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92ND INDIANAPOLIS 500

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the planet

DANICA

RACE WIN? CHECK.
INDY WIN? LET'S DO IT!

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DAN WHELDON

DANICA PATRICK

HELIO CASTRONEVES

MARCO ANDRETTI





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Worldwide race Twelve countries are represented on the entry list for the 500: U.S., Canada, Mexico, Australia, Brazil, England, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, South Africa, Spain and Venezuela.

DANICA ANSWERS THAT QUESTION



Paul Webby/LAT



Paul Webby/LAT

IT'S ALL WIDE OPEN AT THE BRICKYARD



Darrell Ingham/Getty Images

RAHAL V2.0 IS YOUNGEST INDYCAR SERIES WINNER



Loran Hygema/LAT



DANICA ANSWERS

Patrick makes racing history by taking her first

Most everyone knew it was coming, and her father was sure it was imminent. Now Danica Patrick has to answer a new question: "When are you going to win your *next* race?"

In her 50th start, Patrick passed Helio Castroneves on lap 198 then cruised to a five-second victory, making her the first woman to win a major open-wheel race. She and Castroneves were on a different fuel strategy than the rest of the front runners, who all had to make late pit stops, leaving it to a duel between the Andretti Green Racing and Team Penske drivers.

"Finally," Patrick said in Victory Lane. "This has been a long time coming. It was a fuel strategy race, but my team called it perfectly for me. I know I was on the same strategy as Helio [Castroneves] and when I passed him for the lead, I couldn't believe it. This is fabulous."

With six laps remaining, Scott Dixon had a 3.6s lead. But the leader had to pit for a splash of fuel on lap 195. Dan Wheldon and Tony Kanaan had to follow suit on lap 196. That left the door



Trophy envy... Helio Castroneves notices a very slight difference between coming in first and second at Motegi

S THAT QUESTION

st IndyCar Series win in Motegi

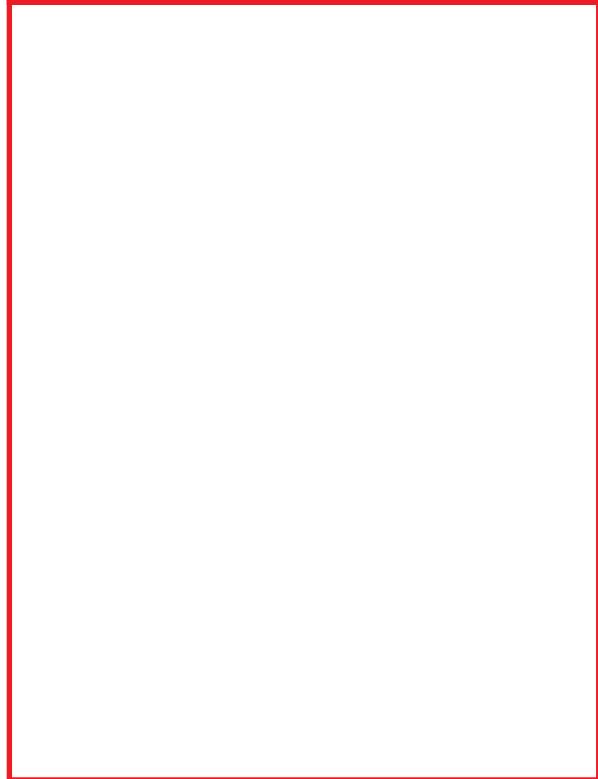
open for Patrick and Castroneves, whose last pit stop came on lap 148 (read the full story on page 8).
"I kind of knew from the start if we had enough fuel that I was going to have a chance because I was saving fuel from the first lap and nobody else looked like they were. So I knew at that point there was a chance to finish much higher," Patrick said.
Probably even Patrick didn't realize what the reaction to her first victory would be. In the ensuing days, she appeared on her former team co-owner David Letterman's show, *The View* and *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*. She'd better get used to it, because plenty think this is only the beginning, including her boss.
"I think Danica is such a fantastic person and I'm thrilled for her that the monkey is finally off of her back," said AGR co-owner Michael Andretti. "We have all believed in her and she proved today that she is a winner. Frankly, I think this is the first of many."
For Patrick's thoughts ahead of the 92nd Indianapolis 500, check out page 14.

THIS JUST IN...

WHAT, WHERE, WHEN
The **92nd** Indianapolis 500
Indianapolis Motor Speedway
(200 laps/500 miles)
Indianapolis, Indiana
1p.m. (ET) May 25 2008
Tickets instix.brickyard.com
TV May 25, noon (ET) - ABC (live)

Experience counts The 92nd running of the Indy 500 has three 500 winners in the field, plus another seven races. In addition, six more of the entered drivers have won Champ Car races, and three more have been F

THIS JUST IN...



GET INDY EVERYWHERE

When you're stuck behind a desk, indycar.com's live streaming video with Timing & Scoring reports of practice and qualifying will help pass the time.

When you're on the go, keep pace with the action by signing up for live Timing & Scoring available through IndyCar Mobile.

The new service for May augments the latest videos, qualification/race reports, breaking news, standings, Fantasy Racing results, and driver and team info that's available on your Web-enabled phone. Text **INDYCAR** to short code **23907** to sign up.

Live streaming video not only will cover the on-track activity every practice and qualifications day, but also special programming and features are built into the daily 10:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. (ET) package. A second channel has been added so viewers can watch every news conference from the Brickyard.

Can't make it to Indy? indycar.com and IndyCar Mobile have you covered.

FAREWELL...AND HELLO

Long Beach says goodbye to Champ Car, hello to the IndyCar Series

Capping off an historic two weeks for open-wheel racing that started with Graham Rahal winning in St. Pete and continued with Danica Patrick claiming victory at Motegi, the Champ Car World Series said farewell to its fans in Long Beach.

With Patrick and Helio Castroneves fresh off the plane from Japan to witness the event, Will Power dominated from the start to end Champ Car's history on the track where so much of it took place - the streets of Long Beach, America's most successful street race.

Long Beach first hosted a street race in 1975, with Formula 5000 cars topping the bill. Formula 1 was the main attraction from '76 through '83, before Champ Car took over in 1984 for what turned into a 25-year residency. In 2009, the reunited IndyCar Series will head to the iconic Southern California venue.

The 2008 race was run on the same weekend as Motegi's IndyCar Series event, using the Champ Car World Series' Panoz-Cosworth DP-01 cars, because a scheduling conflict between

Long Beach and Motegi when the two series became one.

With drivers in both races heading toward the IndyCar Series, the Champ Car Series' fifth in the standings going to the IndyCar Series in Kansas. Franck Montagny, Danica Patrick, and Danica Dominguez third for Pacific Coast. The Champ Car Series, which a few days later announced the IndyCar Series full time, will head to the Indianapolis 500, with Danica Patrick.

"It's a very sad moment for me to see the last Champ Car race at Long Beach. The best thing for open-wheel racing in the U.S. was to be reunited. The future is very bright for the IndyCar Series. Even though the Champ Car is ending, I'm happy because I'm sure I'm going to be the winners. I'm going to be watching one IndyCar Series star, with all the great names out there on the streets of Long Beach."

Who have won IndyCar Series
Firestone Indy Lights champs.

indycar.com

Champ Car's reign in Long Beach ended after 25 great years. In 2009, the IndyCar Series puts the excitement on the streets



Inside Line

Jeff Olson, Senior Writer

SOMETHING GOOD IS AFOOT

Donald Miralle/Getty Images

ELLO

IndyCar Series

could not be resolved
ame one in February.
ees scoring points
s title, Power jumped to
ng into the next race at
y was second and Mario
fic Coast Motorsports,
nounced it would enter
ne, beginning at the
ominguez at the wheel.
t right now that this will
ce in history, but I think
wheel motorsports in
ed," Dominguez said.
I think there has to be
ugh I'm very, very sad
, at the same time I'm
n the end the fans are
when they're going to
Series race with all the
ams, with all the great
ame track."

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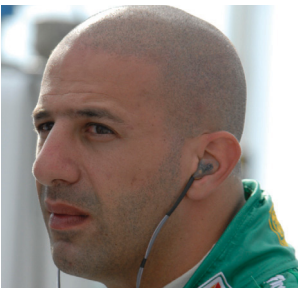


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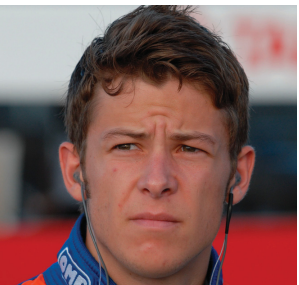
S TO SHOW



LUCZO
DRAGON RACING
Starts 6 **Best
Finish** 4th (2003)



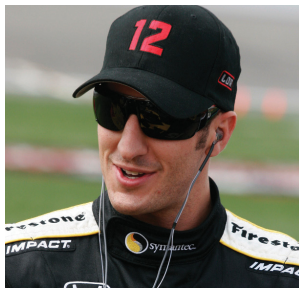
VISION RACING
Starts 4 **Best
Finish** 11th (2005,
'06)



RAHAL LETTERMAN
RACING
Starts Rookie
Best Finish N/A

RAHAL LETTERMAN
RACING
Starts Rookie
Best Finish N/A

DARK HORSES



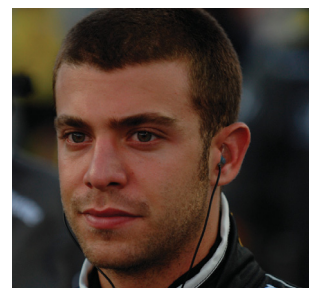
LONG SHOTS

NEWMAN/HAAS/
LANIGAN RACING
Starts Rookie
Best Finish N/A

KV RACING
TECHNOLOGY
Starts Rookie
Best Finish N/A

ANDRETTI GREEN
RACING
Starts Rookie
Best Finish N/A

HVM RACING
Starts Rookie
Best Finish N/A



Name

C/E/T

Entrant

Race Strategist

IN THE BLEACHERS... OR ON YOUR COUCH

Here's your day-by-day guide to what's happening at the track and on your TV during the Month of May

There is nothing like being in the grandstands for the thrills and spills of the Indianapolis 500. But if you *really* can't make it, check out the high-def happenings on ESPN and ABC





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AFTER THE

All eyes will be on Danica Patrick as she looks for victory in Motegi, can



The moment when Danicamania reached fever pitch: Patrick takes the lead of the 2005 Indianapolis 500 in her first start at the Brickyard

 VIDEO

Over a quarter of a million seats at IMS, but none of them are being sat on. Why? Danica Patrick's leading the '95 Indy 500

Michael Kim/LAT

R THE FIRST... 92ND?

Patrick at the 92nd Indianapolis 500. After her
she resume her winning ways at the Big One?

Words Jeff Olsen *Main Image* Darrell Ingham/Getty Images

*“If you finish
top five at Indy,
it was a good
month, but it’s
not the win”*

DANICA PATRICK

LEADING A NEW WAVE

Danica’s success may be a catalyst for others to follow her



Motegi 2008: Danica Patrick’s career highlight – so far... But with that momentous first win under her belt, she’s looking to the Indy 500 next

Paul Wehby/LAT

VIDEO

Take a look at the story so far, as Danica Patrick evolves from junior karter to IndyCar Series race winner

CLOSE, BUT NO BORG-WARNER



UNFINISHED BU



Dixon (right) knows what it's like to lead at Indy; Kanaan (far right) has experienced everything but that final, winning moment

Gavin Lawrence/Getty Images



INDY BY THE NUMBERS

TONY KANAAN

Starts 6
Best finish 2nd (2004)
Best start Pole (2005)
Laps led 202

MARCO ANDRETTI

Starts 2
Best finish 2nd (2006)
Best start 9th (2006 and '07)
Laps led 15

SCOTT DIXON

Starts 5
Best finish 2nd (2007, pictured below)
Best start 4th (2003, '06 and '07)
Laps led 32



Dixon leads Andretti on his way to second in 2007

Michael Levitz/LAT



Dan Boyd/LAT

CLOSE, BUT NO BORG-WARNER

(Below) Tony Kanaan "won" part one of a rain-interrupted 91st Indianapolis 500, but lost out when the race finally resumed. (Opposite) Marco Andretti talks to the media after just missing out in '06

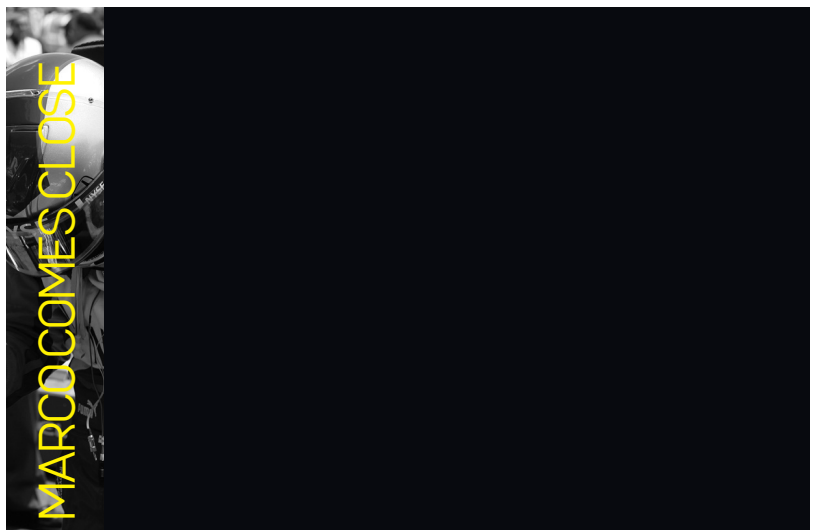
BUSINESS

For guys like Tony Kanaan, Marco Andretti and Scott Dixon, who've come agonizingly close to an Indy win, the lure of the Brickyard is strong

Words Jeff Olson Main Image Darrell Ingham/Getty Images



Robert Laberge/Getty Images



INSIDE TRACK

It's a question everyone who's ever watched the Indianapolis 500 has asked. *What does it feel like to drive a car around Indianapolis Motor Speedway at 230mph?*

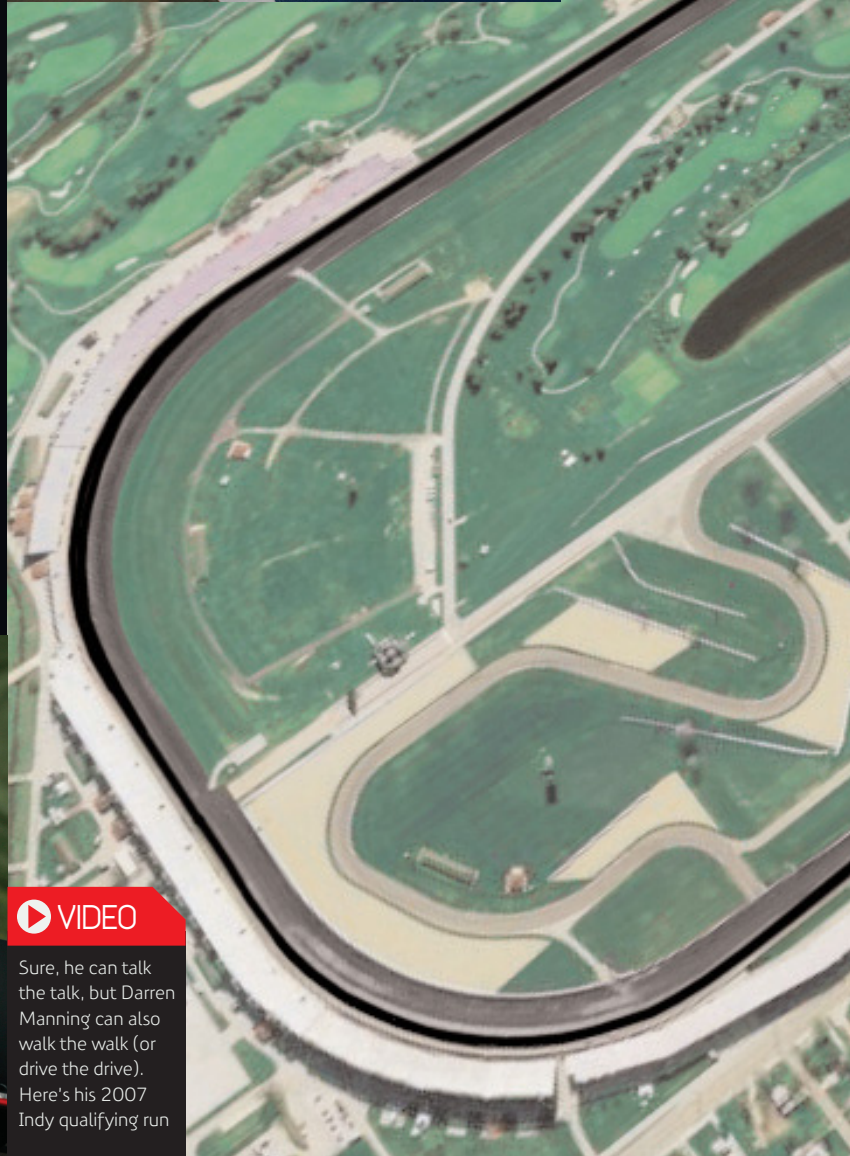
The answer lies somewhere between terrifying and exhilarating. It's not as easy as it appears, nor is every turn of the wheel the same as the one before. Each corner at Indy is like a snowflake - unique unto itself. A lap around the giant rectangle takes precision, strength and bravery. It takes meticulous hand-eye coordination, anticipation, feel and experience. It's unlike any other racetrack - or endeavor - humans encounter.

What, then, does a driver notice about each individual turn at Indianapolis Motor Speedway? We asked A.J. Foyt Racing driver Darren Manning to give us his take on the four corners of the Brickyard.



Darren Manning peers into the abyss known as Turn 1 at Indy

Steve Swope



VIDEO

Sure, he can talk the talk, but Darren Manning can also walk the walk (or drive the drive). Here's his 2007 Indy qualifying run



Dan Strech/LAT

CK



Steve Swape



2.5 MILES AT 230MPH

IT'S A BIG OL' PLACE

Just how big? Like, bigger than anywhere else

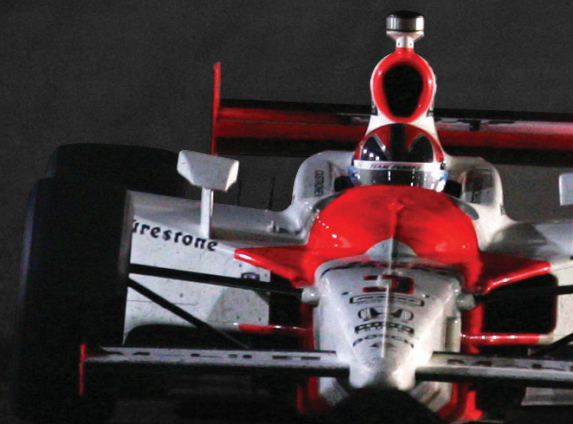
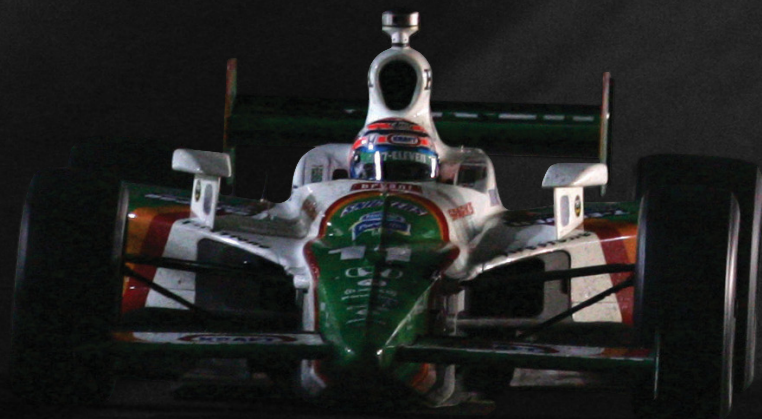


Dan Boyd/LAT

VIDEO

Tony Kanaan and Helio Castroneves get close, and a little too close, at Homestead-Miami Speedway's IndyCar Series season-opener

SIDE BY SID





"My brain hurts..." Hey, too much side-by-side racing can do that to oval aces like Helio Castroneves

Jonathan Ferrey/Getty Images

The 360-degree panning onboard cameras of the IndyCar Series show that side-by-side racing can be anything but a smooth ride

Words Dave Lewandowski Main Image Robert Laberge/Getty Images

Cruising down the Interstate at the posted 70mph, an occasional twinge of trepidation sets in when another vehicle pulls alongside in the passing lane. Both hands grip the wheel and visual diligence is applied as the cars push forward about five feet apart for what seems like minutes until the pass is completed.

Multiply the speed by three, close the gap to inches apart and you have what Team Penske's Helio Castroneves calls "scary close." Racing side by side on ovals might be dramatic TV, but it's not necessarily entertaining for IndyCar Series drivers, who prefer efficient overtaking scenarios.

In the season-opener at Homestead-Miami Speedway, ESPN's onboard cameras captured just how close Castroneves and Andretti Green Racing's Tony Kanaan raced side by side during a particularly tense stretch on the variably banked oval. At one point, their Dallara chassis mimicked an accordion in motion, and a tire mark was noticeable on the side of Kanaan's No. 11 Team 7-Eleven car after their encounter.

"I was like, 'Whoa! That's crazy!'" Castroneves recalls. "It's a very tense situation and one that you don't like to be in for an extended period of time. But neither of us is going to lift to give position, and the cars are so equal that

side by side happens a lot."

Not as physically demanding as the road/street courses on the schedule, oval racing is still challenging because of the speeds that create higher risks. Side by side at 220mph is about as risky as you can get, and respect is greatly appreciated.

"It's more mentally tiring because you have to concentrate doubly hard on driving your line, driving the car as fast as it will go, plus concentrating on the other car and anticipating what he's going to do," A.J. Foyt Racing's Darren Manning says.

"But when you have somebody side by side it doubles, that's what's really tough. You just want to get past somebody because then you can drive your line and have a lot more optimum performance. You obviously want it to be fast, but sometimes it's a little bit loose. You generally want to make it as comfortable as possible but still be fast, and it's certainly not comfortable when you're side by side."

The aerodynamics of the Dallara make it stable, if not comfortable, in such situations. Aerodynamics has played a major role in auto racing since the late 1960s, when the first inverted wings appeared in some formulas. With the introduction of the ground-effect packages a few years later, cars used a third element (the underbody) to make downforce.

The basic idea is to create an area of low pressure underneath the car ▶

Outside the cars, side-by-side racing looks positively serene. Inside, it's a totally different story. The main image and the video are the same move from two very different perspectives



At the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, side-by-side racing is short, sharp, but very intense

Dan Strech/LAT

“It’s a very tense situation. But neither of us is going to lift to give position”

HELIO CASTRONEVES

so that the higher pressure above the car will apply a downward force. The front and rear wings create downforce, which forces the car to the track. The underbody venturi tunnel creates a low-pressure area between the chassis and the track, which sucks the car to the track.

“The primary reason they can run so close together is the car is generating so much downforce,” says Les Mactaggart, senior technical director for the Indy Racing League. “That’s providing the basic stability for the car because it’s sucking down to the track. They’re not sort of weaving in and out with each other. The car feels very stable underneath them so they can drive very close to the other one, knowing that the car is not going to continue to run into it because it’s just the level of control they’re getting from the car underneath.”

“There is a little bit of pressure buffeting from the wheels, but it’s difficult to quantify from an actual point of view. As two surfaces get

close together there’s a small pressure increase between the wheels, but not something that would feel unsettling.”

Speedways with high banking are more conducive to side-by-side racing – even three-wide at times. At the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, the perception of extended side by side exists because of the speeds.

“At Indy, your side by side is short-lived, and usually somebody is getting pinched pretty low,” Andretti Green Racing’s Danica Patrick says. “You do everything you can to not make that happen. If you’re in that situation, you’re thankful when you come out of it, especially when you’re on the outside. At 220mph, you’re through the corners pretty quick, so it’s not like you have a lot of time to go high and go low.”

“Through the month, you learn who you can and can’t trust to go side by side with. You know by whoever has the experience.”

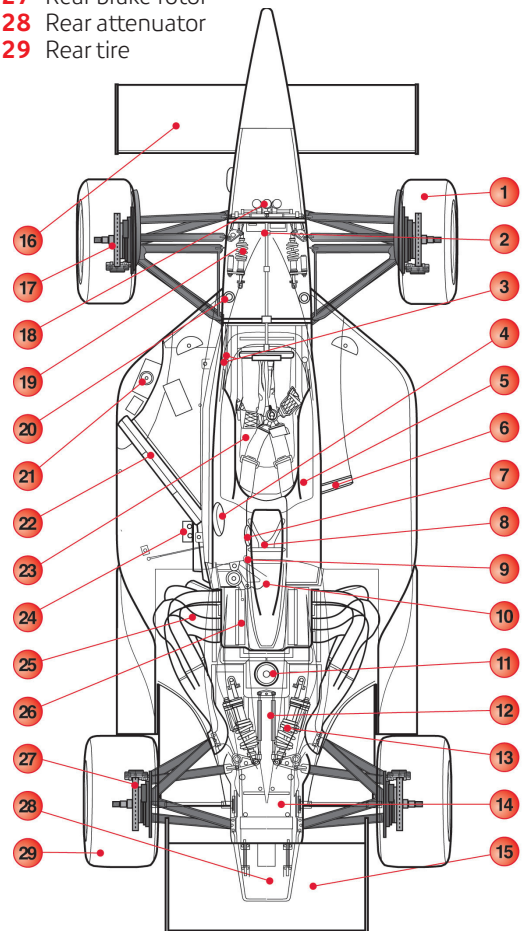
Almost three weeks of practice time is allotted on the relatively flat 2.5-mile oval to gain knowledge of its weather- and time-of-day-induced peccadilloes. Hopefully, a byproduct for drivers is experience running in traffic. They’ll need it for the 200-lap race May 25.

“It’s really awesome to be going that fast and to have somebody next to you that you race with going the same speed,” Vision Racing’s A.J. Foyt IV says. “It’s a big trust factor and it’s exciting when it all works well. I know I definitely trust some of the drivers more than others. ■

ANATOMY OF AN INDYCAR

These are the main components on an IndyCar Series car. We’ll test you on it later

- 1 Front tire
- 2 Center spine
- 3 Anti-roll bar adjusters
- 4 Refueling adapter
- 5 Headrest structure
- 6 Oil cooler
- 7 Fuel vent
- 8 Roll hoop
- 9 Air jack fitting
- 10 Air inlet
- 11 Oil scavenge tower
- 12 Rear anti-roll bar assembly
- 13 Rear damper/spring assembly
- 14 Transmission/gearbox
- 15 Rear wing
- 16 Front wing
- 17 Front brake rotor
- 18 Brake master cylinder
- 19 Front spring/damper unit
- 20 Front air jack
- 21 Engine control unit
- 22 Water radiator
- 23 Molded seat
- 24 Impact lights
- 25 Exhaust system
- 26 Air box
- 27 Rear brake rotor
- 28 Rear attenuator
- 29 Rear tire



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OVALS

No matter what a driver may have done before, racing on ovals - from short tracks to the Brickyard - is a whole new experience

Words *Richard S. James* Main Image *Michael Levitt/LAT*



Four-time Indy 500 winner Rick Mears was so good on ovals, a month at the Brickyard was just a stroll in the park

UTION



In at the deep end... EJ Viso got his first real taste of oval racing at the Homestead season opener



LAT Archive



Running in a pack at Indy with cars all around and masses of turbulence, it helps to know what you're doing

Dan Boyd/LAT



Michael Levitz/LAT

RE-LEARNING THE OVALS

Some newbies have a little oval experience to draw on

For many of the drivers in the 2008 IndyCar Series – those classified as rookies who are anything but, just new to the series – it's been a while since they've raced on an oval. While some may have oval racing experience, Homestead was the first time some had seen a superspeedway.

Justin Wilson's experience on ovals is limited to the Milwaukee Mile and one start at Las Vegas Motor Speedway in Champ Cars. But, he says, "It all comes flooding back from when you last did an oval. You just go out there; and you know what you've got to do. I'm still getting used to it. I feel like I've learned a lot, but I need to learn a lot more."

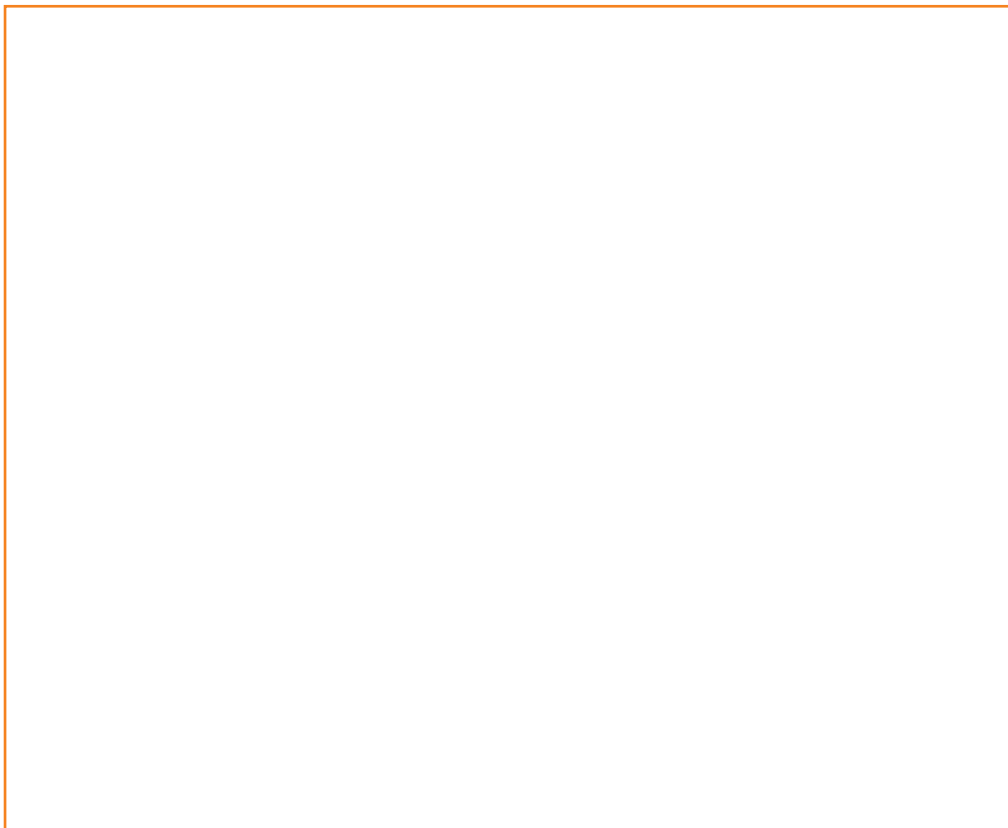
At Homestead, Oriol Servia was the top finisher among the drivers transitioning from Champ Car. But he's no slouch on ovals, with seven top-five finishes in Champ Cars, including a second at Las Vegas. He says it comes back quickly, but there are some things to get used to again.

"I refreshed my memory a lot on what happens when you have five cars in front of you on a superspeedway and you have no grip and no downforce... those kinds of scary feelings," he laughs. "I think we'll be having plenty of those feelings this season! It was good fun, and I can only imagine when we're up to speed how much fun it's going to be."

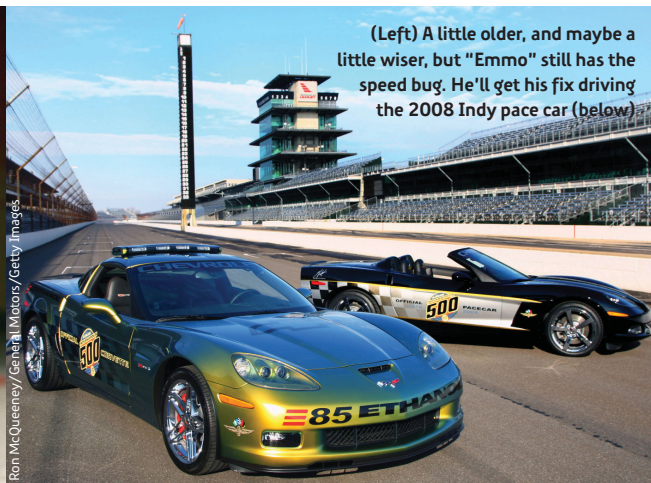
EMMO'S BACK ON THE PACE

The two-time Indy winner won't be passed by anyone in this year's race - he's driving the E85-powered Corvette pace car

Words Dave Lewandowski Main Image IMS Photo



LAT Photographic



Ron McQueeney/General Motors/Getty Images

(Left) A little older, and maybe a little wiser, but "Emmo" still has the speed bug. He'll get his fix driving the 2008 Indy pace car (below)



Emerson Fittipaldi's two Indianapolis 500 victories came in 1989 (left) and '93 (above). He was also Formula 1 World Champion twice

IMS Photo

LEAN, GREEN PACING MACHINE

E85 ethanol gives "Emmo" some serious horses



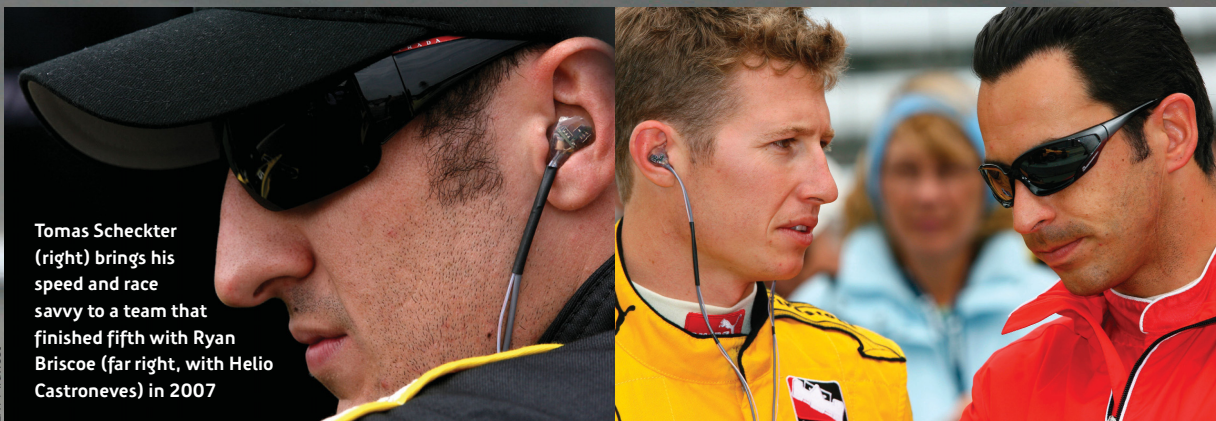
BEWARE OF THE DRAGON

If you're looking for an upset at the Brickyard, check out Luczo Dragon Racing and its driver Tomas Scheckter. This Indy 500-specific program means business

Words Tim Harms *Main Image* Phillip Abbott/LAT



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Tomas Scheckter (right) brings his speed and race savvy to a team that finished fifth with Ryan Briscoe (far right, with Helio Castroneves) in 2007

LAT Midwest

Darrell Ingham/Getty Images

“I didn’t take long to be convinced this would be a deal for the future”

TOMAS SCHECKTER

INDY’S NEWEST OWNER-DRIVER
Sarah Fisher is relishing a double challenge at Indy




Michael Levitz/LAT

Tomas Scheckter got a sneak preview of his Indianapolis 500 program at Kansas Speedway, qualifying fourth and running strongly in the early part of the race

Do you remember the first time? These heroes of the Indy 500 do - and their best and worst times, too







When Roger Penske first entered a car in the 1969 Indianapolis 500, could he have believed that four decades later he'd have a record 14 wins at the Brickyard?

Words David Phillips

Main Image Darrell Ingham/Getty Images

The numbers speak for themselves: 14 pole positions, 34 front row starts and 1835 laps led since Roger Penske first entered a car in the 1969 Indianapolis 500 for Mark Donohue. Oh yes, and 14 victories. In numbers, that translates to a 37-percent winning rate. In words, that translates to Dynasty.

Heck, the only organization with more Indy wins is Firestone...but the tire makers had a 58-year head start, not to mention the considerable advantage of monopolizing many a Memorial Day starting grid.

Of course, Team Penske's success at Indianapolis should come as no surprise. The team has won in every major racing series in North America from the United States Road Racing Championship to Trans-Am, Can-Am, CART and NASCAR dating back to the '60s. And, of course, they were the last American-based race team to score a Formula 1 victory when John Watson led the field home in the '76 Austrian Grand Prix.

But many successful teams have competed at Indianapolis with nothing like the success of Penske. For

example, Newman/Haas/Lanigan Racing has enjoyed a comparable degree of success in Indy car racing to Team Penske, yet NHLR is still seeking its first Indianapolis 500 win. Of course, the fact that Mario Andretti spent the latter stages of his career driving for NHLR may have had something to do with that. Even Roger Penske couldn't get Mario across the yard of bricks first in four tries!

Mario's infamously bad luck notwithstanding, there's undeniably something special about Team Penske's hold on the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. It starts with Roger Penske himself.

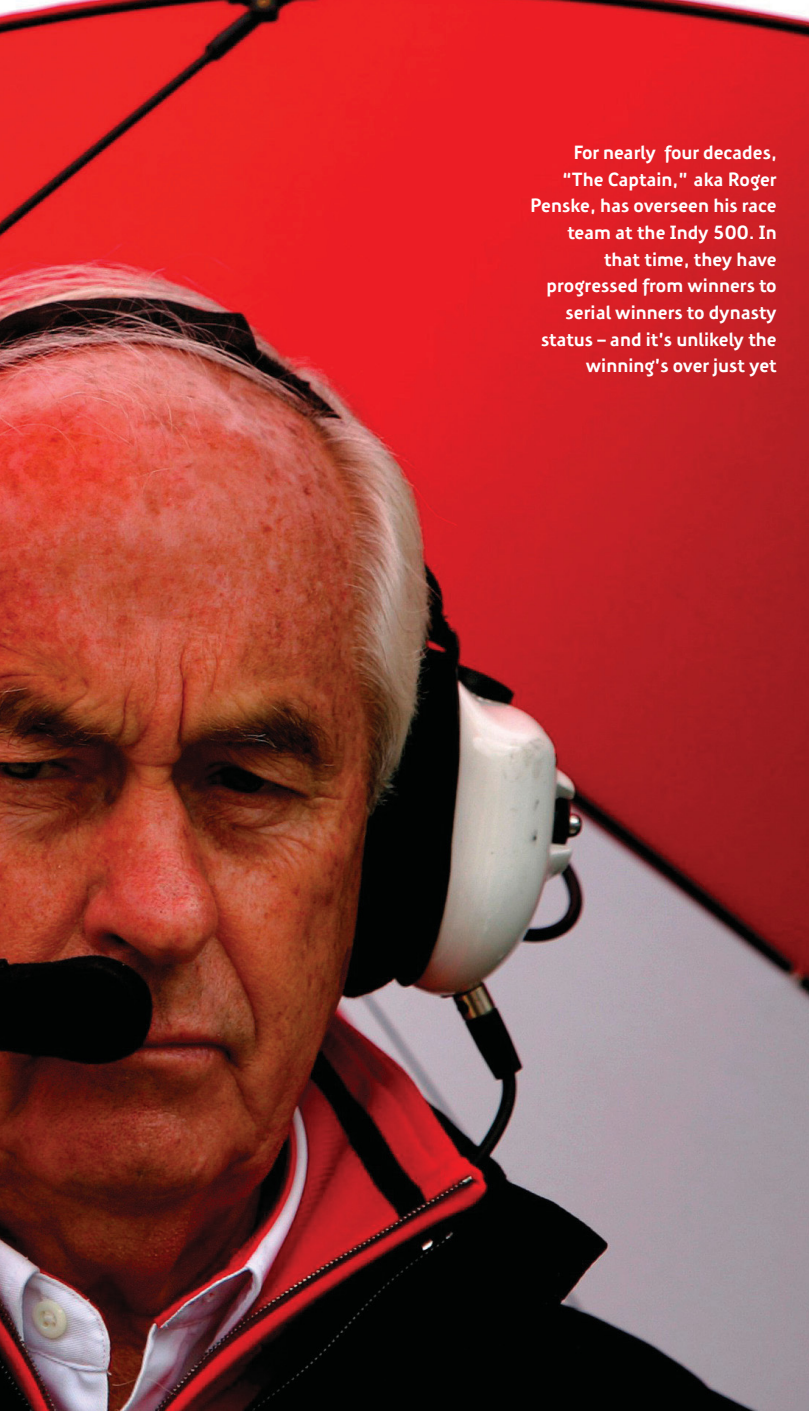
"Indianapolis means so much to Roger," says Derrick Walker, who

served as Penske's team manager for a dozen seasons in the 1970s and '80s. "It's the single most important event in American open-wheel racing, obviously. From the beginning, Roger always had Indy in his sights. It became a priority for his team."

And when Roger Penske makes something a priority, things have a way of getting done...even when the odds are stacked against him.

Although Team Penske has earned its share of Indianapolis success by dint of superior talent and technology – can anybody say Rick Mears or Helio Castroneves? PC-17 or Mercedes-Benz 500I? – some of the organization's greatest success has come with its back against the wall. Like the time Al Unser won his ▶

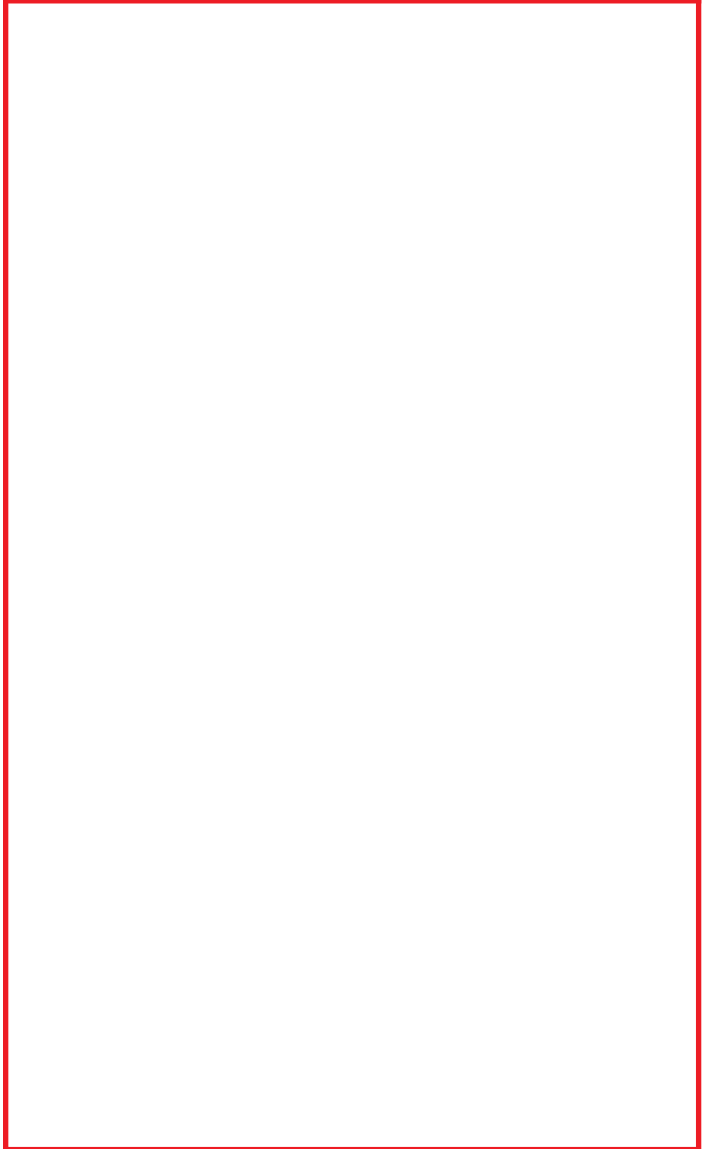




For nearly four decades, "The Captain," aka Roger Penske, has overseen his race team at the Indy 500. In that time, they have progressed from winners to serial winners to dynasty status – and it's unlikely the winning's over just yet

THREE TO REMEMBER

Surprise, domination and a "typical" Penske win



Dave Friedman/LAT

VIDEO

Click and check out a little bit of Team Penske's glorious past at Indy – Helio Castroneves' first win, back in 2001



(Left) Penske puts the sign out to Mark Donohue in 1969. (Below) The most recent win came in 2006, with Sam Hornish Jr.

Robert Laberge/Getty Images



Penske watches over drivers Gil de Ferran and Helio Castroneves in 2001. That year, Castroneves won the race at his first attempt

F. Peirce Williams/LAT



Hutson/LAT

“Roger (Penske) has a sixth sense about strategy. He shoots from the hip”

DERRICK WALKER

fourth Indy 500 in a year-old March 86C Penske pulled out of a hotel lobby after the PC16 chassis proved uncompetitive.

“Preparation is the cornerstone at Penske,” continues Walker. “They always go for speed, of course, but speed’s nothing unless your cars are well prepared. From the outside [Team] Penske may seem like a big group, but it’s really a small unit that doesn’t often lose control, one able to adjust to changing circumstances quickly. Even in the years where the cars were terrible, Roger’d pull an old car out of the showroom and win with it.”

Of course, Team Penske’s Indianapolis record is not flawless. Multiple Indy winners Al Unser Jr. and Emerson Fittipaldi failed to qualify for the ’95 race, just a year after completely dominating the

Month of May. In retrospect, it’s clear it was a sort of perfect storm for Penske. The pushrod Mercs had masked some deficiencies in the Penske chassis and, when the team came to the Speedway with a conventional engine, the cars didn’t perform. Nor did Team Penske make the most of the Lola and Reynard chassis loaned them by other teams. And Roger Penske himself famously waved off a last-ditch qualifying run by Fittipaldi that, in 20/20 hindsight, was fast enough to make the show.

That was a rare gaffe by Penske, whose uncanny feel for strategy has won many more races than he’s lost.

“Roger has an almost sixth sense about strategy,” says Walker. “He shoots from the hip, makes spontaneous decisions. They don’t

always work, but more often than not, he’s right.”

In the end, though, it’s less about Roger Penske, pushrod Mercs, March 86s or PC17s than it is the people at Team Penske. It starts with the drivers, and Penske’s list of Indy 500 winners reads like a Who’s Who of Indy car racing: Mears, Fittipaldi, Donohue, Castroneves, Al, Bobby and Al Unser Jr., Tom Sneva, Danny Sullivan, Sam Hornish and Gil de Ferran. It continues in the supporting cast, from team president Tim Cindric to the floor sweepers.

“The intellectual horsepower and the talent in that place is just gigantic,” says de Ferran. “Everybody who works there is, if not the best I’ve seen, then definitely in the top-three category of each job description. So the truck driver is, if not *the* best truck driver I’ve ever seen, then he’s right there. The chief mechanic or the tire changer or the accounting guy, if not the best, are probably among the top three I’ve seen.”

“Roger actually makes you better than you are... You’re able to extract more from yourself.”

And so, it seems, does Team Penske every May. ■



(Above left) Rick Mears won four Indy 500s with Penske, the last coming in 1991 (above)

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* Only joking. Tony Kanaan's too busy getting ready for the Indy 500 to be making house calls

For drivers like Marco Andretti, the Month of May includes up to 48 hours of track running. That's a lot, but it still leaves plenty of time for him to mull with race engineer Eddie Jones (center) and grandfather Mario



EJ Viso is new to the Indianapolis 500, which means a steeper learning curve for both him and his race engineer, Michael Cannon (right)

Darrell Ingham/Getty Images



Gregg Feistman/LAT

A LAP TOO FAR?

With heaps of track time available prior to the Indianapolis 500, there is ample opportunity to get things right - or just plain screw up

Words Richard S. James Main Image Gavin Lawrence/Getty Images



Make the most of your month, get the little things done right, understand all the data and you might just end up leading the Indianapolis 500 come Sunday, May 25



Phillip Abbott/LAT

TRADITION

It's not often you hear the enthusiastic and well-mannered Indianapolis Motor Speedway crowd berate a performance. In more than 25 years of attending or covering the event, I've heard boos and catcalls exactly twice. The first was in 1984, when Up with People, The Milke Curb Congregation, Hurray for Everyone, or some such group, sang *Back Home Again in Indiana* instead of Jim Nabors. The other was in 1989, when Emerson Fittipaldi disdained the bottle of milk proffered him in Victory Lane in order to chug down some orange juice.

It's no accident that both incidents resulted from people breaking with tradition, for tradition and the Indianapolis 500 go hand in hand, even if some of the most revered traditions started out as more happenstance than formality. Here are some of the best:

Words David Phillips Main Image F. Peirce Williams/LAT

"START YOUR ENGINES!"

ALLY INDY



F. Peirce Williams/LAT

BORN BORG

How auto racing's most iconic trophy came to be

VIDEO
Race day at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway just wouldn't be the same without long-established traditions like these



Bill Osborne

VIDEO

In case you've forgotten why you love Stone Temple Pilots, allow us to remind you. Turn up those speakers and let it rip!

Ever thought you'd see Stone Temple Pilots sharing a stage again? On Friday, May 23, Scott Weiland and the boys will be cranking it up to 11 at Indy!

HIGH-CARB DIET

Love race cars? Love rock 'n' roll? Then you'll love Miller Lite Carb Day at the Brickyard - it's the biggest, baddest Friday in all of auto racing

Words Bruce Martin Main Image Jeff Kravitz/Film Magic/Getty Images



Winning the Pit Stop Challenge means serious bragging rights

Harry How/Getty Images



Party hearty—and have Saturday to recover before the big one: the 500

Phil Abbott/LAT

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CARNEGIE'S HAUL



D HEEEEEEEE'S TILL ON IT!

Words Bruce Martin Main Image Michael Levitt/LAT

For 61 years, Tom Carnegie's voice was the soundtrack of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

His booming tones were first heard on the "world's largest public address system" beginning with the 1946 Indianapolis 500 (below left). In the years that followed, he narrated some of the greatest moments in auto racing history and became as much a part of the venerable Speedway's traditions as the bottle of milk or the Yard of Bricks. He retired after the 90th running of the Indy 500 in 2006 (below right).

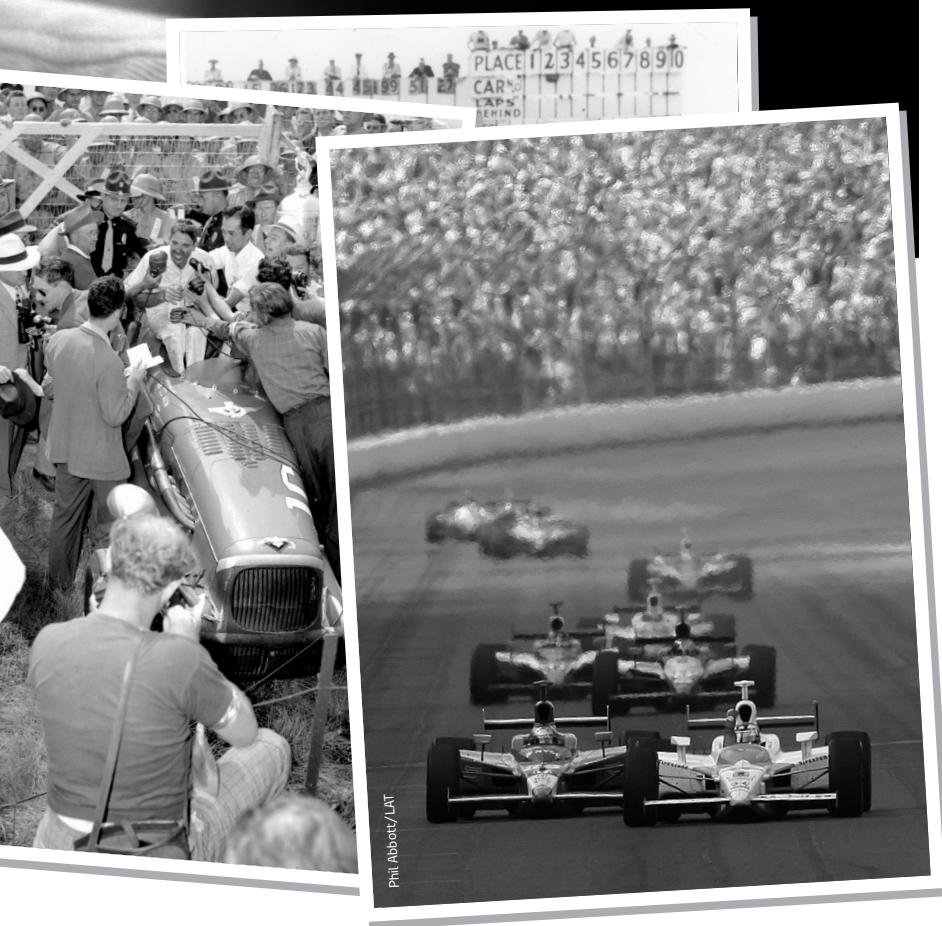
At 88 years young, his love for "The Greatest Spectacle in Racing" remains unabashed. And it's doubtful anyone has seen more history at the Brickyard in the modern era than Carnegie, who shares 10 of his most memorable moments with *IndyCar Series* magazine.



IMS Archive

TOM CARNEGIE, THE LEGEND

The story behind the man behind the voice



THREE DRIVERS ONE GOAL

Words Arni Sribben Main Image IMS Photo

Every driver in Firestone Indy Lights wants to race in the Indianapolis 500. But before they can hope to make the leap to “The Greatest Spectacle in Racing,” they must prove their mettle on their biggest stage of the year.

That stage is still the famed 2.5-mile oval at Indianapolis Motor Speedway, where the sixth Firestone Freedom 100 will take place on May 23. And success on Carb Day is proven to lead to bigger things for the race's winner.

Three drivers who hope to follow the trail to the Indy 500 blazed by previous winners such as Ed Carpenter, Jaime Camara and Alex Lloyd enter the Firestone Freedom 100 with varying backgrounds and experience levels, but all have the same goal - to drive into Victory Lane at the Brickyard.





The hallowed ground of Indy is an awesome backdrop for the Firestone Indy Lights. (From left) Richard Antinucci, Ana Beatriz and Logan Gomez are all looking for success in the Freedom 100 on May 23



IMS Photo

A TICKET TO THE BIG TIME

A big day in the Freedom 100 can lead to bigger things

Take a large field of hungry, young drivers desperate to win on auto racing's grandest stage – the venerable Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

Put them in a 100-mile, no-holds-barred sprint race in front of 100,000-plus fans.

Oh yeah, and throw in the biggest paycheck of the year.

It's no wonder the Firestone Freedom 100 may be the keenest-fought race of Memorial Day Weekend.

Since moving to the Friday before the Indy 500, the race has become the event to see during Carburetion Day's non-stop fun (see page 40).

The Firestone Freedom 100 has all the drama of its big brother, but compresses it into those 100 action-packed miles. For the fans, it's a chance to get to know the stars of tomorrow today.

- In 2005, Brazil's Jaime Camara led the field wire to wire to claim his first win in the Firestone Indy Lights.

- In 2006, Jay Howard battled wheel to wheel with Wade Cunningham over the final laps, but came up just short.

- And, last year, Alex Lloyd became the first driver to win on the road course and the oval at Indianapolis Motor Speedway, etching his name on the radar of IndyCar Series team owners.

This year, all three will be in the "500," and the Freedom 100 helped get them noticed.

Who will be the next driver to follow them? May 23 will provide some exciting answers.



IMS Photo

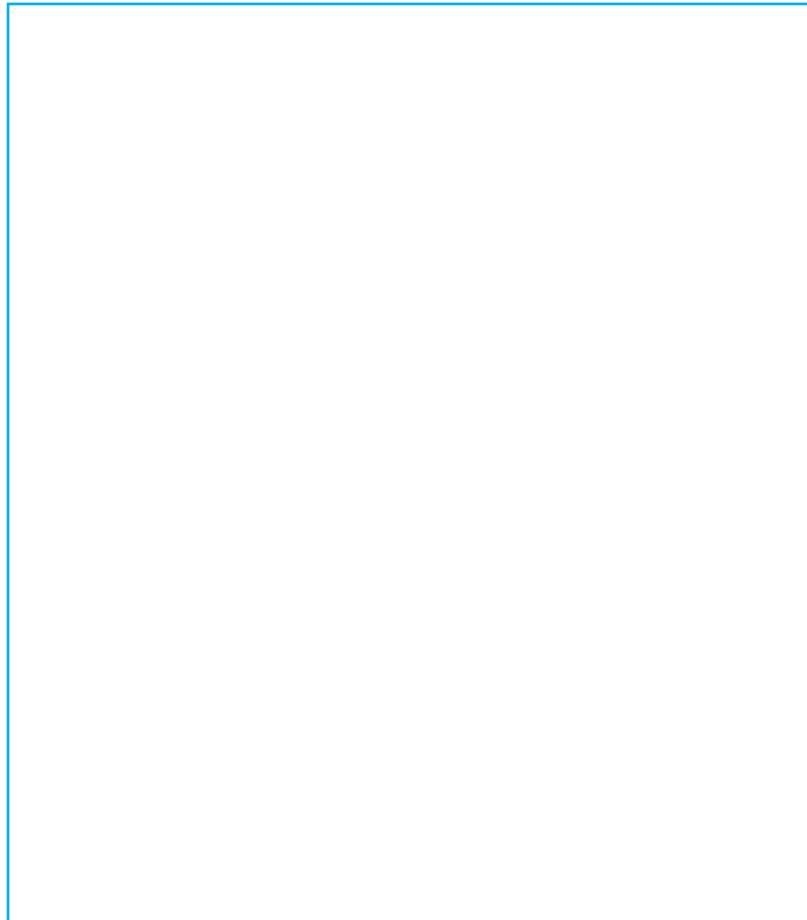


The No. 3 has won at Indy 10 times – that's one in every 10 races! Helio Castroneves took No. 3 to Victory Lane in 2001 (pictured) and '02

Michael Levitt/LAT

Indy by the numbers

Can the number on your race car make a difference in winning or losing at the 500?



THE TOUGH QUESTION: H

DANICA PATRICK

"I like staying at a hotel because it's more space, but for other purposes and waking up whenever you want, I'll definitely sleep at the track in a motor home. I'm a little nervous the night before the race, but I try to relax as much as I can. I sleep like a champion the night before the 500. I've slept through the (mortar blast at 6 a.m. on race day) every year"

A.J. FOYT IV

"I stay at my place downtown usually for the Month of May. The night before the race, I'll sleep at the hotel at the track so I don't have to mess with the traffic in the morning. I'm actually able to sleep the night before. I get nervous the morning of it, about an hour before the driver intros"



Darren Manning's golf masterclass

Chapter 2: The most difficult hole on the Brickyard Crossing golf course

"I would say No. 8, the par four. If you hit the ball too much you're in the water. If you fade the ball, you have to stop in the water. And the wind is generally from the left, so it's pushing you into the water, so then you try to take it too far right and you're in the trees. That makes it tough. On the seventh, par three, I've had an eight on there going from one side of the green to the next"

HOTEL OR MOTOR HOME?

or traffic
ately stay at

For any driver wavering over the hotel/motor home conundrum, this little beauty should help make up your mind. Mmmm-mmm!



HOW SCARY IS...

Dan Boyd/LAT

...QUALIFYING AT INDY, WITH FOUR LAPS AND THE CAR ON THE EDGE?
MARCO ANDRETTI

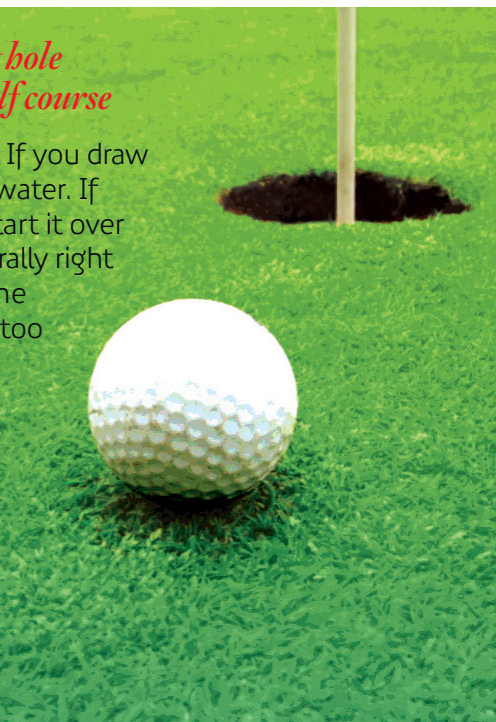
"It was definitely one of the toughest things to overcome and get mentally prepared and focused for. Now, we have to do four laps at all the ovals, even the shorter tracks like Milwaukee and Richmond, so that's going to be tough. But it's definitely a different ballgame at Indy, because it's very high speed"

...THE OPENING LAP OR A RESTART?
DANICA PATRICK

"I've had the good fortune of starting on the first few rows. I've experienced restarts from the back and that's quite spectacular going into Turn 1. You get lots of weird feelings out of the car, lots of buffeting in the car, dirt flying and lack of handling. I don't plan on being there"

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What are you thinking about during a caution?

RYAN HUNTER-REAY

"Depends on how the race is going. If it's going great and the car's going great, then I'm thinking about going back to green. If the car isn't running right, then I'm complaining to my crew about making it better. Cautions are the only time to debrief during the race, so I try utilizing that time"

ROGER YASUKAWA

"It depends how your car is during the race. Funny thing is, when your car's running well you don't think about anything other than the race. When you're struggling with the car, that's when you start thinking about dinner and how you're going to get out of the track as fast as possible. We obviously try to focus on the race and there's a lot to talk about during the yellow"



Darrell Ingham/Getty Images

INTRODUCING BRUNO JUNQUEIRA



Bruno Junqueira already has the 2002 Indianapolis 500 pole on his resumé. He returns to the Brickyard in '08 with Dale Coyne Racing

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