



CLINT BOWYER

Relying on Mobil 1 at the Daytona Road Course

KANNAPOLIS, North Carolina (Aug. 10, 2020) – It was more than seven years ago and he barely remembers it, but Clint Bowyer, driver of the No. 14 Mobil 1 Ford Mustang for Stewart-Haas Racing (SHR), is one of the few NASCAR Cup Series drivers who've logged laps on the 14-turn, 3.57-mile road course at Daytona (Fla) International Speedway where the series will race for the first time in Sunday afternoon's Go Bowling 235.

Bowyer drove an AF Corse GT entry in the 2013 Rolex 24 with teammates Rob Kauffmann, Rui Aguas and two-time Daytona 500 winner Michael Waltrip. The foursome finished 16th overall and seventh in class in the 24-hour event, logging 677 laps around the track.

His Daytona road course experience, Bowyer is the first to point out, came in a much more nimble sports car compared to the 3,500-pound Cup Series car he'll driving Sunday.

"I'm probably unique since at least I have some laps on the racetrack," Bowyer said. "It was a long time ago. I don't even remember those laps, but I ran the Rolex 24 and have some experience on that track. I think there are definitely drivers and teams who have experience of running at the Rolex who will be ahead of the pack, ahead of the curve, for sure. But, it's nothing like driving one of these Cup cars. That's going to be totally new to all of us."

Bowyer's limited experience became even more important when NASCAR ruled there would be no practice or qualifying for Sunday's 234.65-mile event. NASCAR also added a chicane to the exit of the superspeedway oval's turn four to help slow speeds before entering the infield portion of the course. There is already a chicane on the backstretch of the oval. The rumble strips used for the chicane are the same ones used for the "roval" at Charlotte (N.C.) Motor Speedway.

Temporary lights will be brought in for the infield in case the 65-lap race has to be run into the night.

"I think it's a tall order to show up there and to run a track that we've never been on before with a tire combination, rule package, aero, horsepower, everything we've never even seen before," Bowyer said. "It's going to be a crapshoot for everybody."

He said he understands why NASCAR is not allowing practice or qualifying amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

"These are challenging times," he said. "To ask the team to come up with a unique car again for a backup car and everything else, I mean, it's saving them money. I get it. Everything's tight right now. So, you've got to give and take in this scenario, and I think that's definitely a given for this race."

Bowyer will carry the decals of Mobil 1 on his No. 14 Ford on Sunday. Mobil 1 isn't just the world's leading synthetic motor oil brand, it also provides the entire SHR team with leading lubricant technology, ensuring that all SHR Mustangs have a competitive edge over the competition on the track. In its 17th consecutive season as the "Official Motor Oil of NASCAR," Mobil 1 is used by more than 50 percent of teams throughout NASCAR's top three series.

"With all the unknowns this weekend at Daytona, we are glad we can count on Mobil 1 in our Ford Mustang," Bowyer said. "There are a lot of questions, but I know our Roush-Yates engines are going to be strong and reliable. ExxonMobil knows our sport and our engines inside out. Andy Moran and his Mobil 1 lubricant engineering team help to develop new formulations at points throughout the year, which constantly exceed our very high expectations and provide the vital improvements we need."

Sunday's race is as important as any race so far this season, according to Bowyer. He arrives 12th in the driver standings after finishes of 14th and 19th in last weekend's doubleheader at Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn. Bowyer is 14th in the playoff standings with a 60-point cushion for the final transfer spot into the 16-driver playoff field.

A win at Daytona Sunday secures a spot in NASCAR's postseason, but a good run helps in padding his points cushion with just three races left in the regular season thereafter. The Cup Series will run its third doubleheader of the season Aug. 22 and 23 at Dover (Del.) International Speedway, then return to Daytona Aug. 29 to race on the oval for the regular-season finale.

“This is the time of the year when the pay window starts to open and we want to be there,” Bowyer said. “Obviously, we need some good runs at both Daytonas and both Dovers coming up in the next few weeks. I’m pretty confident. Both of those places have been good to us in the past.”

Bowyer should be one of the favorites Sunday at Daytona. He has scored the fourth-most points of any driver in the last nine road-course races held at Sonoma (Calif.) Raceway, Watkins Glen (N.Y.) International and at the Charlotte “roval.” He owns 12 top-five finishes in his 30 career road-course races.

With laps on the track at Daytona, even though it was a long time ago, a successful career on road courses, and partnering with Mobil 1, Bowyer has an arsenal of weapons as he goes into battle for Sunday’s race.

CLINT BOWYER, Driver of the No. 14 Mobil 1 Ford Mustang for Stewart-Haas Racing:

Do you enjoy battling for the playoff position in these final regular-season races and eventually competing in the playoffs?

“I wish we had a win earlier in the season and we wouldn’t have to worry about these races, but it’s still fun. It’s do-or-die time. It’s the playoffs. You watch these football teams go through these playoffs and how exciting it is and it’s our turn to have those nerve-racking moments and do-or-die moments for your race team and your season. But I’m looking forward to it.”

Has your mentality changed to the must-win way of thinking?

“It’s kind of a must-win situation at all times. In life, if you wake up and say, ‘I don’t really need to win today,’ you’re probably going to suck.”

What do you remember about the 2013 Rolex 24 on the Daytona road course?

“It was a really, really cool, the atmosphere and the excitement in the air before the race, the prerace ceremony, the starting grid. That was their biggest race of the year. I think our Daytona 500 is exactly like that, with the thrill and the excitement in the air like that, especially down on the starting grid. It’s kind of comparable.”

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