



The Race: Whelen Made in America 300

The Place: Martinsville (Va.) Speedway

The Date: Saturday, Sept. 20

The Time: 3:30 p.m. ET

TV Schedule:

Track Layout: Half-mile paved oval

Race Purse: \$137,420

2007 Winner: L.W. Miller

2007 Pole: Brian Loftin

Rk	Driver	Points
1	Brian Loftin	1,265
2	L.W. Miller	1,233
3	Tim Brown	1,230
4	Burt Myers	1,228
5	Jason Myers	1,140
6	Andy Seuss	1,131
7	Frank Fleming	1,126
8	Brian King	1,117
9	G. Brunnhoelzl	1,060
10	John Smith	1,000

Schedule:
Saturday:
Practice: 9:30-11:00 a.m.
Time Trials: 12:30 p.m.

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- Four Drivers Head To Martinsville In Championship Hunt
- Twenty-Three Years Since Bryant's Historical Win
- Updated Special Award Standings



CLOSE QUARTERS RACING: NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified Tour driver **Brian King** (No. 17) races side-by-side with **Tim Brown** in last year's Whelen Made in America 300 at Martinsville Speedway.

Four Drivers Enter Martinsville With Championship Hopes

One of the biggest stories heading into Saturday afternoon's Whelen Made in America 300 at the famed Martinsville Speedway is the four-man race for the NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified Tour championship.

Last Saturday night at Southern National Raceway Park, current championship leader **Brian Loftin** suffered electrical problems early in the race with his **No. 23 L&R Transmission/QMF Solutions Chevrolet**.

The Lexington, N.C., driver would see a large chunk of his points lead disappear with his last-place finish, while the top three drivers chasing Loftin in the championship standings gained valuable ground.

Loftin entered the event with a 79-point lead over defending champion **L.W. Miller**. Loftin's lead over Miller, who finished third, was cut to a mere 42 points.

Burt Myers, fourth in points, won the race to move within 37 of Loftin with three races remaining.

"Our results last Saturday night really set us back

a good bit," Loftin said. "To be honest, I'm not sure that's such a bad thing because now we can just go out and win races and let the points standings fall where they fall.

"I was talking to one of my crew members on the way home from Southern National and I told him it takes a lot of fun out of it when you start worrying about where you finish in the points, instead of my style of racing where I try as hard as I can to win every week and don't worry about anything other than winning races.

"It bothered me more giving up a chance to win another one of these races than losing the amount of points we did. It's still pretty much our championship to lose because our destiny is in our hands. At this point we just have to go out and do the best we can do and try to win each of these three races we have left to go this season."

For Miller, last Saturday's race was an evening of redemption from an 18th-place finish on Sept. 6 at

(Continued on page 3)



Brian Loftin



L.W. Miller



News & Notes



• **The Race:** This event is the ninth of 11 races on the NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified Tour schedule. It will be the only appearance for the series at Martinsville (Va.) Speedway this year.

• **The Procedure:** The starting field is 43 cars, including provisionals. The first 25 cars will qualify through two-lap time trials. The remaining eight spots will be awarded through the provisional process. The race will be 300 laps (150 miles).

• **Tour History at Martinsville:** This Saturday's Whelen Made in America 300 at Martinsville Speedway marks the fourth Whelen Southern Modified Tour combination race with the popular northern-based Whelen Modified Tour since going under the NASCAR banner in 2005.

So far, the Whelen Modified Tour drivers have a stranglehold on Victory Lane at Martinsville as they have won every event to date. Last year, Donnia Lia won at Martinsville. Lia is currently driving in the NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series.

• **The Winners:** The Whelen Made in America 300 is a unique race with two different winners celebrating wins. The top finishing driver in the NASCAR Whelen Modified and NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified tours will be credited with wins. Points are awarded to drivers based on their finish versus other drivers in their series.

Jay Foley was the top-finishing driver in the NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified Tour in 2005. Tim Brown claimed top honors in 2006, while L.W. Miller finished third overall and was credited with the win in 2008.

Southern Modified Drivers Look To End Martinsville Winless Streak

It has been a long, long, long time since a Southern driver won a NASCAR Modified event at Martinsville Speedway.

It's been 23 years to be exact, since a Southern driver rolled one of the sleek, powerful Modifieds into Victory Lane at Martinsville.

The last Southern winner? Johnny Bryant, driving a baby blue 1984 Chevrolet Cavalier. He won the 200-lap Modified portion of the 1985 Winn-Dixie 500.

The Modifieds return to Martinsville Speedway this Saturday afternoon with the running of the Whelen Made In America 300. The race is a combination event between the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour and the NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified Tour.

Bryant's win was an upset of unprecedented proportions, maybe the biggest surprise victory in the 61-year history of Martinsville Speedway. Bryant was driving for Riggs Racing, based just a few miles from Martinsville Speedway. It was an under-funded, family operation short on dollars but long on love of the sport.

How under-funded was the team?

They were probably the only team without two-way radios that day. They communicated with Bryant the old-fashioned way: with a chalk board held up on pit road. They had competed in only a handful of races prior to the event.

Ironically, they didn't qualify for the spring Martinsville race that year, but were given a "promoter's option" berth in the field by Martinsville Speedway founder H. Clay Earles. But you couldn't have convinced anyone on the team they were underdogs before the race started that fall afternoon.

"I actually thought we had a chance to win," said Jeff Riggs, who was a 23-year-old tire-changer for the team in 1985. Today he is listed as the team's owner, but still has to answer to his

father, family patriarch and team founder David Riggs.

"When we got up that Sunday morning, I asked my wife where she was going to sit. She said on the backstretch. I asked her how she was going to get to Victory Lane. She laughed and said she'd be there. Well, we got there and she didn't."

Much has happened to the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour since 1985. The tour will celebrate its 500th race at Martinsville Saturday, and will be joined by the NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified Tour, which was added three years ago.

And it should come as no surprise that the Riggs Racing team has won two out of the three NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified championships to date.

The Riggs team won those two championships with veteran Junior Miller, but this year have a Northerner, young Andy Seuss, behind the wheel.

While the changes have been great in Modified racing since 1985, one thing remains the same: winning at Martinsville Speedway is the Holy Grail of Modified racing. And according to one Southerner who has celebrated in victory lane at Martinsville Speedway, you don't have to be from above the Mason-Dixie Line to win a Modified race on the tough half-mile.

"Absolutely, Southern teams have a chance in this race. I believe that more so now than ever," said Riggs. "It's a lot of good equipment down here now and there are plenty of good drivers."

Tickets for the Made In America Whelen 300 are \$25. Children five to 12 years old are \$5. Tickets may be purchased by calling 1.877.RACE.TIX or visiting www.martinsvillespeedway.com.

The race is scheduled to start at 3:30 p.m.

Martinsville Speedway To Host Whelen Modified Tour's 500th Race

When the green flag drops on the Made In America Whelen 300 on Saturday, Sept. 20 at Martinsville (Va.) Speedway, it will be a historic marker on the timeline of the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour: the 500th race.

Formed with the purpose of formalizing the procedure to crown a Modified champion, the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour's first race took place at Thompson (Conn.) International Speedway on March 31, 1985. Fittingly, it was Richie Evans, who is widely considered to be the greatest Modified driver of all-time, that took the checkered flag in the first race.



"To be part of the 500th race is going to be quite a feat," Flemke said. "It's going to be really special to be a part of that – the 500th – that's a pretty big number."

2008 SUNOCO ROOKIE OF THE YEAR STANDINGS

Driver	Points
1. Rich Kuiken Jr.	67
2. Buddy Emory	65
3. Scott Rigney	64
4. Zach Brewer	39



Top Southern Modified Tour Drivers Say Martinsville Will Play Vital Role In 2008 Championship Outcome

Caraway (N.C.) Speedway.

"We took a pretty good beating in the points a couple of weeks ago at Caraway," Miller said. "We had a lot of bad luck despite having a very good car. I thought that race would have knocked us out of any chance to win the championship this year. Brian Loftin had his problems last Saturday night and that ended up being a huge race for us.

"We had a good car and finished third while Brian Loftin had a really bad night. It not only let me but also **Tim Brown** and **Burt Myers** get right back in the thick of it. Right now there are four guys who have a great shot at the championship. I think these final three races are going to make things interesting for everybody involved."

The first of the three final NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified races is this weekend's 300-miler at Martinsville, followed by back-to-back events at Caraway.

All the drivers admit that Martinsville race is their biggest event of the year, both from the length and prestige factor.

Miller is only one NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified driver who has won the overall Made in America 300 at Martinsville, though the Dushore, Pa., native won the 2002 edition as a northern driver (prior to the formation of the NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified Tour).

"As good as all four of us are running right now and as competitive as the Southern Modified Tour is right now, I think all four of us at the top of the points standings are going to have a chance at going to Victory Lane this weekend," said Miller, who has Martinsville victory as the top-finishing NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified driver in last year's event. "To have a chance at winning Martinsville again is awesome. We were third last year, so if we can get a little bit better this year, we have a good chance at pulling the victory off. It's going to make for a fun weekend of racing."

"It's pretty neat knowing that the Whelen Southern Modified drivers are really and truly going to get the chance to shine this weekend."

Loftin agrees with the assessment of Miller in that the fact the top-finishing Southern Modified gets credit and points for winning their portion of the race, but also agrees it's not the same as being the first driver in the 43-car field to take the checked flag.

The last time a Southern driver won at Martinsville was 23 years ago when Johnny Bryant scored the victory.



Burt Myers' win last week at Southern National Raceway Park put him back in the title hunt. Myers is fourth in points, only 37 behind the leader, **Brian Loftin**. (Kevin Thorne/NASCAR)

"I'm in the same boat as several Southern Modified Tour drivers because none of us have been able to win at Martinsville and go to Victory Lane," Loftin said. "The format of the combination race at Martinsville with the Whelen Modified Tour is a little different because there are actually two race winners. If a Whelen Modified Tour driver wins the overall race like they have the past few years, then the top-finishing Southern Modified driver gets credited with a win and the points that go along with it. It's really a race within a race because of the format."

Brown won the 2006 NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified portion at Martinsville. He is the first to admit that it's a nice statistic to have by his name even though he didn't get to have the chance to celebrate the true outright victory.

Brown says that while posting a solid finish at Martinsville is a huge task in his eyes, he's keeping focused on the final three races that will determine this year's championship. He's in contention despite early season troubles which would seemingly knock him and his **No. 83 Hayes Jewelers Chevrolet** out of title contention.

"I never gave up because I knew in my heart that I still had a chance to win the championship," Brown said. "I made up more than 150 points on Junior Miller a couple of years ago, so I knew I could do it again. You can't ever give up. Unfortunately for Brian Loftin, his problems from the other night allowed me and a couple of the other guys to get right back into the thick of this year's championship race. I believe that it's

going to come down to who has the least amount of bad luck."

Brown says that Loftin's problems have helped back up his motto of not giving up until all is said and done.

"We just never quit or gave up and we've been able to chip away at the amount of points we lost earlier in the year just a little bit each week," said Brown, who won two weeks ago at Caraway Speedway. "Brian Loftin has really had the car to beat this year because he and that team have been so consistent all year long until they had an electrical problem early last Saturday night at Southern National.

"I had a problem earlier in the year to get behind in the points and so did Burt Myers and L.W. Miller. Brian had his first really bad race last weekend and that has really turned this into a four-man race for this year's Whelen Southern Modified Tour championship."

Loftin says he's no longer going to worry about the results of the final three races and the championship consequences as much as he is about going out and winning the final three events.

"I've told all the guys on my team to not even look at the points," Loftin said. "I don't want to hear about points and I don't want to know anything about it. If we're lucky enough we'll go out and hopefully win these last three races. Win, lose or draw – we've had a great year. If winning the championship is meant to be, it'll happen for us. If we don't win the title, we'll be proud of what we accomplished and try to come back



NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified Tour Special Awards Standings

COORS LIGHT POLE AWARD

Burt Myers	3
L.W. Miller	2
Tim Brown	1
George Brunnhoelzl	1
Andy Seuss	1



SUNOCO ROOKIE OF THE RACE AWARD

Zach Brewer	3
Buddy Emory	3
Rich Kuiken Jr.	1
Scott Rigney	1



FEATHERLITE MOST IMPROVED DRIVER

Andy Seuss	2
Tim Brown	1
George Brunnhoelzl	1
L.W. Miller	1
Scott Rigney	1
Thomas Stinson	1
Dean Ward	1



POWERADE POWER MOVE OF THE RACE

Zach Brewer	1
Buddy Emory	1
Frank Fleming	1
L.W. Miller	1
Burt Myers	1
Jay Mize	1
Andy Seuss	1
John Smith	1



L.W. Miller won his second Coors Light Pole Award of the season last Saturday at Southern National Raceway Park in Kenly, N.C. (Kevin Thorne/NASCAR)

For more information, contact:
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