

**AUTO RACING:** The veteran stock car driver will be the star attraction at the Delaware stop of the NASCAR Canadian Tire Series

# Whitlock to push pedal to the metal on final tour

BY JIM CRESSMAN

London Free Press

Dave Whitlock hopes to make this season a victory tour.

It's already been dubbed "Whit's Race to the Finish" as the veteran stock car driver announced yesterday this will be his final year behind the

wheel in a touring series.

The Wyoming resident, who cut his teeth at Delaware Speedway 24 years ago, embarks on his final go-around Saturday when the NASCAR Canadian Tire Series opens in St. Eustache, Que.

The second event in the 13-race series is June 6 at Delaware and Whitlock

expects it to be an emotional moment.

"It's neat that we've got a show there (after a three-year absence for the series)," Whitlock said of where his racing began in 1985. "There are a lot of memories there and a lot of heartbreaks, too."

He's never won a major race at his home track, but the 42-

year-old was the CASCAR Super Series national champion in 1991, '97 and '98.

He's also enjoyed his share of big events, including winning the "Richest short-track race in North America," the Oxford 250 in 1995, plus two American Canadian Tour Milk Bowl wins at Thunder Road Speedway in Barre, Vt.

"I've had a great career with many memorable wins and championships, but it's time to move on and enjoy some other interests," he said.

"I want to have more time with my family. They've sacrificed many activities for me to go racing and I want to give some of this time back.

"Secondly, my other busi-

ness venture (the family construction company) has grown to where it requires more of my attention."

Delaware race director Jeff Wilcox attended high school in Petrolia with Whitlock and was his crew chief from 1996 through 2001.

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# He says it's too early to contemplate Friday late model racing at Delaware

## 2009 NASCAR Canadian Tire Series schedule

**Saturday:** Autodrome St. Eustache (.4-mile), St. Eustache, Que.

**Saturday, June 6:** Delaware Speedway (.5-mile), Delaware

**Sunday, June 14:** Mosport International Raceway (2.459-mile road course), Bowmanville

**Saturday, July 11:** Autodrome St. Eustache (.4-mile), St. Eustache, Que.

**Saturday, July 18:** SunValley Speedway (.5-mile), Vernon, B. C.

**Saturday, July 25:** Rexall Speedway (1.973-mile road course), Edmonton, Alta.

**Wednesday, July 29:** Auto Clearing Motor Speedway (.333-mile), Saskatoon, Sask.

**Saturday, Aug. 8:** Mosport Speedway (.5-mile), Bowmanville

**Sunday, Aug. 16:** Circuit de Trois-Rivieres (1.53-mile road course), Trois-Rivieres, Que.

**Sunday, Aug. 30:** Circuit Gilles Villeneuve (2.71-mile road course), Montreal (part of NASCAR Nationwide Series event)

**Saturday, Sept. 12:** Barrie Speedway (.333-mile), Barrie

**Saturday, Sept. 19:** Riverside International Speedway (.333-mile), Antigonish, N. S.

**Saturday, Sept. 26:** Kawartha Speedway (.375-mile), Peterborough

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"I'm really excited about seeing Dave here on the sixth and then seeing what the future may bring for him, but at the same time it will be sad," Wilcox said.

"He's been a great ambassador. He's helped a lot of racers, whether it was with advice, tires or parts. He was always willing to help them to become better and in turn to grow the sport."

Whitlock Motorsports fields three cars in the Canadian Tire Series, but Whitlock hasn't decided what he'll do with the team. And he said it's much too early to contemplate something like Friday night late model racing at Delaware.

But Wilcox didn't hesitate when it came to that thought.

"If he ever decided to do that, it would be fantastic and I can only hope that may happen. It would be a big benefit to not only the track, but all racers."

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Special to Sun Media

Dave Whitlock was the only three-time national champion in the former CASCAR Super Series, which became the NASCAR Canadian Tire Series in 2007. The Wyoming resident will retire from the touring series at the end of this season.

