

Statistical Advance:
Analyzing The Icebreaker At Thompson International Speedway

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (March 31, 2009) – The 25th season of the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour will commence with the Icebreaker at Thompson (Conn.) International Speedway on Sunday, April 5.

At Thompson International Speedway:

- Since the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour formed in 1985, there have been 106 races at Thompson.
- There have been 29 different race winners at Thompson, led by **Mike Stefanik's** 14 victories.
- **Jeff Fuller** maintains the record for most poles won at Thompson with 13 ... There have been 36 different pole winners at the track.
- **Ed Flemke Jr.** is the defending winner of the Icebreaker ... **Ron Silk** won twice at Thompson in 2008 and **Ted Christopher** and **Todd Szegedy** also reached Victory Lane at the track a year ago.
- In the first 24 years of the NWMT there have been 17 different drivers win the Icebreaker, led by **Rick Fuller's** three victories ... **Richie Evans** won the inaugural NWMT Icebreaker on March 31, 1985.
- There are eight drivers on the entry list who have previously reached Victory Lane at TIS.

2008 Recap:

- **Ted Christopher** earned his first career NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour crown ... He recorded four wins, 10 top fives and 13 top 10s in 16 starts ... His wins came in the Stafford Spring Sizzler, Mansfield, the September New Hampshire race and the Thompson World Series.
- **Matt Hirschman** was the championship runner-up, the highest points finish of his young driving career ... He recorded his first career NWMT victories at Spencer and Chemung.

Thompson Intl. Speedway Data

Race: # 1 of 14 (4-5-09)

Track Layout: .625-mile oval

Banking: 26 degrees in the turns

Race Length: 150 lap/93.75 miles

- Opened on May 26, 1940 as the first asphalt track in the United States, and the largest track in New England at the time.
- Has one of the oldest NASCAR affiliations in the nation.
- Has held a total of 106 NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour races, the most of any track in series history.
- This is the first of three races that the NWMT will have at TIS in 2009.

Qualifying/Race Data

2008 pole winner: James Civali (120.097 mph, 18.585 seconds)

2008 race winner: Ed Flemke Jr. (56.647 mph, 1:00.25)

Track qualifying record: Eric Beers (122.080 mph, 18.429 seconds, 10-19-08)

Track race record (150 L): Eric Beers (81.660 mph, 1:08.53, 9-10-06)

NWMT Active Win Leaders at TIS

1. Mike Stefanik	14
2. Ted Christopher	7
3. Reggie Ruggiero.....	6
4. Ed Flemke Jr.....	4
5. Ron Silk	3
Todd Szegedy.....	3

NWMT Active Pole Leaders at TIS

1. Mike Stefanik	8
2. Reggie Ruggiero.....	5
3. Ted Christopher	4
Ed Flemke Jr.....	4
5. Todd Szegedy.....	3

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ANALYZING THE ICEBREAKER

- **Mike Stefanik's** performance in the Stafford Fall Final extended his record for series career victories to 69, and by earning the Coors Light Pole Award he passed **Tony Hirschman** for first on that all-time list with the 42nd of his career.
- **Ryan Preece's** season was highlighted poles at the Stafford Spring Sizzler and the Martinsville combination race, and a win at Martinsville ... In the process he became the youngest driver in series history to accomplish both.
- In addition to Christopher and Hirschman, **Jimmy Blewett** (Riverhead, Stafford – August), **Chuck Hossfeld** (Stafford – April, New Hampshire – June) and **Ron Silk** (Thompson – June, August) were also multiple race winners in 2008.
- The championship points lead only changed hands twice during the season ... Icebreaker winner **Ed Flemke Jr.** carried the lead to the second event of the year then Hossfeld maintained the lead until late August ... Christopher, with the race win at Mansfield, brought the points lead back from Ohio and kept it the rest of the year.

Selected Driver Highlights:

Eric Beers (No. 46 Chevrolet)

- Has two wins and nine poles in 128 career starts ... Has one win and one pole at Thompson.
- Set the qualifying record at Thompson in the 2008 World Series at 18.429 seconds (122.080 mph).
- Finished sixth in the 2008 NWMT season standings ... Career-best points finish was fifth in 2005.
- Registered finishes of 28th, 14th, 32nd, 10th and 10th at Thompson in 2008.

Jimmy Blewett (No. 12 Chevrolet)

- Has four wins and one pole in 62 career starts ... His one pole came at Thompson, but he has yet to reach Victory Lane at the track.
- Finished ninth in the 2008 standings ... Career-best points finish was eighth in 2007.
- Had finishes of 12th, 29th, 25th, 26th and 15th at Thompson in 2008.
- Returns to the No. 12 car for 2009 after driving the No. 19 in 2008.

Ted Christopher (No. 36 Chevrolet)

- Has 31 wins and 18 poles in 265 career starts ... Has at least one win in 10 consecutive seasons entering 2009 ... His 31 wins are tied for fourth on the series all-time list with Jeff Fuller ... His 18 poles rank ninth.
- Earned the 2008 NWMT title, the first of his career, after runner-up finishes in 2002 and 2005.
- Has seven wins and four poles at Thompson in his career ... Last win at Thompson was the 2008 World Series ... Is a two-time winner of the Icebreaker (2004, 2005).
- Had finishes of 10th, 2nd, 4th, 14th and 1st at Thompson a year ago.
- The 2001 NASCAR Whelen All-American Series champion, he plans to run for the national crown again in 2008 by competing weekly at Thompson, Stafford and Waterford (when possible).
- Won the NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified Tour season-opener at Concord (N.C.) Speedway.

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Doug Coby (No. 19 Chevrolet)

- Has one win, one pole and 26 top 10s in 81 career starts.
- Recorded three top 10s in five 2008 starts driving the No. 28 for Don King ... Finished third and fourth in his two starts at Thompson.
- Will run a partial-to-full season in the No. 19 of George Bierce in 2009.

Ed Flemke Jr. (No. 10 Chevrolet)

- Has 17 wins and 15 poles in 370 career starts ... Four of his wins and three of his poles have come at Thompson ... Is the defending winner of the Icebreaker.
- Has made a record 311 consecutive starts ... The last time he did not start an NWMT race was on July 22, 1992 at Riverside Park Speedway.
- Finished 11th in the 2008 NWMT standings ... Best career points finish were runner-up campaigns in 2004 and 2006.
- Had finishes of 1st, 26th, 26th, 30th and 23rd at Thompson in 2008.

Donny Lia (No. 4 Dodge)

- Has 11 wins, 13 poles and 43 top 10s in 97 career starts ... One of his wins and two of his poles have come at Thompson.
- Did not have a start at Thompson in 2008, but has five top 10s in his last eight starts at the track.
- Will return to the No. 4 full-time in 2009 after winning the NWMT title in the car in 2007 ... Ran in the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series in 2008.

Chris Pasteryak (No. 52 Chevrolet)

- Has four top 10s in 14 career starts.
- Will compete full-time in the NWMT in 2009 after running partial schedules in 2005 and 2006 and serving as crew chief for his father, Charlie, in 2007 and 2008.
- Captured the True Value Modified Racing Series championship in 2008.

Rowan Pennink (No. 93 Chevrolet)

- Has eight top 10s in 30 career starts.
- Improved from 17th in points as a rookie in 2007 to eighth as a sophomore a year ago.
- Had finishes of 9th, 19th, 7th, 8th and 12th at Thompson in 2008.

Woody Pitkat (No. 28 Chevrolet)

- Has seven top 10s in 17 career starts.
- Will drive the No. 28 full-time in 2009 after making seven starts with the team last year.
- Had finishes of 17th, 18th, and 18th at Thompson in 2008.
- Finished 12th in the final 2008 NASCAR Whelen All-American Series standings with six wins.

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Ryan Preece (No. 3 Chevrolet)

- Has two poles, a win and 10 top 10s in 30 career starts.
- His win at Martinsville and his poles at Stafford and Martinsville in 2008 made him the youngest driver in NWMT history to accomplish those feats.
- Finished 10th in points as a sophomore in 2008 after a 19th place showing as a rookie in 2007.
- Recorded finishes of 19th, 10th, 24th, 27th and 14th at Thompson in 2008.

Erick Rudolph (No. 59 Chevrolet)

- Recorded five top 10s in nine starts as a rookie in 2008 ... Earned Sunoco Rookie of the Race honors in six of those nine outings.
- Had finishes of 29th and 5th in his two starts at Thompson in 2008.
- Finished fifth in the NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified Tour season-opener at Concord.

Reggie Ruggiero (No. 14 Ford)

- Has 44 wins, 27 poles and 190 top 10s in 413 career starts ... His 44 wins rank second in series history and his 27 poles are tied for fourth with Jan Leaty.
- Has six wins and five poles in his career at Thompson ... His last win came at Thompson in the 2006 Icebreaker.
- Recorded finishes of 8th, 30th and 4th at Thompson in 2008 ... He did not qualify for two races.

Ron Silk (No. 79 Pontiac)

- Has three wins, a pole and 21 top-10s in 56 career starts ... All three wins have come at Thompson.
- Has recorded top 10s in nine of his last 11 starts at Thompson ... That span includes three wins and seven top fives.
- Has finished fourth and fifth, respectively, in the points standings the last two seasons.
- Finished 10th in the NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified Tour season-opener at Concord.

Mike Stefanik (No. 16 Pontiac)

- Seven-time NWMT Champion ... Has 69 wins, 42 poles and 254 top 10s in 384 career starts ... He holds NWMT record for most championships, wins, poles, top fives and top 10s.
- Is the all-time wins leader at Thompson with 14 ... Won the 1998 and 2006 Icebreakers.
- Registered finishes of 33rd, 3rd, 5th, 22nd and 24th at Thompson in 2008 ... Last win at the track was the 2006 Icebreaker.
- Has finished seventh in the standings each of the last two seasons following his seventh series crown in 2006.

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ANALYZING THE ICEBREAKER

Todd Szegedy (No. 2 Ford)

- The 2003 NWMT Champion ... Has 13 wins, six poles and 67 top 10s in 110 career starts.
- Has the best win percentage of any active driver, earning a trip to Victory Lane one out of every 8.5 starts.
- Has three wins and three poles at Thompson ... Last win was September, 2008.
- Has finished in the top five in the points standings in each of the last three years.

Jamie Tomaino (No. 99 Chevrolet)

- The 1990 NWMT Champion ... Has three wins, six poles and 234 top 10s in 499 career starts.
- Will become the first driver in series history to start 500 races at the Icebreaker ... Has missed only four of the 503 races in the history of the NWMT (1985-pr.) ... Is one of three drivers (Rick Fuller, Carl Pasteryak) to make a start in each of the first 24 years of the NWMT.
- Has more starts than any driver in any NASCAR series, other than the Sprint Cup Series, and has 60 more than any other NWMT competitor.
- Won a pole at Thompson in 1999 ... Best Thompson finish were runner-ups in 1987 and 1990 ... Had two top 10s in five starts at Thompson in 2008.

Upcoming Milestones/Benchmarks:

- **Jamie Tomaino** will extend his own series record by becoming the first driver to 500 career starts.
- **Ed Flemke Jr.** is expected to extend his record consecutive starts streak to 312.
- **Ted Christopher's** next race win would put him in sole possession of fourth place on the NWMT all-time wins list with 32 ... He is currently tied with Jeff Fuller.
- **Mike Stefanik's** next victory would make him the eighth driver in NASCAR history to earn 70 wins in a series ... All others on the list accomplished the feat in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series.
- **Donny Lia's** next win would place him in a tie with Richie Evans and George Kent for 14th on the all-time series wins list at 12 ... He is also three starts shy of 100 for his career.
- **Wade Cole** is two starts away from 150 for his career.

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