

Clint Bowyer Seeks NASCAR Win in Chevrolet's Backyard this Sunday

The NASCAR Sprint Cup Series will compete this weekend at Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn, approximately 90 minutes west of Detroit, home of the major auto manufacturers that rely on NASCAR to promote their cars.

It is no secret that two of the major manufacturers, Chrysler (Dodge is a part of this group) and General Motors (the Chevrolet brand), filed for bankruptcy protection. Richard Childress Racing has fielded Chevrolet cars throughout its 40-year history, so there is little hesitation from BB&T Racing driver Clint Bowyer when he speaks of the importance of winning this race for Chevrolet.

"It's important for us to run well there," Bowyer said. "It's Chevrolet's backyard and its bragging rights for whoever wins at Michigan. If you can win there for your manufacturer, that's huge."

In six Sprint Cup Series starts at Michigan, Bowyer's best showing at the two-mile oval is a 16th-place finish, which he posted in June 2007. Additionally, the 30-year-old driver has led six laps of competition, has an average starting position of 18.3, an average finish of 25.2 and completed 95.7 percent of the laps contested (1,086 of 1,135).

Michigan is clearly not one of Bowyer's best tracks, but he said the results do not tell the entire story.

"I've always had decent cars at Michigan, but never seem to do well with them," Bowyer said. "Our pit strategies never played out the way we hoped for and I've blown up (my engine) running third. I've had some bad luck there over the last few years. The results aren't always indicative of how I've ran. I think we have the potential to run well there and, hopefully, this time around we'll be able to get a good finish out of it."

After 14 of 36 races, Bowyer is 16th in the standings that rank the drivers based on the amount of points they accumulate for each race. After the 26th race (Richmond), only the top 12 drivers are eligible for the Chase for the Sprint Cup, the NASCAR playoff system. Only 102 points separate Bowyer from the 12th place driver, and there is a gap of only 155 points between Bowyer and the ninth-place driver.

Bowyer, in his fourth season, has qualified for the Chase the last two years, finishing third in the Chase in 2007 and fifth in 2008. The only other driver to finish in the top five each of the last two years is three-time champion Jimmy Johnson.

The BB&T brand will be along for the ride this weekend as the No. 33 Chevrolet will feature the Cheerios paint scheme. In fact, the No. 33 will sport a "heart healthy" paint scheme this week as Cheerios, along with RCR president and CEO Richard Childress kick off a month-long program encouraging race fans to take care of their hearts.

Live coverage of the race at Michigan International Speedway will take the green flag Sunday, June 14 beginning at 12:30 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time. The race will be televised live on TNT and be broadcast on the Motor Racing Network and Sirius XM Satellite Radio. Qualifying will be telecast live on SPEED Friday, June 13 beginning at 3 p.m. EDT.