trim their rosters from 90 to 53 players is Tuesday, Aug. 26 at 4 p.m. ET. Kentucky currently has 29 players scattered across the league, but quarterback Will Levis’ future has already been determined with the Titans. Levis is on the Injured Reserve, which means he is done for the season. Lions edge rusher Josh Paschal is on the Lions’ active-non football injury list, but could still be activated for the season.

Wildcats are currently represented on 21 NFL rosters, but there are varied levels of safety. For example, the Jaguars are not going to move on from edge rusher Josh Hines-Allen after signing him to a lucrative contract extension whereas offensive tackle Marques Cox has a steeper hill to climb.

Here are the UK players currently on an NFL roster:

TE Brenden Bates, Browns
CB Brandin Echols, Steelers
QB Devin Leary, Ravens
EDGE Josh Hines-Allen, Jaguars
OG Luke Fortner, Saints
OT Landon Young, Saints

UK SPORTS



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- IOL Eli Cox, Texans
RB Ray Davis, Bills
CB Maxwell Hairston, Bills
DT Deone Walker, Bills
LB Jamin Davis, Jets
QB Will Levis, Titans (Injured Reserve)
S Mike Edwards, Chiefs
OT Marques Cox, Broncos
S Keidron Smith, Broncos
S Lonnie Johnson, Raiders
EDGE Bud Dupree, Chargers
EDGE Josh Paschal, Lions (Active/Non-Football Injury)
LB Jamon Johnson, Packers
CB Carrington Valentine, Packers
LB Trevin Wallace, Panthers
EDGE J.J. Weaver, Panthers
CB Dru Phillips, Giants
WR WanDale Robinson, Giants
OL Darian Kinnard, Eagles
CB Zion Childress, Cowboys
- RB Chris Rodriguez Jr., Commanders
DT Quinton Bohanna, Seahawks
LB D’Eryk Jackson, Seahawks
The Dallas Morning News recently reported that Childress could push for a starting spot with the Cowboys. The former UK cornerback is said to have been impressing in training camp.
“An undrafted free agent rookie out of Kentucky, Childress has worked with the first-team defense in training camp, and if he’s able to handle the nickel corner spot, it would allow DaRon Bland to remain on the outside.”
Johnson suffered a broken leg in training camp. The team has not provided an official designation or timeline for his return, but is expected to miss some time.
There has not been a lot of buzz about Kentucky’s other undrafted free agents and their respective bids to make the 53-man roster.

LOWE

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points, 10 rebounds, and 10 assists.

Ranked as the No. 36 overall transfer in the portal and No. 10 point guard according to 247Sports, only 15 players in college basketball last season scored more points operating out of ball screens last season.

“He’s a lightning quick, get wherever he wants on the court leader. He’s an elite level play maker off ball screens. He can fling the

ball everywhere on the court, make every pass,” Pope said. “He was our leading 3-point field goal percentage shooter in 5-on-5 competition this summer at almost 42% and so we’re incredibly excited about what we believe he’s going to do in terms of efficiency. We think he’s going to make a massive jump. He’s been special for us.”

Pope said Lowe also has an important trait that every great point guard must possess: being a vocal leader.

“He actually has

the beautiful skill of not being overly concerned whether people like him in any given moment. That’s actually a really important skill as a leader,” Pope said. “Sometimes you gotta be a truth teller, sometimes you gotta hold people accountable and for those of us who are born pleasers, that can be really challenging. There’s no fear in him to be like, this is how it is. If you like it or don’t like it, doesn’t matter, it’s just the truth. He’s stepped up as a great leader for us.”

WCHS

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Webster returned to the Murray area Monday, falling at Calloway County, 4-0. Statistics for

the game were not available at press time Tuesday.

The Trojans travel to 6th District foe Henderson County tonight, then wrap up the road swing Tuesday at Lyon County.

The Lady Trojans play at Muhlenberg County tonight, then return home to face 6th District rival Union County on Monday. Tuesday sends WCHS to Caldwell County.

FEDEX

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outside the top 20 in the FedEx Cup, happy and deserving to be at East Lake.

Twelve players at East Lake did well enough to get here without winning. If they win, are they the season-long FedEx Cup champion?

Even with a half-dozen changes to the post-season format dating to 2007, the best player didn’t always win the FedEx Cup.

McIlroy won two majors and a World Golf Championship in 2014 and didn’t win it. The three times he did win the FedEx Cup, McIlroy was never at the top of the points list throughout the entire post-season until he delivered the goods at East Lake.

Scheffler was among those adamant about

Play great all year and East Lake is a lock, which is why Rory McIlroy was able to skip the first postseason event. Some played well enough that even a bad start in the postseason didn’t keep them from advancing to the BMW Championship. Do just enough to be among the top 70 who get into the postseason and there is no margin for error.

changing from “starting strokes,” which gave the No. 1 seed — him each of the last three years — at least a two-shot lead over the field before the tournament started. It still took him the third try to finally win it.

He was in favor of giving up an advantage at a tournament where he has never posted the low 72-hole score and finished out of the top 10 in three of his five appearances. But Scheffler and others felt strongly that giving all 30 players the same chance is the way to identify the FedEx Cup champion.

“When you look at the FedEx Cup, I think it’s a

greater discussion,” he said. “If you’re going to have a true season-long race — truly the best player every year wins — odds are it’s not going to come to an interesting of a conclusion in most years.”

In other words, the race already would be over at this point.

“In order to win the FedEx Cup, you have to play good golf at the right time,” he said. “In our sport, in order to accomplish what you want to accomplish, you have to play good golf at the right time. If you want to win major championships, you have to play great golf major championship weeks.”

That’s where the clarity comes in.

The Tour Championship, which identifies the FedEx Cup champion, is no different from playing a major championship. That’s when players want to be at their best. Scheffler was at Quail Hollow and Royal Portrush. He wasn’t at Augusta National or Oakmont.

“Once you get to the Tour Championship, you’ve had a great season,” Scheffler said. “And now you have an opportunity to go out and win the FedEx Cup. But you have to play good golf at the right time.”

What hasn’t changed

since the FedEx Cup began in 2007 is rewarding consistently good golf with an emphasis at the end of the year.

Play great all year and East Lake is a lock, which is why McIlroy was able to skip the first postseason event. Some played well enough that even a bad start in the postseason didn’t keep them from advancing to the BMW Championship. Do just enough to be among the top 70 who get into the post-season and there is no margin for error.

And then at East Lake, bring your best.

“I think a lot of times the media is always looking for something where we’re looking for a perfect finish to the year,” Scheffler said. “Look at what LIV is doing with their final tournament. I tried to read about it the other day — I still can’t figure out what they’re trying

to do with the final tournament. It’s not easy to figure out a true season-long race.

“And I think when you’re looking for an interesting finish to the year, I think we’ve got it down pretty good where you have 25, 30 weeks to prove yourself to get into the Tour Championship and then it’s game on.”

The season-long points race is not for the FedEx Cup. Scheffler won that, and he already has been rewarded with \$15 million in bonus money.

The race is for the opportunity.

“I don’t care who you are, it’s hard to get into this top 30,” Harris English said. “You’ve had a hell of a year if you’ve made it this far. I like it that everyone starts at zero. This is a culmination of getting everyone to square one, the top 30 guys. Now go get it.”