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Broken Transmission Ends Lofton's Parker 425 Run

A strong qualifying position gave Justin Lofton the start he was hoping for in the Best in the Desert (BITD) Racing Association's BlueWater Parker 425 over the weekend, but early trouble left him with a much different finish.

"We had a good qualifying spot. We were fifth overall out of 88 trucks. On Saturday, we slid off the road, hit a tree, and broke the transmission. Those things happen in the desert," Lofton said. "We worked on it for a while but we were already out of the hunt for the win. We'll fix it and start testing for the General Tire Mint 400."

Lofton, who won the BITD event in his No. 1577 unlimited buggy in Henderson, Nevada in December, ran just 14 of the 425 miles before the transmission problems plagued his General Tire/College Complete (www.collegecomplete.com) entry.

However, the Parker 425 was only the first of six BITD off-road events that the California racer, who also competes full-time in the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series (NCWTS), has scheduled for the 2012 season, giving him numerous opportunities to revisit the winner's circle. His next event will be March 23-25 in Las Vegas for the General Tire Mint 400. Since its inception in 1967, the event has been one of the most storied in off-road racing competition.

The General Tire Mint 400 falls during a break in NCWTS competition. The following week, he will be back behind the wheel of his No. 6 College Complete Chevrolet at the Martinsville Speedway short track in Martinsville, Virginia. But first, Lofton will kick off the NASCAR season on February 24th at the famed 2.5-mile Daytona International Speedway.

In addition to primary co-sponsors General Tire and College Complete (<http://www.collegecomplete.com>), who also serves as primary sponsor on his No. 6 NCWTS entry, the No. 77 unlimited buggy also had support in Parker from MasterCraft, Fox Racing Shocks, Fortin Racing Inc., Dougan Racing Engines, and Rusty's Motor Car Inc.

Lofton will next be behind the wheel of his full-time ride, the No. 6 College Complete Chevrolet Silverado in the Truck Series, for his first laps of competition this season for practice on February 23rd at Daytona.

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