

## Statistical Advance: Analyzing The CARQUEST Fall Final

**DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (Sept. 30, 2009)** – The NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour will make its fourth and final trip in 2009 to Stafford (Conn.) Motor Speedway for the CARQUEST Fall Final on Sunday, Oct. 4.

### At Stafford Motor Speedway:

#### *History*

- The Stafford Springs Agricultural Park opened in 1870 ... The current race track was originally used for horse racing.
- Horse racing gave way to automobile racing at the half-mile oval after World War II.
- Stafford Motor Speedway became a NASCAR track in 1959 and was paved in 1967.
- The NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour has held 93 races at SMS since the tour began in 1985 ... The NWMT has run there every year of its existence, except for 1988.
- The 93 all-time NWMT races at SMS is second only to the 108 held at Thompson (Conn.) International Speedway.

#### *Notebook*

- There have been 29 different race winners at SMS, led by **Mike Stefanik's** 20 victories.
- There have been 35 different pole winners at SMS, led by Stefanik's 15.
- **Ted Christopher** won the first of four NWMT races at SMS in 2009 on April 26 ... **Jimmy Blewett** captured the May 22 event ... Christopher earned the pole for both ... **Eric Berndt** was the pole winner while **Ryan Preece** earned the race win at SMS in August.
- Christopher had the longest win streak in the history of the NWMT at SMS with four-straight victories from Sept. 30, 2001 to Aug. 23, 2002.
- The NWMT champion has earned at least one win at SMS during his title run in 13 of the last 15 years.
- The preliminary entry list for the CARQUEST Fall Final features 10 drivers who have won at SMS during their careers.

### Stafford Motor Speedway Data

**Race:** #12 of 13 overall, #4 of 4 at SMS

**Track Layout:** .5-mile asphalt oval

**Banking:** 9 degrees in Turns 1 & 2, 7.5 degrees in Turns 3 & 4

**Race Length:** 150 laps/75 miles

### Qualifying/Race Data

**2008 Pole Winner:** Mike Stefanik (18.158 seconds, 99.130 mph)

**2008 Race Winner:** Mike Stefanik (1 hr. 53 sec., 73.912 mph)

**Qualifying Record:** Matt Hirschman (18.009 seconds, 99.950 mph, 4/28/07)

### NWMT Active Win Leaders at SMS

1. Mike Stefanik .....	20
2. Reggie Ruggiero.....	9
Ted Christopher.....	9
4. Ed Flemke Jr.....	3
Todd Szegedy.....	3

### NWMT Active Pole Leaders at SMS

1. Mike Stefanik .....	15
2. Reggie Ruggiero.....	7
3. Donny Lia.....	6
4. Rob Summers.....	4
Ted Christopher.....	4

## **2-2-2-2**

### **ANALYZING THE CARQUEST FALL FINAL**

#### **Up to Speed:**

- **Ted Christopher** earned the Coors Light Pole Award and a trip to Victory Lane in the season opener at Thompson (Conn.) International Speedway.
- Christopher also earned the pole and the win in the second race of the year at Stafford (Conn.) Motor Speedway.
- Christopher made it three-for-three when he earned the pole for the third race of the season, also at SMS, but finished second to **Jimmy Blewett** in the race ... Christopher became the seventh driver in NWMT history to earn at least three-consecutive pole awards, and extended his mark for consecutive poles to start a season.
- At New Hampshire Motor Speedway **Donny Lia** earned his first win of the season and the 12th of his career ... **Doug Coby** captured the pole, the second of his career.
- **Erick Rudolph** became the youngest winner in NWMT history when he took the checkered flag at Spencer Speedway in Williamson, N.Y. ... Qualifying was rained out and the race was pushed back a day.
- **Ryan Preece** took the pole and the checkered flag at Riverhead (N.Y.) Raceway ... He then won the next time out at SMS with **Eric Berndt** earning his first career pole award.
- Lia won the inaugural event at Bristol (Tenn.) Motor Speedway ... It was the first of two scheduled combination races with the NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified Tour in 2009 ... Qualifying for the event was rained out.
- Lia made it two in a row with his win at TIS ... He also captured the pole prior to the race, his first of the season and the 14th of his career.
- **Ron Silk** earned his first win at NHMS in the New Hampshire 100 ... Preece was the pole winner.
- Silk got his first Coors Light Pole Award of the season in the NWMT-NWSMT combination race at Martinsville Speedway while **Mike Stefanik** earned the race win.
- Christopher has a one point lead in the season standings on Lia ... Christopher has maintained the lead through 17 of the last 18 races dating back to 2008.

#### **Selected Driver Highlights:**

##### **Eric Beers (NWMT No. 46 Chevrolet)**

- Has two wins and nine poles in 138 career starts ... Two poles were earned at Stafford Motor Speedway.
- Is seventh in points with four top 10s.
- Has an average finish of 11th in the three previous 2009 races at SMS.

##### **Eric Berndt (No. 54 Chevrolet)**

- Has one pole and two top 10s in 31 career starts.
- Earned first Coors Light Pole Award at SMS in August.
- Has an average finish of 17th in the three previous races at SMS this year.

### **3-3-3-3**

### **ANALYZING THE CARQUEST FALL FINAL**

#### **Ted Christopher (No. 36 Chevrolet)**

- The 2008 NWMT champion ... Has 33 wins and 21 poles in 276 career starts ... Has at least one win in 11 consecutive seasons ... His 33 wins rank fourth all-time and his 21 poles rank ninth.
- Earned the pole award in the first three events of the year, and the race win in the first two ... Became the first driver in NWMT history to begin the season by earning multiple poles.
- Has a one-point lead on Donny Lia in the standings ... Has nine top 10s in 11 starts, with six of those either wins (2) or runner-up finishes (4).
- Has led one-third (529 of 1,586) of all laps run this year, more than double any other driver.
- Has nine career wins at SMS, including the 2009 Spring Sizzler ... Finished second at SMS in May and August.

#### **James Civali (No. 79 Pontiac)**

- Has four wins and 24 top 10s in 45 career starts ... Was the 2006 Sunoco Rookie of the Year.
- Has an average finish of 23rd in four starts in 2009.
- Won at SMS in 2006 ... Last start there was a fifth place finish in the 2008 Spring Sizzler.

#### **Ed Flemke Jr. (No. 10 Chevrolet)**

- Has 17 wins and 15 poles in 381 career starts ... Has made a record 322 consecutive starts ... The last time he did not start a NWMT race was on July 22, 1992 at Riverside Park Speedway.
- Is 10<sup>th</sup> in the season standings with four top 10s.
- Has three career SMS wins ... Has an average finish of 12th in the three 2009 races at SMS.

#### **Donny Lia (No. 4 Dodge)**

- The 2007 NWMT champion.
- Has 14 wins, 14 poles and 53 top 10s in 108 career starts.
- Is up to second in points, just one behind Ted Christopher, with nine top 10s in 11 starts.
- Has wins this year at New Hampshire Motor Speedway (June) Bristol Motor Speedway and Thompson International Speedway (September).
- Has two career SMS wins ... Has an average finish of 10th in the three previous races at SMS.

#### **Chris Pasteryak (No. 52 Chevrolet)**

- Has nine top 10s in 25 career NWMT starts.
- Is eighth in points with four top 10s.
- Has an average finish of fifth in the three previous races at SMS.

#### **Rowan Pennink (No. 93 Chevrolet)**

- Has 17 top 10s in 41 career starts.
- Is fifth in points with nine top 10s in 11 starts.
- Has an average finish of 13th in the three previous 2009 races at SMS.

#### **4-4-4-4**

#### **ANALYZING THE CARQUEST FALL FINAL**

##### **Woody Pitkat (No. 28 Chevrolet)**

- Has 12 top 10s in 28 career starts.
- Is ninth in points with five top 10s in 11 starts.
- Has an average finish of eighth in the three previous races at SMS this year.

##### **Ryan Preece (No. 3 Chevrolet)**

- Has four poles, three wins and 19 top 10s in 41 career starts.
- Became the 20<sup>th</sup> driver in NWMT history to earn back-to-back victories earlier this year.
- Is just 12 points out of first with nine top 10s in 11 starts ... Has two wins and two poles ... Has completed 1,581 laps this year, most among all competitors.
- Won the last race at SMS and had finishes of third and 10th in the first two dates.

##### **Keith Rocco (No. 12 Chevrolet)**

- Has three career NWMT starts ... Debuted with a 19th place finish the 2008 World Series.
- Has finishes of fifth (TIS) and 33rd (NHMS) this year.
- Finished as the NASCAR Whelen All-American Series national runner-up to Philip Morris.

##### **Reggie Ruggiero (No. 14 Chevrolet)**

- Has 44 wins, 27 poles and 192 top 10s in 419 career starts ... Wins total ranks second all-time while poles total is tied for fourth.
- Has two top fives in six 2009 starts ... Best finish was fourth at NHMS in September, where he led 15 laps ... Other top five came at SMS in May.
- Has eight wins and seven poles in his career at SMS ... Has an average finish of 20th in the three previous races at SMS this year.

##### **Andy Seuss (No. 70 Chevrolet)**

- Has two top 10s in 15 career NWMT starts.
- Has an average finish of 19th in two races at SMS in 2009.
- Is second in the NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified Tour standings ... Leads the NWSMT with four wins ... Will compete in the NWSMT race at Ace Speedway in Altamahaw, N.C., on Friday.

##### **Mike Stefanik (No. 16 Pontiac)**

- The 1989, 1991, 1997, 1998, 2001, 2002 and 2006 NWMT champion.
- Has 70 wins, 42 poles and 260 top 10s in 392 career starts ... Holds NWMT record for most championships, wins, poles, top fives and top 10s.
- Is sixth in points with six top 10s in 11 starts ... Won last time out at Martinsville Speedway.
- Has a record 20 wins and 15 poles at SMS ... Earned both in this race last year ... Has an average finish of 21st in the three previous races at SMS in 2009.

## **5-5-5**

### **ANALYZING THE CARQUEST FALL FINAL**

#### **Todd Szegedy (No. 2 Ford)**

- The 2003 NWMT champion.
- Has 13 wins, five poles and 77 top 10s in 121 career starts.
- Is fourth in points – 37 behind leader Ted Christopher – with a NWMT-high 10 top 10s.
- Career includes three wins and two poles at SMS ... Has two fourth place finishes and sixth in the three previous races at SMS.

#### **Jamie Tomaino (No. 99 Chevrolet)**

- The 1990 NWMT champion.
- Has three wins, six poles and 236 top 10s in 509 career starts ... One of his wins came at SMS.
- Become the first driver in series history to start 500 races at the Icebreaker ... Has missed only five of the 512 races in the history of the NWMT (1985-present) ... Is one of only two drivers, along with Carl Pasteryak, to make a start in each of the 25 years of the NWMT.
- Has an average finish of 17th in the three previous races at SMS.

#### **Miscellaneous**

- Just 37 points separate positions 1-4 in the championship standings with two races remaining, and there is only one point between leader **Ted Christopher** and second place **Donny Lia** ... The last time the lead was single digits with two races remaining was in 2000 when Jerry Marquis led **Reggie Ruggiero** by eight ... The smallest final championship margin was when Tony Hirschman edged Steve Park by three points for the 1995 crown.
- With **Mike Stefanik's** win last time out, the last four seasons have featured at least seven-different race winners.
- Stefanik has a record eight CARQUEST Fall Final wins, including the last two years.
- **Todd Szegedy** leads all competitors with 10 top-10 finishes while **Ryan Preece** has the most top fives with eight.
- **Ed Flemke Jr.** enters this race with a record streak of 322 consecutive starts ... Christopher is second on the list with 140.
- There have been 1,586 laps completed this year ... Preece has turned the most of any competitor at 1,581 ... Christopher had led the most with 529, and has also led laps in the most races with eight.

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