

Bowyer, Bristol and BB&T: "Racin' the Way it Ought'a Be!"

For the second race in a row, BB&T Racing driver Clint Bowyer will start the competition occupying second place in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series driver standings. After a weekend with no race, the circuit will storm into Bristol, Tenn., this weekend to continue to determine who this year's championship contenders will be. Bowyer has staked a large claim as a contender.

Bristol Motor Speedway has at least half a dozen nicknames earned by staging some of the best races in the history of the sport on a half-mile track surrounded by 165,000 seats. In his past four efforts at "Thunder Valley," Bowyer has finished, seventh, third, third and eighth, and "The World's Fastest Half-Mile" saw Bowyer win the Nationwide Series race at Bristol in the No. 2 BB&T Chevrolet in March 2008.

"The Holy Grail of Motorsports" requires a driver's attention at all times. Each lap is completed within 15 seconds and there are always clowns to the left and jokers to the right. It has become one of Bowyer's favorite tracks, even after a rocky start when he finished 29th in his first race and 38th in his second effort in 2006 rookie season.

"Bristol is a place where you've got to calm down and settle in," Bowyer said. "It's a hard place to do that. It's easier said than done. I think I've been able to get myself acclimated to the conditions. When I first started out, I was terrified of the place, but now I really enjoy racing there."

Shane Wilson is Bowyer's crew chief, and one of his most important tasks during Sunday's 500-lap race will be to ensure Bowyer remains calm and patient.

"I go to Bristol knowing that it's going to be loud and exciting, and you've got to know that you're going to be on the bad end of some situations," Wilson said. "But at the same time, you might be on the good end of some situations. You've got to go in there knowing that it's going to be a fast race where anything can happen. You can have a real good car and have a bad day, or you can have a mediocre car and come out of it with a good finish. You've got to know that it's going to be crazy and that anything can happen. And, it probably will."

The Food City 500 will be televised live Sunday, March 22, beginning at 1:30 p.m. ET on FOX and broadcast live on the Performance Racing Network and Sirius XM Satellite Radio. Qualifying will be televised live on SPEED Friday, March 20, at 3:30 p.m. ET. PRN and Sirius XM Satellite Radio will carry qualifying updates live.