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# FRONT RUNNERS

## WHOM TO WATCH FOR UP FRONT AT 2017 NASA EASTERN STATES CHAMPIONSHIPS

STORY BY BRETT BECKER

**R** Just as soon as the Western States Championships wrap up at Thunderhill Raceway Park in California, it will be time for the Eastern States Championships at Sebring International Raceway, and a completely different crop of racers will be vying for the coveted title

of National Champion.

We've been looking at the registrations and the points totals for different NASA regions across the eastern half of the United States, and we're prepared to offer our latest predictions on who we expect to see up front at this year's Eastern States Championships. We also

had to look at who's actually registered for the events because, well, you can't win if you don't enter, and some of the known fast guys had not yet entered at press time.

So, all in good fun, and with fingers and toes crossed, we offer our 2017 predictions. Lets' hope we fare better than last year.

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## Spec Iron

We'd be crazy to pick anyone other than Robert Miller to win Spec Iron at Sebring in October — and we're not crazy. He won Spec Iron at Watkins Glen in 2016 and at VIR in 2015. He has experience at Sebring, so he's a good bet for the 2017 Spec Iron Championship. Look for NASA Florida driver Carmine Pace to give Miller a run for his money.



## Spec Miata

Spec Miata is always a tough call because the class has so many first-rate drivers vying for the top spot. For the 2017 Eastern States Championships, we're going off the reservation a bit and picking Todd Buras. He's been on the fringes of a Championship over the last couple of years but hasn't quite broken through. We know he can win at Sebring because he has in the past. As long as he can keep his car in one piece throughout the Championships format at Sebring, we think he has a good shot at P1 for all the marbles. He'll have his hands full, though. Look for other drivers like Danny Steyn, James Drago, Preston Pardus and Texas teen Danny Soufi to be right up front with him.

