

2000 WINSTON CUP CHAMPIONS

Collector's

INTERSTATE BATTERIES

Edition

www.interstatebatteries.com

Volume 16, No. 3, December 2000

This is awesome," Bobby's voice came in over the radio in the closing laps, "and it's all thanks to you guys."

The Interstate Batteries #18 team had just won the 2,000 Winston Cup points championship at Homestead on Nov. 12. After finishing fourth that day, not far behind teammate Tony Stewart who won the Homestead race, the celebration began — and it hasn't stopped since.

"We've had a great year, and it feels great to beat the guys we beat like Dale Earnhardt, Jeff Burton, Dale Jarrett and Jeff Gordon," said Bobby, who until that point didn't want to talk about the championship. "It's just awesome. I can't really believe it. You start thinking it's going to happen but you never know until it's over."

"This is a tough deal, and I think that's why I appreciate it so much," said team owner Joe Gibbs. "I don't think anyone could be happier. Our group is kind of a quiet group, but I'd say right now they are having the biggest celebration I think I've seen."

Crew chief Jimmy Makar recalled the three goals he had in mind when he joined Joe Gibbs in 1991: "to build a successful racing team, win races and win a championship ... It's taken nine years but we finally did it. It's very satisfying ..."

"Norm Miller gambles nine years ago," said Gibbs, "and decides to sponsor a race car when we didn't have a nut or a bolt and to see him a part of a championship is a great story." Norm said, "We've been the title sponsor of the #18 car since Joe Gibbs Racing got their start in '91. It's a great team of quality individuals... and we are so proud they brought home the championship for Interstate and all our Dealers and Distributors."

So after years of working to achieve the right combination of teamwork and consistency, Bobby Labonte, the entire Joe Gibbs Racing team and the Interstate Batteries family are indeed 2000 Winston Cup Champions! ■



The 2000 Winston Cup Championship celebration began with crew chief Jimmy Makar, Interstate Batteries chairman Norm Miller, driver Bobby Labonte, J.D. Gibbs and team owner Joe Gibbs.

The #18 Team's Season Highlights



In 34 races...

- 5,130 points — the third highest point total since the current system began in 1975
- 1st in the standings for 31 races
- 4 victories
- 31 top-fifteen, 24 top-ten and 19 top-five finishes
- 7.5 — average finishing position
- 20 top-ten starts
- 11.4 — average starting position
- At least one lap led in 23 races — more than any other driver
- 10,228 laps run of 10,237 total laps — that's 99.9%

Motorsports media name Bobby Labonte Driver of the Year!

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Dallas Texas 75251-1292

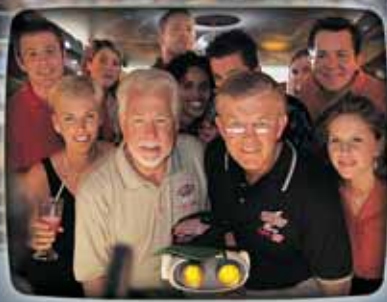
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Interstate Battery



Look for Interstate's New TV Ad



Bobby is racing the Interstate #18 limo, loaded with accessories, to show the power of Interstate batteries.



Norm Miller and Joe Gibbs throw a race-watching party in the back of the limo.



Joe points to the limo's big-screen TV that is tuned in to the very race that they are in.



As the limo crosses the finish line, Norm says, "Hey Bobby! We just won first, second and third!"



Hang on to your TV remotes! Bobby Labonte will be driving into homes all over North America this fall and winter in "Racing Limo," an all-new Interstate Batteries TV ad. The ad premiered Sunday, Nov. 19 — a week after the #18 team clinched the Winston Cup Championship.

In the ad, Bobby exhibits his championship driving skills behind the wheel of the #18 Interstate racing limousine. Bobby's brought several of his friends to demonstrate the power of his Interstate battery. While he's battling for the lead, Bobby's guests are in the back of the limo enjoying a race-watching party thrown by team owner Joe Gibbs and Interstate Batteries chairman Norm Miller.

"The bottom line is that we want to help our Dealers grow their business by bringing in more customers." — Tommy Miller

The new TV commercial should help increase sales at Interstate's 200,000 retail Dealers. "Each time Interstate Batteries' commercial runs," said Tommy Miller, president of Interstate Batteries, "more and more consumers throughout North America are reminded of the #1 brand name in replacement batteries. The bottom line is that we want to help our Dealers grow their business by bringing in more customers."

In the new ad they have enough battery on board to power a popcorn machine, a smoothie-making blender, a musician's electric guitar, a huge stereo system, a robotic waiter and a big screen TV tuned in to Bobby's race! Bobby makes daring moves in his wide (and long) track Pontiac while the race-watching action takes place in the back. The commercial ends when Norm sticks his

head through the privacy window and yells, "Hey Bobby! We just won first, second and third!"

Bobby's humorous new commercial is the latest in a series of tongue-in-cheek race ads that started four years ago with the commercial entitled "Fully Loaded." In that ad, Bobby's race car is outfitted with a powerful Interstate battery and a "few race necessities" including a window-unit air conditioner, track lighting, a foot massager and a microwave. Watching Bobby compete on a big-screen TV in the back seat are Joe and Norm who asks, "Hey Bobby. Are those burritos done yet?"

A second commercial entitled "Mini-Van" premiered two years ago. In this ad, Bobby is engaged in a big race and touts the power of his Interstate battery while his wife Donna gets a makeover, his son Tyler plays an on-board video game, and Joe and Norm stretch out in full-length tanning beds — all inside the signature green #18 racing Pontiac mini-van. The commercial ends with the slogan, "Interstate Batteries. The official battery of the family car."

Behind all of the fun, laughter and racing action is a well thought-out advertising strategy. "We know that sports fans love to laugh at and talk about entertaining commercials," said Charles Suscavage, vice president of advertising & public relations. "Our goal is to reach TV viewers with a simple message — Interstate batteries deliver power fast, and they're built to last."

"Bobby Labonte, Joe Gibbs Racing and the Interstate Batteries' green #18 Pontiac are three of the most visible entities in all of racing," said Suscavage. "We want to leverage those images by building our TV ads around them to increase awareness with potential battery consumers." ■

FALL 2000 / WINTER 2001 AD BLITZ

11/19	FOX	NFL — Atlanta @ San Francisco, Dallas @ Baltimore, Arizona @ Philadelphia, Carolina @ Minnesota, Detroit @ NY Giants, Tampa Bay @ Chicago
12/3	CBS	NFL — Denver @ New Orleans, Miami @ Buffalo, Oakland @ Pittsburgh, Seattle @ Atlanta, Tennessee @ Philadelphia; NFL Today
12/10	FOX	NFL Pre-Game
12/11	CBS	NFL Today
12/11	ESPN	Super Bowl III: When the Game Changed
12/12	ESPN	Basketball — Big East Conference
12/14	ESPN	Basketball — Xavier @ Cincinnati
12/16	FOX	NFL — Washington @ Pittsburgh
12/16	CBS	NFL — Oakland @ Seattle
12/17	ESPN	Football — NCAA Division 1-AA Championship
12/17	FOX	NFL — Atlanta @ New Orleans, Green Bay @ Minnesota, Detroit @ NY Jets, Chicago @ San Francisco
12/17	CBS	NFL — Baltimore @ Arizona, Indianapolis @ Miami, Denver @ Kansas City, Jacksonville @ Cincinnati, New England @ Buffalo, San Diego @ Carolina, Tennessee @ Cleveland; NFL Today
12/19	ESPN	NFL — NY Giants @ Dallas
12/19	ESPN	SportsCenter
12/20	ESPN	College Football Bowl Special
12/21	ESPN	Basketball — Wake Forest @ Temple
12/22	ESPN	Basketball — Indiana @ Kentucky
12/23	FOX	NFL — San Francisco @ Denver
12/23	CBS	NFL — Jacksonville @ NY Giants
12/23	ESPN	Basketball — Indiana @ Kentucky; NFL — Buffalo @ Seattle
12/24	FOX	NFL — Arizona @ Washington, Chicago @ Detroit, St. Louis @ New Orleans, Tampa Bay @ Green Bay
12/24	CBS	NFL Today
12/24	ESPN	NFL Countdown; Football — Jeep Oahu Bowl
12/25	ESPN	NFL SportsCenter
12/26	ESPN	SportsCenter, NFL's Greatest Game: 1991 NFC Championship, NFL's Greatest Game: Raiders @ Colts '77
12/27	ESPN	SportsCenter
12/28	ESPN	Football — Insight.Com Bowl
12/29	ESPN	Football — AXA Liberty Bowl, Culligan Holiday Bowl
12/30	ESPN	Football — Sylvania Alamo Bowl
12/31	FOX	NFL — Wild Card Pre-Game, Wild Card Game
12/31	CBS	NFL — AFC Wild Card Game
12/31	ESPN	Football — Sanford Independence Bowl
11/27 - 3/26	TSN	NHL games; NFL football; NASCAR and CART racing; Sportsdesk
11/27 - 3/26	CTV	NHL games; PGA golf
11/27 - 1/22	Global	NFL games, playoffs and superbowl package
11/27 - 1/22	Headline Sports	NFL billboards
12/11 - 1/15	TNN	Best of Shadetree, Car & Driver Television, Crank & Chrome, Eighteen Wheels, Martial Law, Horse Power, My Classic Car, Trucks!, Magnificent Seven, Motor Madness, Race Day
12/11 - 1/15	WEATHER	Storm Watch, Your Weather Today, First Outlook and Weather-Triggered programming

Journey to the Top

The Season's Most Memorable Milestones



February 27: Dura Lube/Big K 400, Rockingham

The Interstate Batteries team took their first victory in the second race of the season. Starting from the third position, Bobby stayed in the top-10 the entire race, took the lead on lap 241 and never looked back.

"We're off for six or eight weeks," said Bobby, "and we come back strong and win the second race. ... We didn't lose nothin' over the wintertime. And that set the precedent for the whole season."



Bobby and the #18 team won at Rockingham — their first victory of the 2000 season.

March 12: Cracker Barrel 500, Atlanta

In one of the closest finishes in NASCAR history, Bobby and the #18 team came up 10 inches short of Dale Earnhardt who took the checkered flag. After starting back in the 22nd position, Bobby patiently worked his way toward the front of the pack. In the end, he was one hundredth of a second shy of the victory.



In this remarkable finish in Atlanta, Earnhardt edged out Bobby by only 10 inches for the win.

"We just didn't quite have enough," said Bobby. "But I'll tell you, we fought our heart out right there at the end — Dale and I both did. That's about the hardest racing I've ever done."

April 16: DieHard 500, Talladega

A 17-car pile-up on lap 138 tore up the Interstate Pontiac and eliminated Bobby's chance for the victory. After repairing the front end, the #18 team performed well and dodged a near catastrophe.

"I looked at the car afterwards," said Bobby. "We could have busted the radiator, gotten the oil pump or something like that. Fortunately the guys worked real hard and got it back out there. ... At least we finished up 21st, which wasn't all that bad."

May 6: Pontiac Excitement 400, Richmond

On lap 351, Bobby found himself with nowhere to go except over the front of Jarrett's car, causing major damage to the #18 car. The team repaired the damage and had to cut the power-steering belt, but Bobby drove like a champion the last 30 minutes and came in 26th — his worst finish of the season. But the team was relieved to have lost as few points as they did.

"We were able to finish off the season without a DNF (Did Not Finish)," said Bobby, "which as everyone knows, is the key to finishing up in the point standings." Bobby and Dale Earnhardt were the only drivers in the top-40 to accomplish this feat.



August 5: Brickyard 400, Indianapolis

The #18 team had an impressive final pit stop that kept them within a car length of Rusty Wallace en route to a 4.229-second victory — their second of the season. Bobby took the lead on lap 146 and held it for the final 15 laps. With a stretch of poor finishes in the summer, crew chief Jimmy Makar felt that winning the prestigious Brickyard 400 put an exclamation point on an already great season.



Joe Gibbs, Jimmy Makar and Bobby observe tradition by kissing the bricks at the Brickyard.

"There are races that are more special," said Bobby, "and this is definitely one of them. ... When we're sitting in the cabin one day, when we're done and retired ... the Brickyard 400 ... that's one that we'll talk about — that and the Coca-Cola 600 and, maybe one day, the Daytona 500."



September 3: Pepsi Southern 500, Darlington

This was the defining race of the #18 team's season. Following a scary accident in practice on Friday, a sore Bobby Labonte powered the back-up car from the 37th starting position to victory lane. The crew picked up 22 positions during pit stops throughout the race and, on a final pit stop of 14.8 seconds, bumped Bobby from fifth position to the lead before the race was called for rain.

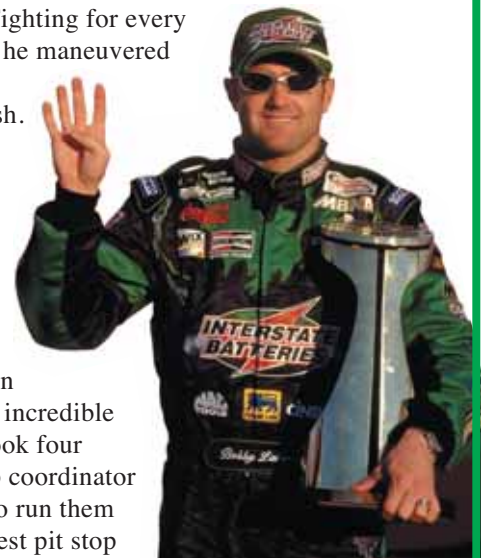
"We came in the pits fifth and went out first," said Bobby. "That was the total deal. ... We had a roller-coaster ride by tearing a car up, coming from the back of the pack and winning a race, in the rain! ... To go from near tragedy to triumph — who would have thought?"

The pit crew made all of the difference in several races this season including the Darlington victory, which was a wild ride from 37th place to 1st!



October 1: NAPA AutoCare 500, Martinsville

With pinpoint precision, Bobby moved up through the field to the top-five by the race's halfway point. But near disaster struck twice. Bobby rear-ended Jerry Nadeau's car while leaving the pits. After the team repaired the fender and replaced a cut tire, they came within 20 feet of losing a lap. Then finding himself in a 360 spin coming off of turn four, Bobby gunned it, kept driving and lost only one position, earning a prominent spot in that week's highlight films. Bobby said afterwards that this was his first time to pull off a 360 without hitting the wall. Fighting for every position and overcoming a great deficit, he maneuvered the banged-up #18 Pontiac from 25th position to a respectable 10th-place finish.



That makes four wins, baby!



October 8: UAW-GM 500, Charlotte

The Interstate team earned their fourth victory in the season's most competitive race, which had 46 lead changes. Bobby led 12 separate times and came off pit road for the final time in eighth place with four new tires after an incredible 14.4-second stop. "Of all the cars that took four tires, we beat them all out," said pit stop coordinator Jeff Chandler. "That put us in position to run them all down." The pit crew nailed their fastest pit stop ever earlier in the race — an amazing 13.61 seconds!

October 22: Pop Secret 400, Rockingham

Bobby radioed in to say that the left rear tire was cut down. He was right; he had run over a pop rivet. Most drivers know when they have a flat, but Bobby has the uncanny ability to detect which tire has the problem. If he hadn't come in, that tire would have blown in another lap or two; the unscheduled pit stop cost the team a lap but salvaged a 20th-place finish.

November 12: Pennzoil 400, Homestead

This was a special day for Joe Gibbs Racing as Bobby and the #18 team clinched the 2000 Winston Cup Championship and teammate Tony Stewart won the race. Bobby and Tony took a victory lap side by side. "For two



Tony Stewart offered Bobby some champagne in honor of his clinching the 2000 Championship.

teams to be able to win on one day — one a race and one a championship," said Bobby, "I don't think it really gets much better than that."

"When you look around and see everyone happy and enjoying the win," said owner Joe Gibbs, "that's what makes it

Making Racing History

Bobby Labonte and Joe Gibbs Racing have made their mark as the 2000 Winston Cup Champions. While that in itself is remarkable, there's quite a bit more history that surrounds this prestigious title.

1st to follow his brother to the championship

Terry Labonte was the Winston Cup points champion in 1984 and 1996. Even though nearly eight years separate Terry and Bobby, the two have a very close relationship. On becoming the first set of brothers to win Winston Cup titles, Bobby said, "...to go from watching him race hobby stocks at Corpus Christi Speedway when he was 15 and I was eight, watching them tear down a '57 Chevy ... I can remember those days, so I guess that's what makes it all so special. We've raced for a long time now. To be a part of winning the championship — both of us — I think that's just overwhelming for our family."



The Labonte brothers shared a great moment after the final Atlanta Race in 1996; Bobby won the race and Terry won the championship!

And Bobby received some good advice from his older brother at Homestead, "He told me, 'You won't feel like you've done anything tomorrow,' and he was right. It was like a normal day. It just has not sunk in yet. He also advised me that in New York (at the banquet) it will sink in a lot ... I think the biggest thing Terry said was, 'Just make sure you enjoy it.'" Bobby plans to do just that.

1st to win both the Busch and Winston Cup championships

We found it surprising that this hasn't happened before, but Bobby Labonte is the first to win both. He won the Busch Championship in 1991, which was pretty special since Bobby was both owner/manager and driver of the Slim Jim team, and his father, Bob, was crew chief.

"When things were going right in '91 for the NASCAR Busch Series championship," said Bobby, "we did the same thing as we did this year. Consistency is what it's about."



A championship pose: (from L to R) Alex Makar, Patti Makar, Ms. Winston, Dillon Makar, crew chief Jimmy Makar, engine builder Mark Cronquist, Interstate chairman Norm Miller, team owner Joe Gibbs, driver Bobby Labonte, Donna Labonte, Tyler Labonte and Madison Labonte.

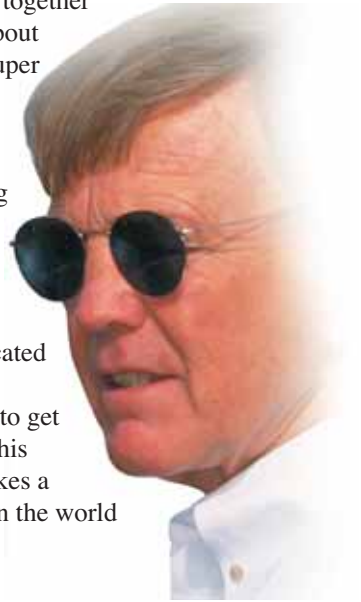
Engine Builder of the Year heads winning program

Team engine builder Mark Cronquist had to get through the long Atlanta race weekend before he knew that he edged out Rusty Wallace's builder to win an added honor — Mark is Winston Cup's Engine Builder of the Year for 2000!

The crew can also celebrate that the 18 car made the shortest run from establishing an engine program to winning a championship title! Mark entered Winston Cup racing in 1985. In '95, he came to Joe Gibbs Racing and began building engines that performed well even in the first year. He said, "It has been really rewarding for me to see the engine department progress to where it is today... adding a second team to our stable has been a big benefit. We're able to experiment with more ideas, which has been an advantage for us."

1st owner/coach to win the title in two major sports

The owner of the Interstate Batteries racing team, Joe Gibbs, won the 1983, 1988 and 1992 Super Bowls as coach of the Washington Redskins, and he was still coaching when he put together Joe Gibbs Racing nine years ago. When asked about how he felt becoming the first person to win a Super Bowl and a Winston Cup title, Joe explained, "People always ask me if I thought about championships when I got into racing, and I've got to tell the truth. The only thing I was thinking about was surviving..."



"Over here it took nine years. In football, I think we went to three Super Bowls in nine years. It's very hard, and you have to have a group of dedicated people. You have to have great pit stops, office people, shop people and engineering ... It's hard to get a group like that. What I think is so great about this sport is that you can't buy it. It's chemistry. It takes a certain kind, and I'm the most fortunate person in the world because ... I know I am around great people."

It Ain't Easy Bein' Green

When we started with Joe Gibbs Racing in 1991, the team was less than enthusiastic about a green car because that color was thought to be unlucky among many racers. When the first #18 car (back then it was a Lumina body) came out of the paint booth, Interstate's vice president of advertising/PR Charles Suscavage remembers Jimmy Makar saying something like, "It looks like an old taxi ... an ugly taxi ... In fact, it's the ugliest thing I've ever seen." They all hoped that it would get better with the decals. And it did, a little.

The team started winning in spite of the color, and they soon came around to our 'Interstate green.' Charlie explained, "It's a very recognizable car, whether it's out on the track or in a magazine photo, which is probably why several teams have tried bright green paint schemes over the years. Ours seems to be the most lasting ... and I think the Interstate Batteries #18 car is the first green car to win that Winston Cup title. One thing's for sure. It looks great against the black and white of any Winner's Circle!"

1st battery sponsor to win championship

Our affiliation with racing and in particular with Joe Gibbs' team has been extraordinary from the start, said Interstate Batteries President/CEO Tommy Miller. "When Joe Gibbs approached us about sponsoring his team, he didn't have an employee or even a bolt to his name, much less a car or a shop. But we could see his dream, his vision. From the first meeting we had with Joe in 1991, we knew he was in it for a championship."

"We're excited to be the first battery company to help a team attain the very prestigious Winston Cup Championship title," said Tommy. "Our organization has grown to love racing, and we all take a great deal of pride in our team's tremendous accomplishments. And it's sure not gonna hurt our sales either!"



Going, Going, Gone the Distance!

In the 2000 season, Bobby was able to run 10,228 out of a possible 10,237 laps in 34 Winston Cup point races — that's 99.9%, and that's an amazing accomplishment! That consistency came from excellent decisions in the pits, out on the track and back at the shop. ■

Must Be 18 to Win!



Bass Boat – Daryl Salemi, L.D.V. Inc., Burlington, Wisc. Our final Creative-Ad-Contest winner, Daryl won this auto-graphed Bobby Labonte replica racing helmet. In designing his #18 bass boat, he combined the three things that he likes doing most: fishing, watching Bobby race and spending time with his two kids. Daryl thinks of himself as Bobby's biggest fan.

Car Hat – Jerry Lipson, IBS of Space Coast, Melbourne, Fla.

Jerry's headwear was fashioned from a hard hat, a radio-controlled car body, racing decals and two screws. He says that he attracts some attention when he wears it to the races.



Car Jack Bobby Watts, Seneca, S.C.



Bobby saw his son Logan dragging his heavy-duty car jack to his room with the aim of jacking up his race-car bed. A loyal Labonte fan, Bobby built Logan this #18 wooden jack with wheels to protect his hardwood floors.



Radio-Controlled Airplane Jesse Doyle, Johnson Controls, Winston-Salem, N.C.

Jesse chose this paint scheme for his radio-controlled airplane because he likes Bobby Labonte, Joe Gibbs and everything about Interstate Batteries.

We invited you — our Interstate dealers — and Bobby Labonte fans to send us photos of the most creative Interstate “ads” out there. We were looking for unusual displays of the Interstate name, and you certainly delivered. Each entry was judged on the quality and creativity of the “ad.” We had two winners — one for the June 2000 Current and one for this December issue. Here are some of the contest entries, as well as some of our distributors' creative advertising. ■



Mac Toolbox Joe Stewart, Nock's Firestone, Pocomoke City, Md.

When he bought this used toolbox, Joe said it needed a paint job. So, being a big Bobby Labonte fan, he decided to paint it Interstate racing colors. Nock's has been selling Interstate batteries for six years.



Truck & Trailer – John Clark, Clyde Wanslee Auto Sales, Tucson, Ariz. A huge Bobby fan, John painted his 1980 Datsun pickup and utility trailer like the #18 Pontiac. He and his wife take the truck to the local racetrack every weekend.



Bobby Bedroom – Kaleb Campbell, Perry, Mo. Kaleb, now eight years old, proudly presents his Bobby Labonte bedroom. One of his walls sports a big #18 painted by his mom. When people tease Kaleb about going overboard, he tells them, “I can never have too much Bobby stuff.”



Super Midget Race Car – Floyd Alvis, Champion Automotive, San Carlos, Calif. Five-time Bay Cities Racing Association champion, 65-year-old Floyd races his super midget on the West Coast of California. Floyd has been selling Interstate batteries since 1972.

RV and Squirrel Rick Barrett, Hamilton, Ohio

Rick says he likes Bobby Labonte because “he doesn't run on ego but on style. He's a classy dude.” While painting flames on his trailer, Rick noticed the plastic squirrel sitting in his yard and thought, “That squirrel needs to get ‘Labonteed’ (pronounced Labontaid).” The green and red squirrel, which perches on the RV's rear ladder on racing trips, has logged 5,000 miles this year; Rick, his four race-watching buddies and the squirrel went to 16 races in his #18 motorhome.



Toni's Texaco Station Justin Parker (17), Ryan Weeks (16), Joe Helevy (17), Josh Winters (19), Toni's Texaco, Port Angeles, Wash. Owners Frank and Toni Thompson boosted battery sales by outfitting their gas pumps with Interstate racing shirts and hats, and by hanging an Interstate

Forklift – Steve and Ginny Kostechka, IBS of Metro-Chicago, Chicago, Ill.

They get the job done at their warehouse with this #18 forklift, which was painted, decal'd and tricked out by Lif-Tech, an Interstate Dealer. It features a chrome racing dash with a tachometer and gauges, wheels with brass lug caps, and tires with a yellow racing pin stripe.



What a Collector's Item!



**Distributors and Dealers
please call for special pricing.**

Back

Description	Item #	Price	Total
Championship T-shirt	CCH1109W	\$21.00	
Championship T-shirt			Subtotal
Size	Qty	Size	Qty
SM		XL	
MED		XXL	
LG		XXXL	
			Tax (NC residents only add 6%)
			Shipping & Handling
			TOTAL

NOTE: For shipments outside the U.S., call or fax for additional charges. Please include your fax number below.

Ship to: Residential Commercial

Please print clearly.

Fax # (____) _____

Name _____ Day Phone (____) _____

Mailing Address _____ Apt. # _____
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\$.00 to \$100 - \$8.50
\$101 to \$200 - \$10.50
\$201 to \$300 - \$12.50
\$301 to \$400 - \$14.50

Bobby... From Under the Hood to Behind the Wheel

Bobby spent a few years as a crew member and as a mechanic in the shop, so he has a special understanding of the pit crew and the race car. "The man has a phenomenal feel for what is happening to the race car while he is driving," said pit stop coordinator Jeff Chandler. "In Atlanta, he's running along on a green flag run, and he comes on the radio and says, 'I've run these tires to the core.' Jimmy told him the next pit stop was scheduled in seven laps and asked him if he could wait. 'I'm telling you the right rear tire is into the cords,' Bobby said as he brought the car in. Another lap, and the tire would have exploded. That's just the kind of feel he has for it."

In another race this year when the oil-pump belt kicked off, Bobby diagnosed it by looking at the oil pressure gauge. "It was amazing," said Jeff. "There are so many things going on in a race car, I



Starting in 1983, 19-year-old Bobby Labonte worked for two years on the pit crew for his brother Terry, who won the Winston Cup Championship in '84. Bobby's mother, Martha, says that Bobby would even sweep the floors for the opportunity to be around the race team.

don't know how he had the presence of mind to know that." If Bobby hadn't brought the car in when he did, the engine would have blown in another 10 seconds. Most drivers know when the car has a problem, say a flat tire. Bobby has the ability to pinpoint exactly what the problem is, say the left rear tire is cut down. Bobby's past experience under the hood has helped him become a champion behind the wheel. ■

Winning More Than Races

Joe Gibbs has always played to win, and to do that, he depends on more than his relentless work ethic and dynamic personality. His deep-rooted faith has helped Joe succeed in nearly everything he has attempted, and it has become part of everyday life at Joe Gibbs Racing.

A subtle demonstration of the team's faith sits on the back bumper of the #18 Pontiac – John 3:16 *"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."*

And it shows up in the team's mission statement: "Our goal is to field for our sponsors and fans competitive race cars on a consistent basis with the goal of winning races and championships. Our expectation is that we will be able to see in our growth and success, things that would have never been accomplished except by the direct intervention of God." So it's no surprise that upon winning the championship, the team gathered for a prayer of thanks before celebrating. ■



The back bumper of the Interstate Batteries Pontiac features a verse to inspire the team as well as fans.

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Look for us at www.interstatebatteries.com