



Uphill battle: Rookie Jennifer Jo Cobb eyes Nationwide prize

By [Seth Livingstone](#), USA TODAY

Posted 14h 47m ago | 4 | 4

Share

[Reprints & Permissions](#)

Last time the Nationwide Series took the track, [Danica Patrick](#) made history with her fourth-place finish in Las Vegas, becoming the highest-finishing female ever in one of NASCAR's national series events.

Jennifer Jo Cobb was just hoping for a top-20 finish. Instead, she got caught up behind a [Kyle Busch](#) wreck and demolished her car — her one and only car.

Disappointed as she was, Cobb still has a distinction Patrick does not. Last year she became NASCAR's highest placing woman in a season series, finishing 17th in [Camping World](#) Truck Series points.

She opened this season with a sixth-place truck finish at Daytona. Even then she had her eyes on a higher prize. Cobb intends to run the entire Nationwide Series with a clearly stated goal — to win Rookie of the Year honors in that series.

Problem is, it's an uphill battle.

STANDINGS: [Nationwide Series points leaders](#)
VIDEO: [Kyle Busch previews Sprint Cup race at Bristol](#)

"The car can be fixed and will be ready for Bristol (this week)," Cobb said after her Las Vegas tangle with fellow rookie contender Timmy Hill. "No plans for the purchase of another car. When you're with a team that doesn't have the resources the some of the larger teams do have, you have to work twice as hard when you have a setback. We won't let it stop us from going forward."

Cobb, who ran her own truck team last season, has combined with owner Rick Russell and 2nd Chance

Motorsports for her Nationwide campaign. Her Ford Mustang has Roush-Yates power and benefits from an informal alliance with other Ford teams running the Nationwide series.

Still, there's no backup car and little room for error.

"We focus on working with what we've got," Cobb says. "Our goal is to be Nationwide

By Ross D. Franklin, AP

Jennifer Jo Cobb slides into her car prior to qualifying for the Feb. 26 Nationwide Series race at Phoenix International Raceway. Cobb finished 32nd after qualifying last.

Ads by Google

Nascar Tickets

Showtime Southern 500 at Darlington Raceway. Tickets from \$35 to \$99.

[DarlingtonRaceway.com](#)

Danica Patrick Honda Film

Watch now to discover the upside of failure through Danica Patrick.

[www.honda.com](#)

NHRA 4 Wide Nationals

NHRA 60th Anniversary ticket deal 2 tickets and 2 shirts for \$60

[www.ticketmaster.com](#)

Recommended videos



Japanese in America

Woman shares her earthquake perspective.



Medicine

Americans race to buy anti-radiation pills.



Japan

Quake clouds future of nuclear power.

[More videos](#)

Learn more »

Do you have high cholesterol and plaque in your heart's arteries?

303-356340
Advertisement

Most Popular

Stories

Union or not, NFLPA still could face sanction...

Bracket tips: Your one-stop shop for NCAA...

Adrian Peterson: Players' place in NFL like...

Videos

Expert: Too early to criticize Japan nuke crisis

Japanese in America earthquake perspective

Japan crisis puts financial markets on edge

Photos

2011 NCAA tournament

2010 NCAA tournament

2010-11 Miami Heat season

Most Popular E-mail Newsletter

Sign up to get:

Top viewed stories, photo galleries and community posts of the day

Most popular right now:

[Joke's on those who joke about Japan](#)



Rookie of the Year, build respect and show people that despite not having big bucks, we can compete respectfully. Then, hopefully, those bucks will eventually come and we can compete for wins."

She says she has no regrets about not running for truck points after faring so well in the first race of the season.

"This (Nationwide) is where we need to be," Cobb says. "I know it was a good move. It would be really cool to be so high up in truck points, but we were just not going to be able to survive another full season without being to able to share our resources with 2nd Chance Motorsports."

Cobb says she's grateful for the respect she's received from competitors, officials and fans on the truck circuit and hopes to gain the same in Nationwide.

"On the respect meter in the Camping World Truck Series, I feel like we're in good shape," she says. "On the Nationwide side, we're starting from ground zero. You have to earn that all over again."

Crew chief Steve Kuykendall, who was chief wrench for Cobb's truck team last year, seems convinced Cobb is on the right track.

"Right now is her time," Kuykendall says. "She was very raw when she started but now, she has the ability to tell me everything that's happening with the car. She's proven that if we can get to where we consistently have the right equipment, she can race with the big guys."

Cobb, a 37-year-old Kansas City, Mo., is also trying to make an impact off the track. She's teamed with the U.S. Army's Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command to recognize women in the military and offer two of them (and their families) a behind-the-scenes experience at her races.

"I get a lot of attention for being a female in an all-male-dominated environment and I want to deflect some of that attention to women who are most-deserving

*For more information about [reprints & permissions](#), visit our [FAQ's](#). To report corrections and clarifications, contact Standards Editor **Brent Jones**. For publication consideration in the newspaper, send comments to letters@usatoday.com. Include name, phone number, city and state for verification. To view our corrections, go to corrections.usatoday.com.*

Posted 14h 47m ago

[Share](#)

You might also be interested in:

[Adrian Peterson: Players' place in NFL like 'modern-day slavery'](#) (USATODAY.com in The Huddle)

[Southwest region:](#) (USATODAY.com in Sports)

[Union or not, NFLPA still could face sanction from NLRB](#) (USATODAY.com in Sports)

[World: Radiation halts work at Japanese nuclear plant \[includes video\]](#) (USATODAY.com in News)

Selected for you by a sponsor:

[The 40 Worst Cheaters in Sports History](#) (Bleacher Report)

We've updated the Conversation Guidelines. Changes include a brief review of the moderation process and an explanation on how to use the "Report Abuse" button. [Read more.](#)

What Do You Think?

To leave a comment, you need to sign up.

[Sign up](#)

[Log in](#)



Sign up for USA TODAY E-mail newsletters

All of your bracket needs in one place



Play March Mania online or Mobile Hoopla on your phone; print out brackets, get expert tips.

SPORTS: [College basketball](#)

