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INTERSTATE BATTERIES



www.interstatebatteries.com

Volume 16, No. 2, June 2000

Race Fans Name Interstate Best Sponsor

Interstate Batteries continues to make big headlines and big impressions. We were named the "Best Corporate Sponsor That Supports a Team" in a poll of 3.6 million race fans in Stock Car Magazine's June 2000 issue. Points leader Bobby Labonte made the cover of the May issue. And in the article titled "A Familiar Face," Interstate's Chairman Norm Miller was described as "perhaps the best-known sponsor in racing." Our familiar faces—Bobby Labonte, Joe Gibbs and Norm Miller—are clearly helping Interstate Batteries become a more familiar name. ■



Pontiacs Upgrade Downforce

NASCAR agreed in early June to allow the Pontiacs a new rear bumper cover, putting us on a more even level aerodynamically with the Chevys and Fords. With the new part, Bobby took his first pole of the season June 10 for the Kmart 400 and set a Michigan Speedway track record with his 189.883 mph lap! Although he finished the race third, he had the fastest car on the track according to Joe Gibbs.



Bobby said, "I'm glad NASCAR gave us something. We were asking for three things that would have made us equal with the other makes in terms of aero numbers, but at least it's a step in the right direction." ■

Sign of a Winner

Norm Miller
Interstate Batteries
Chairman of the Board

Tommy Miller
Interstate Batteries
President & CEO

Joe Gibbs
Joe Gibbs Racing
Race Team Owner



Tommy Miller and Joe Gibbs signed the new four-year racing sponsorship contract with Norm Miller watching.

Joe Gibbs Racing and Bobby Labonte will be with Interstate Batteries for a long time to come! We recently signed a four-year contract through 2003 with an option year for 2004.

"I think that we were put together for a particular reason," said Joe Gibbs. "I think God ordained it. I really do. Hopefully what this is going to lead to someday is all of us [Interstate Batteries and Joe Gibbs Racing] sitting at the lead table in New York [NASCAR Winston Cup Series Awards Banquet]." Having already been with Joe Gibbs Racing since

1992, this contract assures us of at least a 12- or 13-year relationship together.

"A lot of people may not realize how long Interstate Batteries has been involved with Joe Gibbs Racing," said Bobby Labonte. "Since they got involved in 1992, they have been the major sponsor of the #18 car. It's all we know to be honest with you. I think except for maybe three or four other sponsors, Interstate Batteries has been with Joe Gibbs Racing longer than any other sponsor/owner combination. That says a lot about their commitment to this team." ■



Interstate Batteries is teaming up with Major League Baseball (MLB™) to showcase a special edition All-Star Game® paint scheme July 1 at the Pepsi 400 in Daytona. The 71st All-Star Game will be played July 11 at Turner Field in Atlanta. Major League Baseball will feature the car at all functions during All-Star week, and the publicity and association with Baseball are sure to be a giant plus for Interstate.

"Bobby Labonte and Joe Gibbs are clearly all-stars in their own right," said Tim Broshnan, Executive Vice President of Major League Baseball, "and we are extremely excited about our association with them."

FINAL ANSWER?



Regis Philbin, a guest of Coca-Cola at the Coca-Cola 600 on Memorial Day weekend, was chauffeured around in the Interstate Batteries limo.

Photo courtesy of Steven Rose Photography.

INTERSTATE BATTERY SYSTEM OF AMERICA, INC.
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Dealer Spotlight: Terlingua Auto Service

In the desert flats near the western edge of Big Bend National Park is Terlingua, TX. Once a mercury mining town, it is best known today for its Terlingua Chili Cook-off, which draws some 5,000 "chiliheads" every November. The rest of the year, Terlingua has less than a thousand residents. There's not a major city within hundreds of miles, and the nearest commercial airport is nearly 270 miles away in Midland. No local radio or television station reaches the remote area. But the little town does have an Interstate Batteries Dealer... Terlingua Auto Service. In Big Bend, one of the country's hottest and most remote regions, Terlingua Auto Service is clearly one great place for battery sales.

"Tourists come out here with a battery that's on its last days," said owner Archie Gill, "and this 115 degree heat does them in."

"The locals around here all got Interstate batteries," said Archie. "But there's not that many local people here, and Interstate batteries last a long time. If we depended just on the locals for battery sales, it wouldn't be that great because the batteries do so well."

But being only a couple miles from one of the two entrances into Big Bend National Park, Terlingua Auto Service is able to sell 150-200 batteries a year, about 75% of that business coming from the tourists.

"There's nowhere else for people out there to buy batteries," says Aldo Subia, the Route Sales Manager who's been running the Big Bend route for nearly three years. "It's either buy Interstate or take a long drive." There's not a Walmart or a

Sears within 150 miles. Remote areas like this reveal one of the great benefits of Interstate Batteries—consumers can buy them just about anywhere.

Other Interstate Dealers throughout the Chihuahuan Desert region of West Texas are also

Terlingua Auto Service sells lots of batteries to the tourists who visit nearby Big Bend National Park. Owner Archie Gill (left) stands next to his daughter and son-in-law, Amanda and Tommy Willard, who also work at the shop.



doing quite well with battery sales. Every three weeks, Aldo drives the two-day, 620-mile

Big Bend route. His stops are the towns of Fort Davis, Marfa, Presidio, Redford, Terlingua, Alpine, Marathon and Sanderson—not exactly well-known metropolitan areas. Averaging 40 miles apart, each of these towns, besides Alpine, has only a

few Dealers. With so many miles and so few Dealers, a shrewd businessman might think it hardly worth the trouble to haul batteries out there. But it turns out that this group of Interstate Dealers sells more batteries than many other Dealer groups serviced by IBS of West Texas, which also covers the Midland-Odessa area.

DEALER PROFILE:

I've been an Interstate Dealer: 30 years (14 years in Terlingua)

We stock: 30 batteries

We sell: 150-200 batteries per year

Our top-selling batteries: MTP-65, 24F-50, 24-50

Why we like Interstate:

The consignment. "The route service works real well. We try to keep it where Aldo doesn't have to rotate batteries and where we never run out. We don't want to lose any battery sales."

How we sell batteries:

Put up lots of Interstate signs. "People come by and see the signs, and they stop."

Tell customers about the warranty. "I tell them any Interstate Dealer will be happy to handle the warranty for them. I show them the 800 number on the battery and tell them that Interstate is everywhere."

Battery selling tip:

Perform a thorough test on the car and explain the results to the customer. "The best salesman for these batteries is a good diagnostic technician. Take a minute to explain to the customer the condition of everything you found, and the battery will sell itself. Be honest with the customer, but don't be pushy." ■



James Hughes' #18 Interstate Batteries fridge was the first winner of our Interstate Creative Ad Contest.

NOW THAT'S COOL!

In our last issue of the *Current*, we invited Interstate Dealers and race fans to send us photos of the most creative Interstate "ads" out there. We had a great response from some really creative folks!

Congratulations to the June WINNER, James Hughes of Hughes Custom Paint in Midland, Mich., for his #18 Interstate Batteries fridge—the coolest "ad" sent in. He won the **Interstate leather racing jacket** shown here. Other interesting entries included a radio-controlled airplane, a mobile tool chest, golf carts, forklifts and a ceramic squirrel—all painted like the #18 Pontiac.



If you missed out on the first half of the contest, you have another chance. We will choose one more winner for our November issue of *Current*. Any unusual display of the Interstate name (that maintains the integrity of our logo) qualifies. The entries will be judged on the quality and creativity of the "ad." The winner for the November 2000 issue will win this **autographed Bobby Labonte replica racing helmet!**



Entries must be received by September 30, 2000. Send your photo entry with your address and phone number to:

Interstate... Still #1



In the past 12 months, Interstate Batteries total sales were 12,129,936—a new company and battery industry record that strengthens Interstate's position as the leader in replacement battery sales!

“What makes this new milestone so satisfying,” President/CEO Tommy Miller said, “is that Interstate sales are growing despite the overall battery industry's decrease over the past couple of years, which we believe is due to the mild weather much of North America has been experiencing.”

At Interstate Batteries' recent convention in Nashville, Tenn. (with more than 2,300 Distributors and their staff and family members attending), executives reported that although Interstate is best known for automotive products, there has been a healthy rate of growth in all battery markets.

Interstate automotive unit sales, with the majority now represented by our Mega-Tron brand, have grown to more than 7.6 million units, up about 300,000 units over the past two years.

Strong growing trends in other markets were also reported. Over the past two years:

- Commercial starting battery sales have grown the most; one out of five commercial batteries sold today is an Interstate brand!
- Marine/RV, Lawn & Garden and Golf Cart battery sales are all up several hundred thousand units.
- Motorcycle and sealed lead acid battery sales are also growing as we keep pace with the needs of these popular markets.

“It is really gratifying to see that our system and our Dealers continue to provide what consumers need—excellent quality batteries through a network of businesses they can trust,” Miller said. “We appreciate what a good job our Dealers do, and are extremely pleased the future looks very bright with Interstate Batteries.” ■

More Opportunity for Extreme Sales

Interstate's Extreme Performance battery is now available in a more versatile group size, a 75/35, so that more of your battery customers can enjoy the advantages of a spiralcell design.

The Extreme Performance AGM-720-DT features:

- 720 CCA
- top and side posts
- 24-month FREE-replacement warranty!

This product will be attractive to owners of more common cars, such as late model GMs, Fords and Chevrolets, who like the sealed product and power that will last through some

Extreme Performance batteries are available for a variety of deep cycle and starting applications, and you can let your local Interstate Distributor know if you are interested in carrying this line.

What is spiralcell design and how does it work?

Each cell has only two thin lead plates, one positive and one negative. These plates are wound into a tight spiral and separated by an absorbent glass material. This material is very thin so that the lead plates can be close together; this enhances the flow of electrical current and lowers the battery's internal resistance. The result? More power.



The new AGM-720-DT is smaller than our other Extreme Performance batteries so you can offer spiralcell technology to fit more conventional vehicles. It will be available later this summer.

of the most extreme conditions. Your customer with specialty and seasonal starting applications will be interested to know spiralcell design advantages include:

- Zero maintenance
- No corrosion
- Fast, crisp starts
- Increased endurance—up to two-three times longer than conventional starting batteries
- Extra vibration resistance
- Any mounting position
- Quicker recharging
- Resistance to damage by deep discharge
- Better recovery from discharge
- Low self-discharge rate
- Safer handling—it's completely sealed, and the electrolyte is completely absorbed
- No special storage or handling procedures

To further enhance corrosion resistance and the adverse affects of high temperature environments, higher lead purity is used. Thinner, more tightly wound lead plates allow for more surface area per cell, which increases the amount of energy stored in the battery.

The spiralcells are pressure-inserted with electrolyte, which is absorbed by the porous glass separator material. There is no free space between the plates so that shorting and damage due to vibration are virtually eliminated. ■



Spiralcell design withstands extreme conditions.

Dear BATTERY ANSWER MAN



GALE KIMBROUGH



Q: I've heard that adding one aspirin to each cell of a tired lead acid battery will restore the cell and give you a little more battery life. Is this true? Or is it an old wife's tale?

Ronnie Jones
Clovis, New Mexico

A: This is one of the old wives tales that has been passed along regarding batteries. If you drop an aspirin into a battery, you will typically see a chemical reaction taking place as the aspirin reacts to the electrolyte, but this reaction does not revitalize the battery. We recommend adding nothing but distilled water. No other additives have been proven to extend battery life, and many actually decrease it.



Q: The May 2000 MotorHome Magazine suggests that flooded, lead acid 6-volt golf cart and RV batteries should be equalized

with high-voltage charging—15 to 16 volts monthly or bimonthly at 2 to 5 amps. Do you recommend this? And how should I do this?

P. R. Watson Jr.
Bridgeport, West Virginia

A: Normally, an equalization charge is only required when:

- batteries are set up on float (maintenance) charge for an extended period (months)
- there is a situation where the batteries are not functioning to their original Ah potential
- the specific gravity of the battery varies more than 30 points between any of its cells.

When you place an equalization charge on a battery, it is critical that you monitor it to ensure that:

- it does not spew violently during the equalization charge
- it does not become overheated during the charge process
- it is adequately ventilated
- it has the proper amount of electrolyte
- all equalization safety precautions recommended by the battery and coach manufacturer are followed.

Dear Interstate...

Dear Interstate,

As a part-time agent for American Eagle Airlines, I met a family of five that the Make-A-Wish foundation was attempting to send to Disney World. Their 8-year-old girl, confined to a motorized wheelchair, used a respirator powered by a lead acid deep-cycle battery that even the Secretary of Transportation could not have been able to get onto a commercial passenger flight!

After determining the type of battery approved for this application, less than 30 minutes remained before departure time. I knew the Interstate Distributor was near the airport. I made a frantic call to explain the situation. The Interstate Distributor had one in stock and delivered it immediately.

That family may never know how easily their Make-A-Wish trip could have been cancelled by a simple "Sorry, we can't do that," but I know the folks at Interstate Battery System of Evansville made it happen.

David Jones
Evansville, Indiana

Dear Interstate,

In 1984, I went on a trip in a '77 Chrysler Cordoba from San Diego to Marble Falls, TX. After a number of electrical problems along the way, I found myself at a Stuckey's in the middle of the Arizona desert with a dead battery, so I called the 1-800 number on the battery. I was given the number for the nearest Dealer, which was about 50 miles away. I called the Dealer and explained that there were no vehicles in the area to jump start my car. The man said he knew where I was and would be there in about an hour. He drove 50 miles into the desert, installed a new battery in the car for no charge and said he was sorry my trip had been delayed. I was in awe. I thanked him, tipped him and off I went. Needless to say, I have stocked Interstate batteries ever since.

James Boucher
Mira Mesa Automotive Repair
San Diego, California



Please send "Battery Answer Man" questions or "Dear Interstate" stories to gshull@ibsa.com or to: Interstate Batteries • c/o Battery Answer Man or c/o Dear Interstate • 12770 Merit Drive, Suite 1000 • Dallas, Texas 75251



TECH TALK

WITH INTERSTATE® BATTERIES TECHNICAL EXPERT GALE KIMBROUGH



Now in All Automotive and Light Commercial Batteries

I do not like to change just to change. I like things to stay the same unless I can see a real advantage to changing. When looking at old photographs recently, my daughter reminded me that I still part my hair the very same way. And that's been, well... a long time.

My point is that change doesn't necessarily make a product better; it just makes it different. At Interstate Batteries, a change isn't considered an improvement unless a series of product verification tests authenticates an improved outcome. Well, our latest change has been authenticated by testing; it's a definite improvement.

Positive Grid Alloy Improvement

In September 1998, we improved our already superior dual alloy grid when we introduced PINNACLE Technology—the triple improvement package of a Silver Calcium positive grid alloy, a Negative Plate Paste Expander and a special electrolyte additive—in our Mega-Tron Plus and our group 31 commercial batteries. Testing and analysis of this new technology revealed a 22% increase in cycle life. Our Interstate 50-month and Mega-Tron lines were improved, at that time, with two of the three enhancements, resulting in a 16% increase in cycle life.

Great News

This summer, Interstate will introduce PINNACLE technology into our 50-month, Mega-Tron and light commercial batteries. The most advanced technology in the industry will now be in all Interstate automotive and light commercial batteries.

What This Improvement Means To You

Now, all of your automotive batteries—50-month, Mega-Tron and Mega-Tron Plus—and all of your light commercial batteries will have:

1. Reduced self-discharge rate

The addition of Silver Calcium allows a lower self-discharge rate, which translates into a fresher product for you. Since all batteries self-discharge, Interstate has had a "Fresh Power Guaranteed" policy in place to insure that you get the freshest and most powerful battery available. And it just got fresher.

2. Greater resistance to overcharge

Battery overcharge results from increased internal battery temperature, operating time and charging system regulation. Since vehicle underhood temperatures and charging system voltage regulation levels have soared over the past few years, batteries require a higher level of resistance to overcharge. PINNACLE technology provides the improved resistance needed.

3. Reduced water loss

Our patented PINNACLE technology significantly reduces the battery's propensity to gas and lose water when facing extremes in temperature, charge time and voltage regulation levels. With less water loss, battery terminals and connections corrode less and last longer without maintenance.

4. Improved corrosion resistance

Because batteries today operate in a hotter underhood environment, the internal battery corrosion effects are greatly increased. The Silver Calcium grid design, with its particular combination of chemical elements, enhances the grid's resistance to internal corrosion. This patented grid design significantly improves the grid's resistance to corrosion, increasing battery life.

5. Increased cycle life

Cycle life longevity is extremely important. SAE (Society of Automotive Engineers) J-240 cycle life tests verify that the latest technical enhancements to our batteries are a definite improvement, from 16% up to 22% cycle life results.

Selling Your Batteries with the New Technology

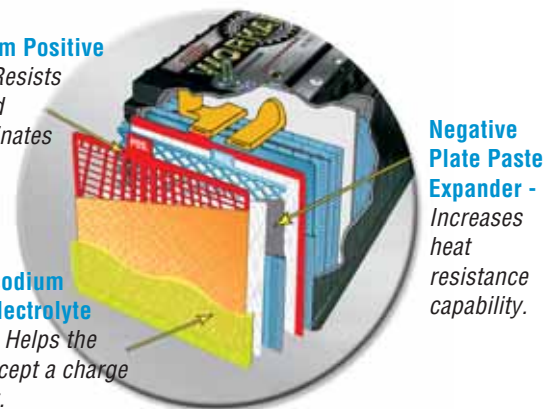
Our Mega-Tron Plus and Group 31 Workaholic batteries have had the superior technology with the Silver Calcium positive grid alloy. Now, all our automotive and light commercial batteries have it, which may affect the way you sell batteries.

Although the chemistry in all these batteries is now the same, there are still three differentiators you can tell your customers: the CCA/RC ratings, the warranty period and the price.

When you discuss these differences with your customers, you can still use a "good, better, best" approach. When it comes to CCA, for example, the 50-month is good, the Mega-Tron is better and the Mega-Tron Plus is best. When it comes to price, however, the customer might see the 50-month battery as best. ■

Silver/Calcium Positive Grid Alloy - Resists corrosion and virtually eliminates maintenance.

Na₂SO₄ (sodium sulfate) Electrolyte Additive - Helps the battery accept a charge effectively.



31-ECL...The News Is Out

Bill Mack talked up the new Interstate 31-ECL battery to his trucking listeners on the Midnight Cowboy, his nightly radio program, in March and April. Of his late night listeners and our Current readers, many responded to the 31-ECL Sweepstakes. And the two winners—Anthony Ponto of West Rutland, Vt., and Donna Linthicum of Joppa, Md.—won expense-paid trips to Dallas to attend Team Texas Driving School in October. The Midnight Cowboy, which airs nightly in all of the U.S. and most of Canada, reaches 1.5 million listeners per month and was a great way to get the word out about the 31-ECL battery, the high-cycle starting battery designed for long haul trucks. ■



Training for Today's Professional Technicians and Mechanics

Look for these four-hour Automotive or Commercial ProClinics coming to your area! For more information, please call your local Interstate Distributor or check www.interstatebatteries.com for future dates. (No registration available at the door.)

September 19	IBS of Green Bay	Appleton, Wis.
September 20	IBS of Green Bay	Green Bay, Wis.

Stylin' in Denim



Features Interstate Racing logo on the front and the #18 and Bobby Labonte autograph on the back. Only available here and at the track.

Description	Item #	Price	Total
Interstate Denim Shirt	C185304D	\$28.50	
Interstate Denim Shirt		Subtotal	
Size	Qty	Size	Qty
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MED		XXL	
LG			
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		Shipping & Handling	
		TOTAL	

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 \$76 to \$100 - \$10.00

Route Managers Honored

Congratulations to Interstate Batteries Norm E. Miller Route Sales Manager (RSM) of the Year winners! This competition (named for one of our best-ever Route Sales Managers and current Chairman Norm Miller), was expanded in 1999 to include seven total winners who were recently honored at Interstate's convention. The Route Sales Manager of the Year program provides a way for Interstate Batteries to measure performance and to recognize the very best of our outstanding Route Sales Managers. Since we depend on them to provide the service for which we're known, we place a great deal of emphasis on this program. Congratulations:



The 1999 winners (from left to right): Ray Brown, Rick Robinson, Joe Mendez, Interstate Chairman Norm Miller, Terry Lantz, Bobby Anderson Jr., Jason Holderfield and Brian Pithers who were honored in Nashville, Tenn. during Interstate's semi-annual convention.

Norman E. Miller RSM of the Year:
 Joe Mendez, IBS of Southern Florida

Rookie of the Year: Terry Lantz, IBS of Detroit

Leading Producers of the Year: Rick Robinson, IBS of Central Massachusetts; Bobby Anderson Jr., IBS of Tampa; Jason Holderfield, IBS of Las Vegas

Specialty Products RSM of the Year: Ray Brown, IBS of Houston

Accessory RSM of the Year: Brian Pithers, IBS of Springfield

You may also want to encourage your RSM to do well in this year's competition, underway through February 2001! ■

"If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

John 8:31-32

For information about how you can find salvation through Jesus' unconditional love, please contact Henry Rogers at:

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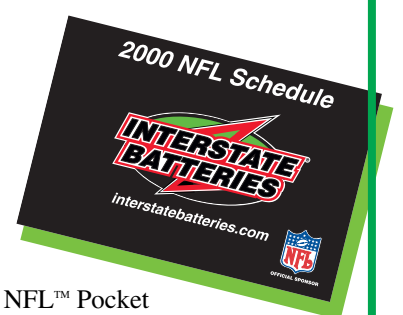
Circuit City Goes Racin'

Circuit City is an associate sponsor on the #18 Pontiac, and this year they stepped up their participation with Interstate Batteries to run their logo on the hood of the car. In fact, it will be prominent on the hood for the Darlington and Richmond races in September. Besides sharing a relationship with us as a sponsor of Joe Gibbs Racing, Circuit City stores carry Interstate Batteries for stereo enthusiasts and other specialty uses. ■



Circuit City will be featured on the hood for the Darlington and Richmond races in September.

NFL Pocket Schedule Coming Soon!



Interested in Interstate Batteries NFL™ Pocket Schedules? The when and where of every game and team for the whole season is listed on this schedule, which is just the size of a credit card. Check to see if your local Distributor is participating, so you can keep track of your favorite team with the 2000 Interstate Batteries Pocket Schedule! Interstate Batteries is an official sponsor of the NFL. ■

