

# INTERSTATE® BATTERIES

# CURRENT

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Volume 13, No. 2

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May 1997

## NASCAR Goes Green with Interstate!

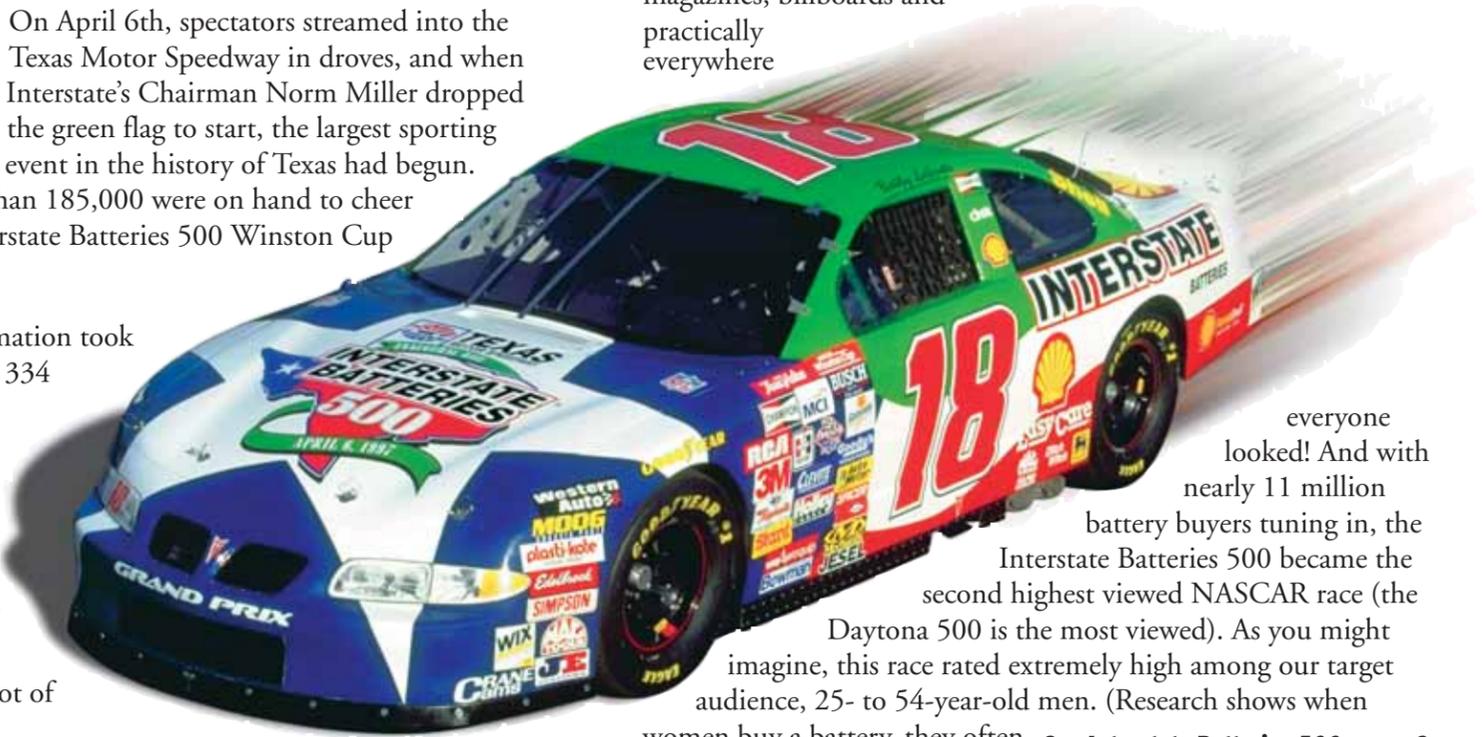


It was every bit as exciting as it promised to be, and it looks like Winston Cup racing has found a home in Texas!

On April 6th, spectators streamed into the Texas Motor Speedway in droves, and when Interstate's Chairman Norm Miller dropped the green flag to start, the largest sporting event in the history of Texas had begun.

More than 185,000 were on hand to cheer on the inaugural Interstate Batteries 500 Winston Cup Race.

An amazing transformation took place during the next 334 laps, where curious onlookers turned into avid race fans and NASCAR followers became fanatics! More importantly for all of us in the automotive industry, it turned a lot of



consumers into more aware battery buyers!

Publicity for racing was at an all-time high in newspapers, on radio and TV, in national trade magazines, billboards and practically everywhere

everyone looked! And with nearly 11 million battery buyers tuning in, the Interstate Batteries 500 became the second highest viewed NASCAR race (the Daytona 500 is the most viewed). As you might imagine, this race rated extremely high among our target audience, 25- to 54-year-old men. (Research shows when women buy a battery, they often *See Interstate Batteries 500, page 2*

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## Win Race Tickets!

### Head to the Duralube 500 in Phoenix November 2

In the February, 1997 CURRENT, we ran an incentive for tickets to the Interstate Batteries 500 Race to show you how much we appreciate your loyalty. But after the mailing house informed us (on Feb. 27) that the CURRENTS were not mailed in January as promised, we knew many Dealers would feel more disappointed than valued when they read of our contest with an entry deadline of March 15, 1997.

We sincerely apologize to all of you who received your February CURRENTS too late to enter the contest. Even though we postponed the deadline from March 15th to the 21st, and we were able to receive several thousand more faxes in that week, we know it was "too little, too late" for many of you to win.

In order to make it up to you, at least a little bit, Interstate Batteries will hold another drawing awarding TWO DEALERS A TRIP FOR TWO to the Phoenix race Nov. 2, 1997! We know it won't be the inaugural Interstate Batteries 500, but we hope another chance to win will restore a little of the confidence you may have lost in us after receiving your newspapers so late. If you already entered for the first drawing, there is no need to reenter; you're already in the new drawing. If you would still like to enter, please send your name, business address and

phone number along with your commitment to sell 50 battery units during 1997 to Race Tickets, Interstate Batteries, 12770 Merit Dr. Ste. 400, Dallas, TX 75251 by September 1, 1997.

By the way, the four Dealers who won the trip to the Interstate Batteries 500 will not be eligible to win the additional drawing. We hear they had more than enough fun coming to the Interstate Batteries 500. Good luck and good selling! ■

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

*to the Dealers who won a trip to the Interstate Batteries 500!*

**Steve Martini of Cincinnati, OH**

**Steve Vest of Bradenton, FL**

**Larry Nelson of San Diego, CA**

**Bill Broddus of Austin, TX**

INTERSTATE BATTERY SYSTEM OF AMERICA, INC.  
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Dallas, Texas

# Interstate Batteries 500

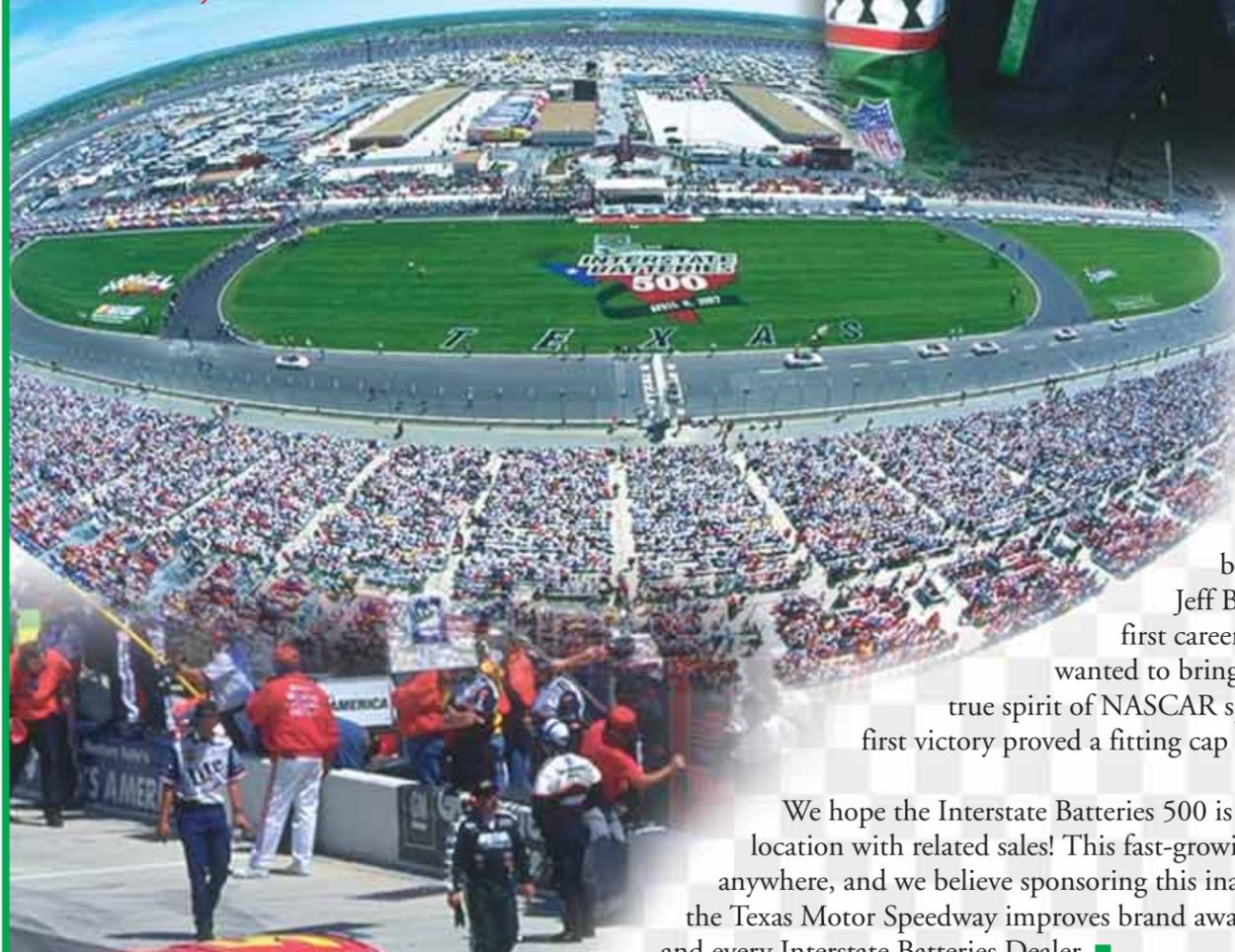
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check with a husband or boyfriend or dad or male friend before making the purchase.)

NASCAR Drivers found the Texas Motor Speedway quite a handful for their first time out, and there were some spectacular wrecks as they adjusted to the fast but challenging new track. Even though 73 of the 334 laps were run under the yellow caution flag, the Interstate Batteries 500 featured 19 lead changes among 10 drivers which made for some pretty competitive racing.

*The Texas Motor Speedway welcomed more than 185,000 fans for its inaugural Winston Cup race (and everyone of them heard and saw the name Interstate Batteries everywhere!).*

*Co-grand Marshals of the event, Joe Gibbs (left) and Tom Landry (right) get together with Interstate's Chairman Norm Miller (center) who dropped the green flag to start the Interstate Batteries 500.*



Bobby Labonte, driving the Interstate Batteries #18 Pontiac painted with commemorative colors honoring the event, stayed in the top ten the entire race and made a late charge to finish third. Coincidentally, he also climbed to a career-high third in the overall season point standings, behind only his brother Terry and Dale Jarrett. An emotional Jeff Burton finished first in the race, to record his first career Winston Cup victory. Bobby Labonte wanted to bring this one home for Interstate; but, in the true spirit of NASCAR sportsmanship, the excitement of a driver's first victory proved a fitting cap to the day.

We hope the Interstate Batteries 500 is making even more history at your Dealer location with related sales! This fast-growing sport boasts the most brand- loyal buyers anywhere, and we believe sponsoring this inaugural event at the Texas Motor Speedway improves brand awareness for each and every Interstate Batteries Dealer. ■

*Our team is gaining even more publicity due to the likeable brothers, Bobby Labonte (#18), and last year's Winston Cup Champion Terry Labonte (#5), who in the last year or so often run side by side in the top five.*

*"Game face" on, Driver Bobby Labonte gets ready for the Interstate Batteries 500.*



*The commemorative paint scheme featuring a Texas Star marked a very exciting inaugural race for the top drivers in the world.*

*Crew Chief Jimmy Makar and Driver Bobby Labonte have to be in sync to achieve success in today's extremely competitive field.*





**Jeff Chandler**  
**Mechanic/Tire Changer**

**T**here's a lot of pressure riding on the tires Jeff Chandler changes, so to speak, as with the other six members of the Interstate Batteries #18 pit crew. In addition to his mechanic responsibilities during the week, the most challenging aspect of Jeff's role at Joe Gibbs Racing comes on race day during the high-pressure pit stops. He changes front tires at the speed of light, as well as coordinates pit stops and evaluates them to make the next stop even quicker than before. Recently, we caught up with Jeff to ask him about life from behind the pit wall.

**When you rate a pit stop, do you rate it mostly on time, consistency or the amount of work you do?**

By far, it's time. Overall speed is the ultimate objective – how fast you can get the most amount of work done, so you can get the driver back on the track.

**What do you do between pit stops?**

Well, after a pit stop's over, I watch the video and evaluate it just after it happened. With a stop watch I clock how long it took for me to change a tire, for Doug (Shaak) to change his tire, Jimmy (Makar) to jack the car up, Todd (Meredith) to mount the tires and how long it took Peter (Jellen) to put the gas in. We used to evaluate pit stops only when the race was over, but now we evaluate as soon as it happens and make any corrections right then.

**What are the other guys doing between pit stops?**

Well, Jimmy is the jack man and the crew chief, so he gets back on the tool box and makes all the calls. Chris (Gillin), the catch can man, he's also the tire man. He's setting pressures, keeping up with tire codes, stuff like that. Peter, the gas man, he has to

# Life on Pit Row

weigh the gas can, figure out how much fuel the car is taking, what kind of fuel mileage we're getting and how far we can go. He's got a big responsibility there. Todd Meredith, my tire carrier, clocks the leaders' times versus our times. He's our scorekeeper in the pits, so he stays real busy doing all that. Doug, the rear tire changer, can watch the race unless we have an air wrench failure or an equipment problem. He'll handle those for us. So, really, everybody who goes over the wall has a lot to do between pit stops.

**How do you prepare for a race mentally?**

I pray. That's the only thing that can get you prepared for the pressure of these races. I mean, if you try to take on that pressure yourself, you'll crack. So you have to turn it over to somebody else.

**Do you do any physical training for your job?**

I work out every night during the week by lifting weights and riding a bike. I have to do it every day to keep in good shape for race day. On Saturdays I take a rest, and then Sundays, of course, it's time to race.

**How many practice pit stops do you do in preparation for a race?**

We practice every Tuesday afternoon for an hour. We usually do six stops, where we'll try to incorporate some new ideas somebody has. That's when we watch and evaluate tapes of other pit crews, and maybe we see something they're doing that could make us quicker. We also have a pit practice every Tuesday night after work just for guys on the team who aren't on the pit crew but want to be. I go out there, clock those guys and evaluate them. Then I turn those reports into Jimmy, our "head coach." If we have someone who's pretty good, he'll come out and watch them. Before they can get on the pit crew, they'll have to go through Jimmy's scrutiny.

**How often does an opening on the pit crew come available?**

Umm, usually when somebody dies! You have to be pretty impressive for us to take somebody off the pit crew.

**What day of the week do you go to the track for a race?**

I go on Sunday mornings. If there's a Busch race, I'll go on Saturday and pit

Bobby's Busch car. I used to travel early with the cars, but since my children have gotten older and are playing ball and stuff like that, I didn't want to be away so much. We have six guys from the team who leave for a race on Thursday, and probably another eight guys come in on Sunday mornings.

**What's your work schedule on Monday after a race?**

The day starts at 7 a.m. when we unload the car that we raced on Sunday and do a post-race inspection. When we're done with that we start disassembling the car, inspecting every piece that comes off of it. This usually takes up the day on Monday. On Tuesdays we start setting up the car for the next race. Once that car's set up and the truck's loaded on Wednesday, we start doing the maintenance on the car we just finished racing. All the parts we took apart have to be cleaned up and the bearings repacked; all the suspension pieces magna-fluxed.... It's just a continual process every Monday through Friday. We're either putting a car together or taking one apart and doing the maintenance on it.

**What is the most challenging aspect of your job?**

Definitely the pit stops, because the pit crews have gotten progressively better over the years, just like the race cars and race car drivers have improved. Also, with the new rules NASCAR put in place about a year and a half ago, it puts more pressure on the tire changers not to make any mistakes. Our mistakes are magnified now with television and radio – if you mess up, everybody in the world knows it.

**What are some of those NASCAR rules that affect pit crews?**

Well, it used to be that you could use three air wrenches and three tire changers, but NASCAR changed the rules so you can use only two air wrenches and two tire changers. So you used to be able to have one real good tire changer and two mediocre tire changers; now you have to have two real good ones. It used to be you were only as fast as the guy on the front. But now, you're only as fast as the guy on the back, because he has the furthest distance to travel and the most work to get done.

**What's some of your job history in racing?**

At the end of 1995 I came to Joe Gibbs Racing after working for Ricky Rudd for a couple of years. Before that I was at Bahari Racing for three years, where I was Crew Chief on Michael Waltrip's Busch car. And prior to that I worked for Rick Hendrick for four years and also Dick Bahre and Alan Kulwicki.

**Do you have any hobbies during your spare time?**

My wife, Tammy, and I have a garden, and we enter our stuff in the fair every year. That's our biggest hobby – winning blue ribbons at the fair. She's got 'em for her baked goods, and I've got 'em for my hot peppers. And then our children – those are the biggest hobbies in the world! My daughter, Kristin, is 8 and my son, Tyler, is 5. The nice thing about working at Joe Gibbs Racing is that I have time to spend with my family. Yes, racing's a high-pressure business, but this team has a family environment, and that's the best part of working here. ■



During the April 6th Interstate Batteries 500, Jeff Chandler (left) approaches the specially designed #18 car for a quick front-tire change.

# Dear Interstate...

If you have an interesting Interstate battery story or any comments, we'd like to hear from you. Please write to:  
CURRENT • Interstate® Batteries • 12770 Merit Drive, Suite 400 • Dallas, Texas 75251

Dear INTERSTATE:



## ANOTHER HAPPY INTERSTATE CUSTOMER!

*My car always sits outside, as it did one day last winter when we had blizzard-like conditions with -15° temperatures and a wind chill of -58°. I went to start the car that morning and realized I had left my dome light on inside the car for over 15 hours. I could not believe that my car started! This battery went above and beyond the call of duty.*

*I have used your batteries in my other vehicles since my mechanic recommended them over five years ago, and I have had great luck with them. I also want to thank my Dealer, Randy's Repair.*

*An Interstate customer forever,*

*Kevin McKinney  
Storm Lake, Iowa*

Dear INTERSTATE:

*After having numerous battery problems over the past few seasons, our racing team switched to Interstate batteries this year. Having no problems racing a "retired" modified, #9NH, our last race tells the story. During my warmups at White Mountain Motorsports Park, the front universal joint broke out of its retainer. Luckily the driveshaft safety loop did its job though it suffered minor damage. Between the shrapnel and the thrashing around that the driveshaft did, the battery case was ruptured. It drained empty before I was pushed from the track.*



*We repaired the driveshaft and ran the second heat – we even finished fourth in the feature! We had started the car at least seven times over five hours with no electrolyte.*

*Thanks for helping us finish the season on the track and not trailered with a DNF!*

*Jeffrey Nichols  
Hudson, N.Y.*

## Amaze-N-Tow Depends on Interstate

In 1994, Butch Walker of Carrollton, Ga., introduced his Amaze-N-Tow™ pallet carrier to the landscaping industry in hopes that his product would break new ground in agriculture. In two and a half years, the unique capabilities of the powerful Amaze-N-Tow, which can carry up to 4,000 pounds when attached to a car or pickup, have attracted not just one market but a variety of industries with numerous applications. The carrier is used for transporting sod, hay and even ATM® machines –



*The powerful Amaze-N-Tow pallet carrier, invented by Interstate Batteries Dealer Butch Walker, comes equipped with a marine/RV SRM-27.*

basically anything within the weight requirement that can be carried on a pallet.

Butch began hand-producing pallet carriers after his work on a sod farm prompted his

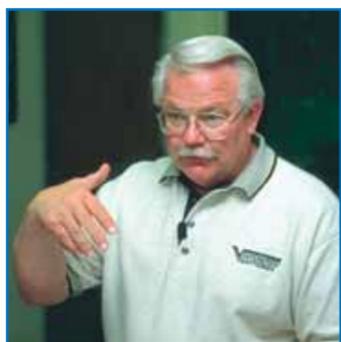
invention of a single-pallet device. Since then he has sold more than 200 Amaze-N-Tows, using the Interstate SRM-27 to power a hydraulic pump in the machine. Butch says he chose Interstate batteries for his product because of the dependable service he receives from Distributor Marc Duncan in nearby Rome, Ga. With the recent acquisition of a U.S. patent for the Amaze-N-Tow, both Butch and Marc are optimistic that Amaze-N-Tow sales – and in turn Interstate battery sales – will quickly escalate in the months to come. ■

# TECHTALK

WITH **INTERSTATE® BATTERIES** PROCLINIC® INSTRUCTOR **GALE KIMBROUGH**

## Improve Your Battery Balancing Act

GALE KIMBROUGH



**W**e often have to work with multiple batteries to achieve desired power demand requirements. The batteries may be placed in:

- series to achieve a higher voltage
- parallel for increased current, or
- a series/parallel combination.

Whichever method is used, you need balanced power to gain the highest efficiency.

Let's look at some examples. Batteries connected in any of the three type systems work the most effectively when they have the same CCA, Reserve Capacity and life expectation. When this balance is attained, all of the batteries (with connections in good working order) operate equally to supply the necessary load capabilities.

I'm often asked about new batteries being installed alongside older batteries. "Should I replace all of the batteries in one unit when one battery goes bad?... What happens to the performance level of the new battery being installed?"

Before we answer, let's give a couple of examples. Let's say Joe has a truck fleet with three group 31s for starting.

**Example 1:** The batteries were installed together two years prior. One of those batteries has recently tested bad. Should he change all three batteries?

**Example 2:** Joe also has a truck in which the batteries have been in the vehicle for only 10 months. (An inadequate connection on the terminals caused a burned post on one of the batteries.) This battery has to be taken out of the group. Should he replace all three batteries in this situation?

There is no exact law concerning the exact time or length of life before all batteries within a system should be replaced as a unit. However, there is a general rule.

When starting batteries differ in age by nine months or more, it is often best to replace them all.

What should you do with the other batteries? They are often good. One suggestion for a fleet is to use the following good battery management practices.

In example 1, the batteries had been in service for two years. The other two batteries load test well and could easily have one or more years remaining life expectancy. Therefore the

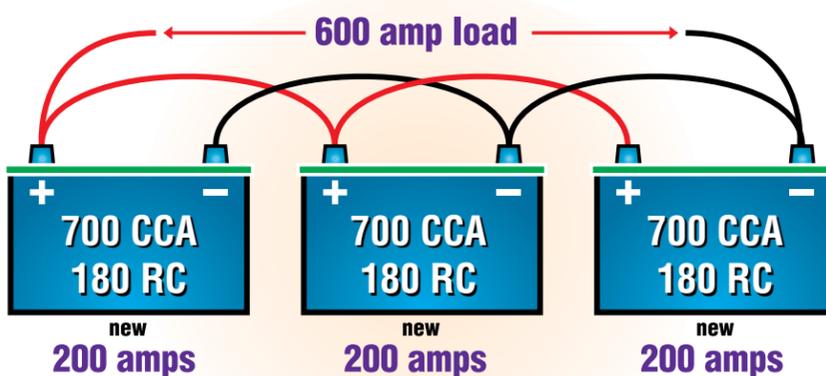
best scenario would be to

- verify load test results of the remaining batteries, and
- match them up with other batteries removed with similar life and/or capacities.

In the second example, again verify and compare load test

When batteries are unequal capacities, such as different CCA or RC ratings, nine months or more difference in age or unequal load test results, the higher capacity battery will work harder. In effect the newly installed battery may deteriorate at a faster rate.

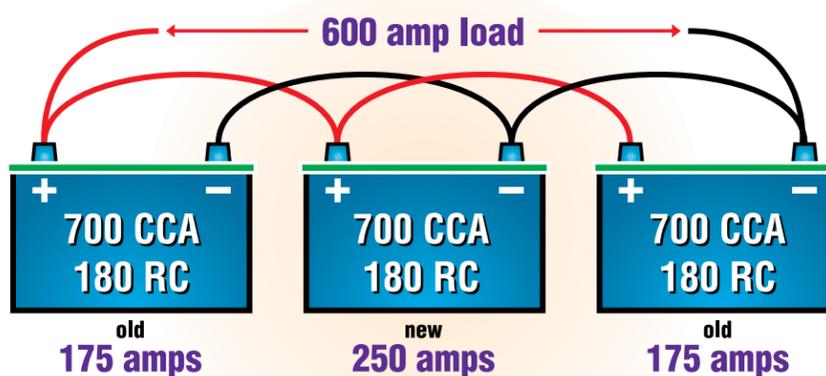
### Parallel batteries equally sharing the load



results. When comparing load test results, first match state of charge levels (i.e. 75%, 100% etc.) on the remaining batteries; then secondly, match load test

To make your battery system function as well as possible, place equal rated and similarly-aged batteries together. It is also

### Parallel batteries unequally sharing the load



results. If the starting batteries' load test results are within 0.2 volt of one another (i.e. 9.9v and 10.0v respectively), they should function well together.

a good battery management practice to utilize older balanced batteries in the same system. ■



## Interstate has Trained **40,000** Technicians!

**A**t an April 15th ProClinic in Las Vegas, Nev., we marked our 40,000th training participant, and President of Interstate Batteries Tom Miller recognized the entire group of about 100 local technicians. Gale Kimbrough, who has been training automotive professionals for nine years for Interstate, was the instructor on hand for this milestone occasion.

Both the automotive and heavy duty ProClinic programs are known for their excellence in our industry, and since this training began in January 1986, it has helped Interstate Dealers and associates to keep up with our fast-changing industry. If you're interested in attending a ProClinic, please give your Interstate Batteries Distributor a call. ■



The group of automotive technicians who attended the Las Vegas, Nev., ProClinic in April included Interstate's 40,000th trainee!

# Own Some Racing History!

## To Order:

Call customer service

9 a.m. - 5 p.m. EST

weekdays at

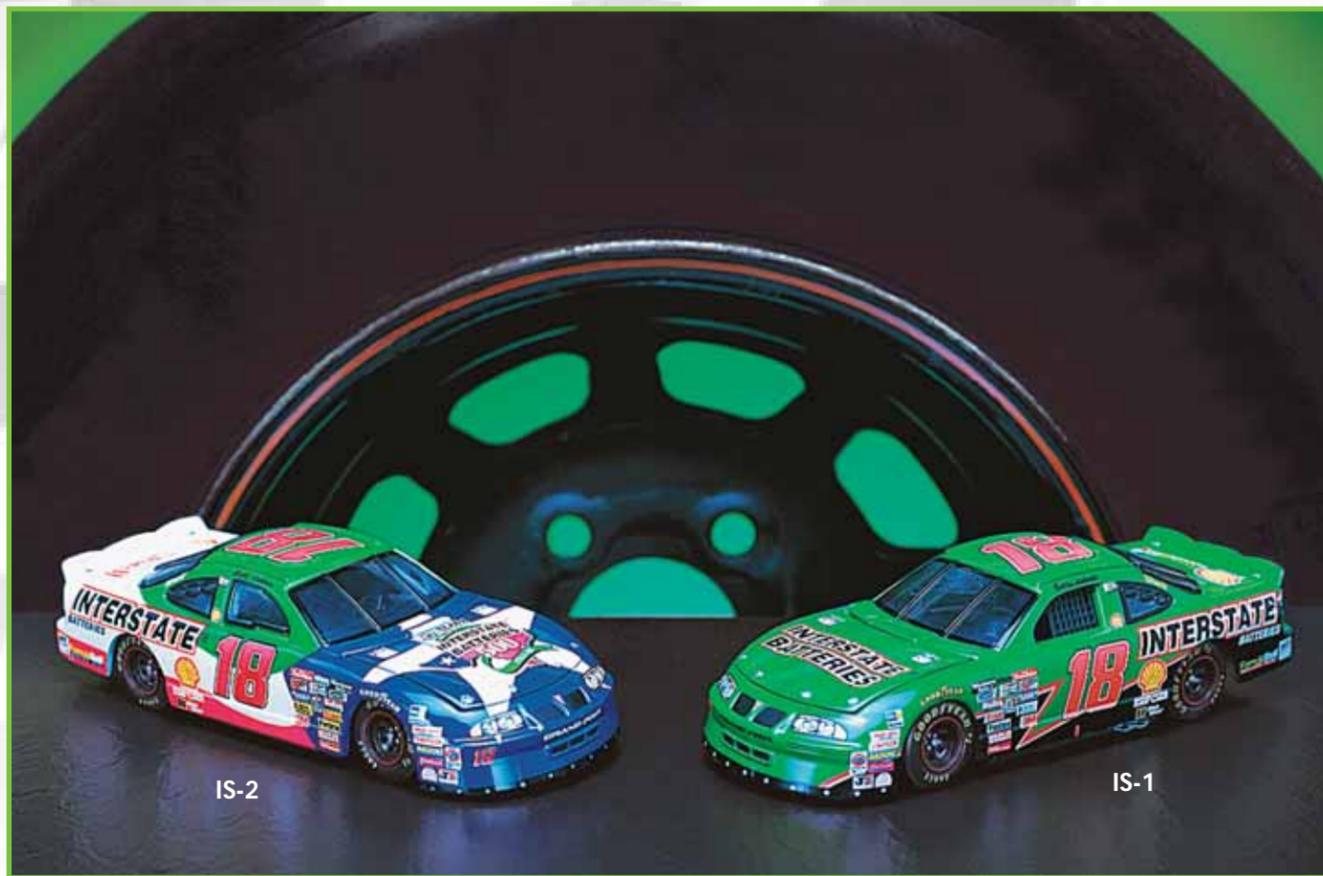
**1-800-268-7471**

OR

Fill out the form below  
and mail along with  
payment to address  
shown.

Credit card orders may  
also be faxed 24 hours to:

**1-704-376-3871**



IS-2

IS-1

### METHOD OF PAYMENT:

VISA/MasterCard

American Express

Discover

Check or money order

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: Fletcher - Barnhardt & White (please do not send cash)

Please print clearly

Fax (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Ship to: Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Day Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

(No P.O. Box please)

ITEM #	DESCRIPTION	QTY EA	PRICE EACH	SUBTOTAL
IS-1	1:24 Scale Bobby Labonte Interstate Batteries #18 Hobby Car		\$24.95*	
IS-2	1:24 Scale Texas Inaugural Interstate Batteries #18 Hobby Car		\$29.95*	

\*Plus applicable sales tax, shipping and handling.

### REMIT ORDER TO:

Interstate Batteries Hobby Car Promotion  
C/O FBW  
P.O. Box 11857  
Charlotte, N.C. 28220-1857

**Offer good while supplies last!**  
**Please allow 12 weeks for delivery.**

Merchandise Total

Shipping, Handling & Insurance

\$7.00 for first car plus \$1.00 for each additional car

TOTAL

Add applicable sales tax- all states except  
AK, DE, IA, LA, MT, ND, NH, OR, SD, VT, WV, WY

TOTAL ORDER AMOUNT

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

These highly sought-after 1:24 scale collectibles both feature fully detailed interiors, unsurpassed graphic replication with up to 130 tampos hits and baked enamel finish. A must for any serious race fan.

For Thou, Lord, are good  
and ready to forgive and  
abundant in loving  
kindness to all who call  
upon thee.

Psalm 86:5

For information about how you can find  
salvation through Jesus' unconditional  
love, please contact Jim Coté at

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Join Us On The

## World Wide Web!



Interstate Batteries' web site is  
gaining popularity and we're  
always happy to highlight an  
Interstate Dealer's business

information and photo. After all, it's in our best  
interest to promote your  
business and especially your battery  
sales. Please send us your business  
name, location and any other  
information that shows why  
customers should come to your  
location, along with a photo taken on  
a sunny day in a way that we can see  
your Interstate Batteries sign if  
possible.

Other exciting news about the  
Interstate Batteries site on the

Internet is that we're developing an  
**online Dealer locator**, available 24  
hours, which is another way we can  
send more customers right to your  
door! Also, an online replacement  
guide is underway, so that you and  
your customers can enter vehicle  
make and model to find out which  
battery is right for the application.

As you can see, we're using  
technology to your advantage to  
keep Interstate Batteries the #1  
replacement brand in North  
America. ■

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