



WHELEN MODIFIED TOUR

News & Notes

RACE 1 | THOMPSON INTERNATIONAL SPEEDWAY

FAST FACTS

The Race: Icebreaker

The Place: Thompson (Conn.) International Speedway

The Date: Sunday, April 5

The Time: 3:15 p.m. ET

The Distance: 150 laps / 93.75 miles

2008 Winner: Ed Flemke Jr.

2008 Polesitter: James Civali

Event Schedule:

Saturday, April 4: Practice 10:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.; Tire Scuff 2:15 - 2:45 p.m.; Qualifying 2:45 p.m.

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2008 DRIVER STANDINGS

| Rk | Driver | Points |
|----|-----------------|--------|
| 1 | Ted Christopher | 2441 |
| 2 | Matt Hirschman | 2314 |
| 3 | Todd Szegedy | 2260 |
| 4 | Chuck Hossfeld | 2251 |
| 5 | Ron Silk | 2158 |
| 6 | Eric Beers | 2115 |
| 7 | Mike Stefanik | 2102 |
| 8 | Rowan Pennink | 2016 |
| 9 | Jimmy Blewett | 1969 |
| 10 | Ryan Preece | 1948 |

- Busy Off Season for Reigning Champ Christopher
- 25 Seasons Running: A Look Back at the Icebreaker
- Home Tracks: Christopher Eyes National Title



Richie Evans won the inaugural NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour race at Thompson 25 years ago.

Silver Anniversary Modified Season to Open at Icebreaker

Fittingly, in a division with so much history, the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour will come full circle this weekend at Thompson (Conn.) International Speedway.

The Modified division dates back to 1948, the inaugural season for racing sanctioned by NASCAR. The present-day NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour, however, held its first event at Thompson with the Icebreaker on March 31, 1985. The same track and event will also play host to the first race of the 25th NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour season on Sunday, April 5.

The NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour and the 1985 season began with the series' most-prominent name in Victory Lane. **Richie Evans**, coming off his eighth NASCAR Modified national title in 1984, took the checkered flag in the new touring series' inaugural event to launch what would be his ninth and final championship campaign. The reigning NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour champion and

Most Popular Driver, **Ted Christopher**, will look to follow in Evans' footsteps 25 years later. The last time the series went to Thompson - the 2008 season finale - Christopher had two trophies to hoist in Victory Lane: one for winning the race and one for clinching his first tour championship.

Christopher, who won the Icebreaker in 2004 and 2005, will certainly be a driver to watch on Sunday, but the starting grid will feature a host of contenders looking to start the season off on the right foot. **Ron Silk** won twice at Thompson last year and is always a favorite at the famed New England oval. Seven-time series champion **Mike Stefanik** is the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour's all-time wins leader at Thompson with 14, and **Todd Szegedy** has won at the track three years in a row.

Icebreaker action will begin for the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour with practice and qualifying on Saturday, April 4. The 150-lap race is set for Sunday at approximately 3:15 p.m.



News & Notes

The Race ... The Icebreaker will be the first of 14 races on the 2009 NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour Schedule. This will also be the first of three stops for the series to Thompson International Speedway.

The Procedure ... Starting positions 1-32 will be set from time trials. The remaining five will be filled through the provisional process. The race is 150 laps (93.75 miles).

The Track ... A .625-mile banked oval that opened in 1940, Thompson was the first asphalt track in the nation, and the largest in New England until New Hampshire Motor Speedway opened in 1990.

Race Winners ... There have been 29 different race winners at Thompson, led by Mike Stefanik's 14 victories. Ed Flemke Jr. is the defending winner of the Icebreaker. In the first year of the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour, 1985, Richie Evans was the Icebreaker victor.

Pole Winners ... There have been 36 different pole winners at Thompson, led by Jeff Fuller's 13. Eric Beers set the Thompson qualifying record in last year's World Series at 18.429 seconds (122.080 mph).

New Web Features in 2009

NASCAR's ever-evolving Web site for weekly and touring racing has a few new features worthy of noting for the 2009 season. Please visit www.nascarhometracks.com to check out the following:



- A raceday page where entry lists, practice times and qualifying and race results are posted. This can be found by clicking on the race name on the respective series' schedule page.
- Lap-by-lap race updates. This page will provide frequent track updates from throughout the raceday and can be found on the homepage during race weekend.
- Driver bio pages. These pages can be found by clicking on the "Drivers" tab along the top rail.

Busy Off Season for Reigning Champ Christopher

After two decades of competing in the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour, longtime series standout **Ted Christopher** finally got his elusive tour title in 2008.

One would understand if the Plainville, Conn., racing veteran scaled back in the off season and enjoyed the accomplishment of a long-desired goal, but that's not Ted Christopher.

Long known as a racer that would drive "anything, anytime, anywhere," Christopher stayed busy behind the wheel once again this off season, which started with a win in the SK Modified portion of the North-South Shootout at Concord (N.C.) Speedway in November. He also finished fourth in the Tour-Type Modified race.

In mid-February Christopher returned once again to New Smyrna (Fla.) Speedway for the World Series of Speedway Racing. He piloted the No. 00 of Joe Brady to the points championship in the Tour-Type Modified division on the strength of four wins, including the Richie Evans Memorial 100, the premier event of the eight nights of racing.

"My goal when I go down there is to just have fun and win," Christopher said. "I've learned to not go down there with my [NASCAR Whelen Modified] Tour team because it's a distraction for when you start the season. I've went with Joe for many, many years down there, and that works the best. I enjoy going there."

Christopher behind the wheel of a Modified is business as usual, but in recent years he's picked up yet another hobby: indoor Three-Quarter (TQ) Midget racing.

Determined to master yet another form of motorsports, Christopher worked hard to hone in a TQ he co-owns with Donny Preece and the results paid off as he captured the main feature in Atlantic City's Boardwalk Hall in January. Christopher then picked up where he left off in New Jersey when he captured the main event in the Dunkin Donuts Center in Providence, R.I., in March.

"It's just a ton of fun," Christopher said of TQ racing. "That, and going down to Florida I think helps to set the tone for when you start racing regular."

In familiar territory, behind the seat of his regular NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour No. 36 Chevrolet, Christopher was one of six drivers that tested for Hoosier Tires and NASCAR at Bristol Motor Speedway in Tennessee in late February. Despite it being the first time the NASCAR Modifieds had ever run on the track's high concrete banks, Christopher mashed the pedal to the floor and turned in laps well under Bristol's official track qualifying record.

Christopher's last outing prior to this week's Icebreaker was the NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified Tour opener at Concord (N.C.) Speedway. Once again the New England standout found Victory Lane as he led all 150 laps of the race in Brady's No. 00.

As he opens his NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour title defense at Thompson (Conn.) International Speedway this weekend, Christopher's goal is to capture the checkered flag at the season-opener for both of NASCAR's Modified divisions, something he also accomplished in 2005.

"We ended up having a great run at Thompson at the end of the year [2008] and I don't think too much has changed," Christopher said. "Starting off winning the Southern one, it would be nice to win the Northern one also."

All told since the calendar turned to 2009, Christopher has won seven of the 11 races he has entered across four different states.

"I like to win everywhere I go," Christopher said.



Ted Christopher dominated the NASCAR Whelen Southern Modified Tour opener at Concord Speedway on March 21.



25 Seasons Running: A Look Back at the Icebreaker

As the 25th season of the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour is celebrated in 2009, events and individuals who have carried the series from its historic first season in 1985 to the present day will be highlighted. The first edition will commence where the series itself began: the Thompson Icebreaker. The following are capsules of the first NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour race and race recaps in five-year intervals.

March 31, 1985 ... It all began at Thompson (Conn.) International Speedway with the first race under the newly-formed NASCAR Modified Championship Series banner. The 1985 Icebreaker was a who's-who of Modified stars of the day: **Richie Evans**, **Charlie Jarzombek** and **Mike McLaughlin** to name a few. Widely-recognized as the top driver in the history of NASCAR Modified racing, Evans brought eight national titles into the 1985 season, and promptly earned the pole for the new series' inaugural event. The Icebreaker was scheduled for 75 laps of green-flag racing and **Jeff Fuller** led the first seven after he started first with the redraw. Evans, who started fourth, took his first lead on Lap 8 and held it until the third caution of the race on Lap 24. Fuller resumed his place at the front of the 35-car field and ran up front for the next 17 laps before Evans wrestled it away on Lap 42. That would prove to be a crucial move as rain forced the race to end with 47 laps in the books and Evans wound up in Victory Lane. The win launched Evan's ninth championship season.

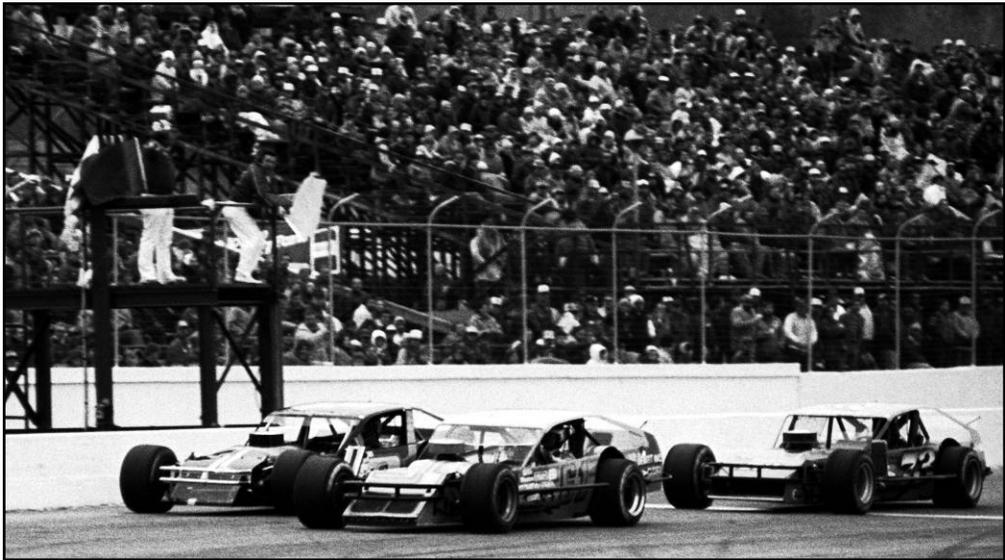
April 1, 1990 ... The NASCAR Modified Tour

opened three weeks earlier in Martinsville, Va., but New England's traditional inaugural green flag dropped at the Thompson Icebreaker. Fresh off a breakout six-win season in 1989, **Tony Hirschman** got past pole-winner **Rick Fuller** on Lap 65 and held on for the final 35 circuits to capture his first career Icebreaker victory.

April 2, 1995 ... **Tommy Cravenho** held off **Tony Hirschman** and **Rick Fuller** in a green-white-checker finish to capture the 1995 season-opener for his first career victory. **Steve Park** earned the pole award and led 17 laps in the middle stage of the race, but it was Cravenho who took the lead from **Bobby Gegetskas** on Lap 74 and held on to take the checkered flag.

July 20, 2000 ... The 2000 Icebreaker was postponed from its traditional early spring date to July. In the rescheduled event, the lead changed three times among four drivers in the extended 159-lap race, but it was **Jerry Marquis** who ran up front in the final 33 circuits to reach Victory Lane.

April 10, 2005 ... For the second year in a row, **Ted Christopher** earned a trip to Victory Lane in the Icebreaker. It was **Chuck Hossfeld** that earned the pole award, but Christopher led four different times during the race to earn the first of his career-high seven wins that season. Christopher wrestled the lead away from **Zach Sylvester** on Lap 152 and held on the final two laps to take the checkered flag.



As the white flag flew in the 1985 Icebreaker, **Richie Evans (61)** had to hold off **Jeff Fuller (2)** on the outside and **Brian Ross (73)** from behind to earn the win in the series' inaugural race.



Home Tracks: Christopher Eyes National Title

As if two races on any given week were not enough, **Ted Christopher** plans to make it three, or four, in 2009.

The 2001 NASCAR Whelen All-American Series champion is set to make another run at the national title again in 2009 as he plans to compete weekly in the Sunoco Modified division at Thompson International Speedway on Thursday nights and in the SK Modified division at Stafford Motor Speedway on Friday nights. When possible, Christopher might also run an SK at Waterford Speedbowl on Saturday nights. All three ovals are located in Connecticut.

"We'll see how it goes," Christopher said. "I go to every race to win, no matter what, so if it gets to where I've got a bunch of wins going, then you start looking toward the national championship at the end."

This aggressive schedule would also be in addition to running full time in the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour, where he is the defending champion.

"I think I have 70-something races scheduled this year already," Christopher said. "I've run as many as 98 in a year, so that doesn't bother me at all."

Christopher, of Plainville, Conn., is a four-time track champion at Stafford and has earned three titles at Thompson during his illustrious Modified career. He also captured the Waterford title in 1992.

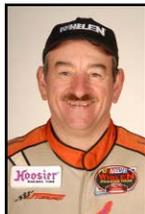


Ted Christopher earned his 100th career win at Stafford in an SK Modified race in June, 2008.



Raceday Round-Up

Tomaino's 500th ... The Icebreaker will mark the 500th start for NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour iron man **Jamie Tomaino**. Tomaino, from Howell, N.J., has missed just four races in the series' 24-year history, and has 60 more career starts than any other NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour competitor. Additionally, Tomaino has more NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour starts than any driver in any of the sanctioning body's national or touring series other than the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series.



Christopher Preseason Favorite ... The 2009 NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour Preseason Poll recently revealed that **Ted Christopher** is the media's favorite to repeat as series champion. Christopher garnered half of all first-place votes cast and collected 234 total points. **Todd Szegedy** (187 points / 1 first-place vote), **Ron Silk** (179 / 5), **Mike Stefanik** (177 / 3) and **Donny Lia** (172 / 3) rounded out the top five vote-getters.



Lia Returns ... Following a one-year hiatus to the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series, 2007 NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour Champion **Donny Lia** is back with the No. 4 Dodge of Bob



Garbarino for another title run in 2009. Lia had six wins and 13 top 10s in the 'Mystic Missile' en route to the 2007 crown, and has 13 career wins in the series. **Chuck Hossfeld** piloted the No. 4 to a pair of wins and a fourth-place finish in the 2008 points

standings. **Second Generation Tour Drivers to Run Full Time in 2009** ... **Chris Pasteryak** and **Erick Rudolph** will complete full time in the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour in 2009. Pasteryak, the son of Charlie and nephew of Carl, both longtime series veterans, will pilot the No. 52 in 2009 after making 14 starts in the series from 2005-07. The younger Pasteryak captured the True Value Modified Racing Series crown in 2008. Rudolph is the son of Charlie, a former Modified competitor and Erick's crew chief, made nine NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour starts as a rookie in 2008 and will run for points this year. The younger Rudolph captured track championships in two different divisions last year at Dunn Tire Raceway Park in Lancaster, N.Y.



Up Next: Spring Sizzler

The second race of the 2009 NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour schedule will take the series to a familiar stop - Stafford (Conn.) Motor Speedway - April 25-26.

The 38th Annual Tech-Net Spring Sizzler presented by CARQUEST will mark the first of four stops for the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour at the venerable half-mile oval in 2009. The event, much like this week's Icebreaker at Thompson (Conn.) International Speedway, is a New England tradition.

Stafford has served as host to 90 NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour races since the series began in 1985. **Mike Stefanik** has earned the most Coors Light Poles (15) and trips to Victory Lane (20) than any other driver at Stafford.

Ted Christopher is the defending winner of the Spring Sizzler, and has captured the checkered flag three times in this event. **Richie Evans** won the first in 1985 and Stefanik has won the most - four times.

2009 NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour Schedule

| DATE | RACE | FACILITY | 2008 POLESITTER | 2008 RACE WINNER |
|----------|---|--|-----------------|------------------|
| April 5 | Icebreaker | Thompson (Conn.) International Speedway | James Civali | Ed Flemke Jr. |
| April 26 | Tech-Net Spring Sizzler presented by CARQUEST | Stafford (Conn.) Motor Speedway | Ryan Preece | Ted Christopher |
| May 22 | TSI Harley-Davidson Classic | Stafford (Conn.) Motor Speedway | Chuck Hossfeld | Chuck Hossfeld |
| June 27 | New England 100 | New Hampshire Motor Speedway, Loudon, N.H. | None-rain | Chuck Hossfeld |
| July 11 | NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour at Spencer | Spencer Speedway, Williamson, N.Y. | Jan Leaty | Matt Hirschman |
| Aug. 1 | NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour at Riverhead | Riverhead (N.Y.) Raceway | Bill Park | Jimmy Blewett |
| Aug. 7 | Town Fair Tire 150 | Stafford (Conn.) Motor Speedway | Eric Beers | Jimmy Blewett |
| Aug. 13 | Budweiser 150 | Thompson (Conn.) International Speedway | None-rain | Ronnie Silk |
| Aug. 19 | UNOH Perfect Storm at Bristol * | Bristol (Tenn.) Motor Speedway | --- | --- |
| Aug. 29 | NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour at Chemung | Chemung (N.Y.) Speedrome | Matt Hirschman | Matt Hirschman |
| Sept. 19 | New Hampshire 100 | New Hampshire Motor Speedway, Loudon, N.H. | Ryan Newman | Ted Christopher |
| Sept. 27 | Made In America Whelen 300 * | Martinsville (Va.) Speedway | Ryan Preece | Ryan Preece |
| Oct. 4 | CARQUEST Fall Final | Stafford (Conn.) Motor Speedway | Mike Stefanik | Mike Stefanik |
| Oct. 18 | Xtra Mart World Series | Thompson (Conn.) International Speedway | Eric Beers | Ted Christopher |

* Combined Race With Whelen Southern Modified Tour