

Clint Bowyer Defends 2008 Win at Richmond this Saturday Night

Clint Bowyer will put on his BB&T uniform again this weekend, receiving more attention than normal in Richmond, Va. During this race last May, he set a Richmond International Raceway record by starting 31st and finishing first, the biggest improvement from start to finish for a winning driver.

One can easily say that Bowyer stole the checkered flag at the end of last year's race, but no one can say he did not earn it.

Bowyer started 31st in the BB&T Chevrolet and patiently maneuvered his way through the field to become a contender at the end of the race. Bowyer was in third place behind Dale Earnhardt Jr. and Kyle Busch when Busch and Earnhardt collided with two laps remaining in the race while Bowyer dipped below them to take the lead. Bowyer defended the lead on the last lap after a caution period, beating Busch to the finish line.

"I've always said that luck is when preparation meets opportunity, and Clint was prepared to take advantage of the situation," said Richard Childress, president and CEO of Richard Childress Racing.

Bowyer explained the circumstances that led to his only win in 2008.

We were riding third when I saw them (Earnhardt, Jr. and Busch) start beating and banging, and I thought to myself, 'I just need to ride right here and see what happens, take care of the car and if something happens, it'll be there for the taking.' You've got to look at who's up there racing and how hard they're racing, and get up there close enough that if something happens you're in a position to take advantage of it. I got up there close enough to them and, sure enough, it happened."

In six starts at Richmond International Raceway, Bowyer has never finished worse than 12th and has an average finish of ninth. He will start Saturday night's race in the BB&T Chevrolet ranked eighth in the standings, but he is less than 100 points away from the driver in fifth place.

Bowyer has been on the track instead of in the garage at the end of every race since Phoenix in November 2006, a streak of 82 races. When the two-time winner crossed the finish line at Talladega Superspeedway last week, he set a new modern-era record of 82 consecutive races without a DNF (did not finish). Bowyer is now just two races shy of tying the all-time record held by Herman Beam, who did not run his races consecutively, but did make 84 starts from 1961-1963 without recording a DNF.

Live coverage of the race on Saturday, May 2, begins at 7 p.m. ET. The race will be televised live on FOX and broadcast worldwide on the Motor Racing Network and Sirius XM Satellite Radio. Qualifying will be televised live on SPEED Friday, May 1, at 5:30 ET. MRN and Sirius XM Satellite Radio will provide qualifying updates live.