

220mph and inches Chicago photo finish ends one amazing season!



# IndyCar<sup>®</sup> series

indycar.com

SEASON REVIEW 2008

DANICA  
2008 IN HER  
OWN WORDS

HELIO  
THE POWER  
OF POSITIVE  
THINKING

**+**  
**BIG 10**  
WHO GOT  
OUR VOTE?

## SCOTT'S GOT IT COVERED

CHAMPIONSHIP #2   
INDIANAPOLIS 500   
BUT NOW DIXON  
WANTS MORE!



CLICK & CHOOSE YOUR COVER

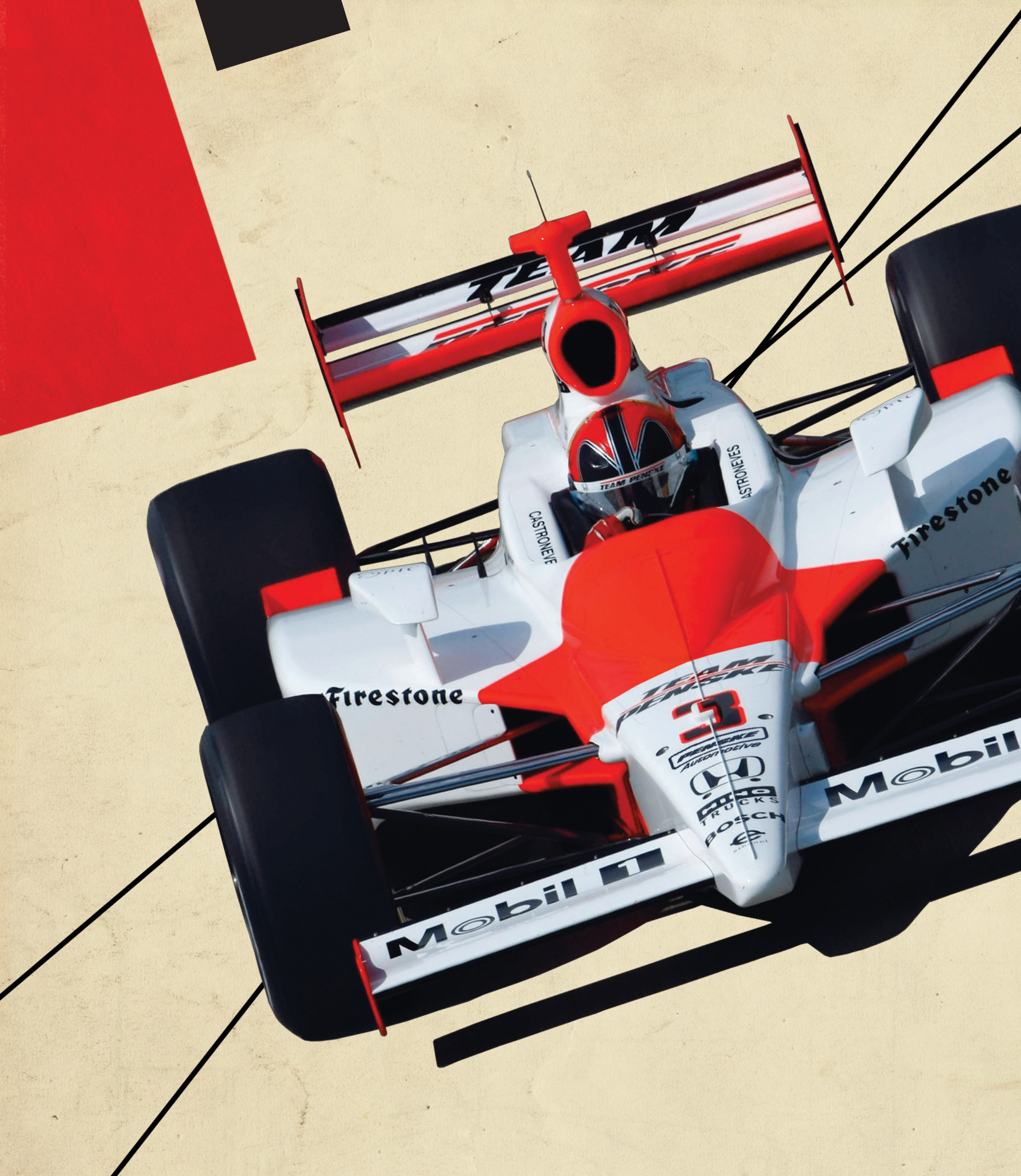
SCOTT DIXON

HELIO CASTRONEVES

TONY KANAAN

DAN WHELDON





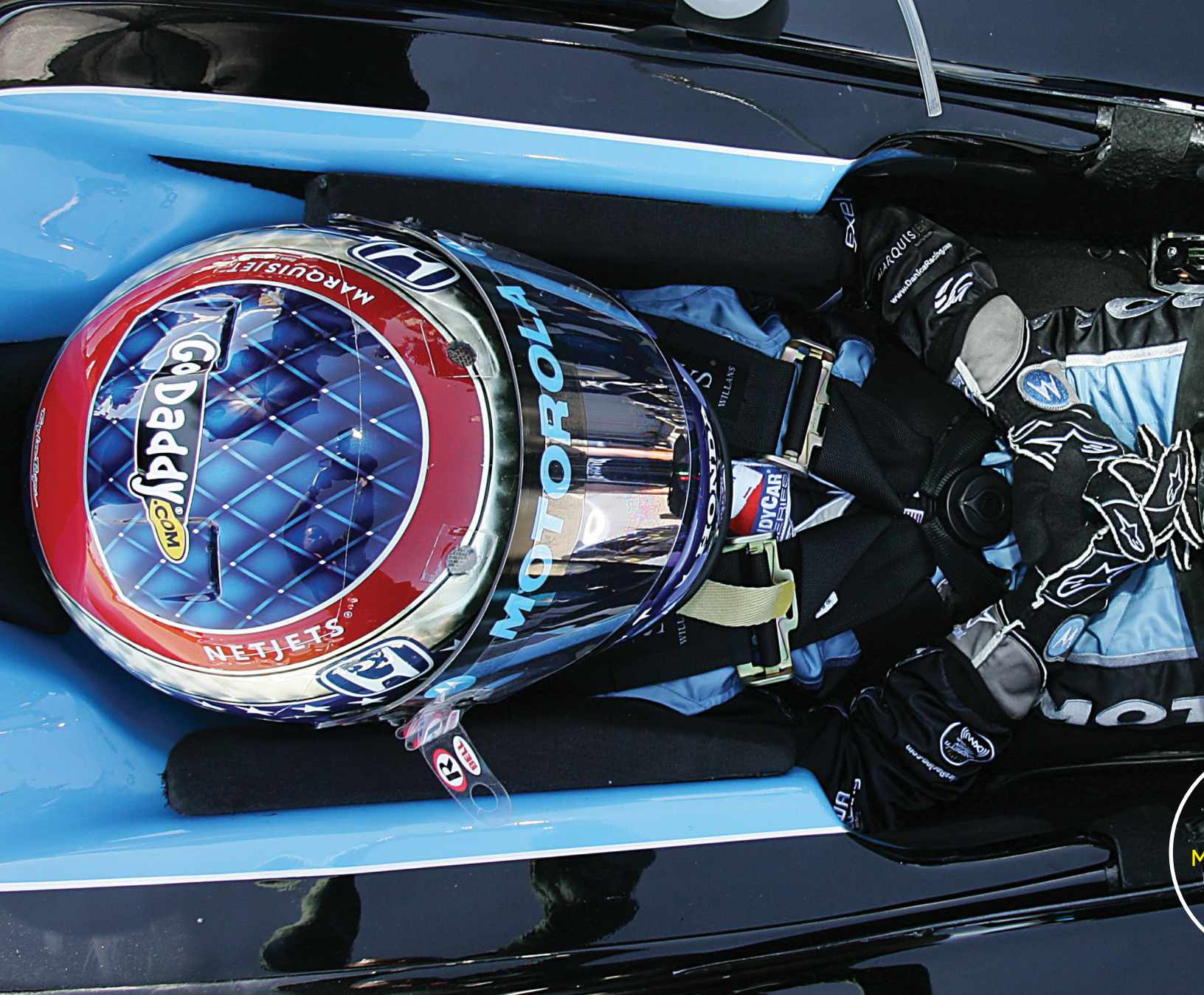
# DREAM **M**ACHINES.

MR. HONDA WAS OBSESSED WITH SPEED. HE STARTED RACING BICYCLES, THEN MOTORCYCLES AND FINALLY CARS. COUNTLESS CHAMPIONSHIPS LATER, THE HONDA MOTOR COMPANY IS STILL POWERED BY THAT LEGACY. WE ARE STILL RACERS, ENTHUSIASTS, LIMIT-TESTERS AND SPEED FREAKS. WE ARE STILL DREAMERS.

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Click gallery button (left) for photo gallery. Click video button (right) to play video

For everything IndyCar Series  
**indycar.com**

**30**

**A CAN-DO GUY**

Good times and bad, Castroneves never gave up fighting for the championship

(Left) Danica Patrick has a little quiet time before heading out on track. (Below) One bad day in the Motor City...Helio Castroneves was the guy to beat in Detroit – until ordered to relinquish the lead by race control

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Brian Konoske, Dan Streck, Paul Webb President and Publisher Ian Havard Account Manager Courtney Smith Display Advertising Manager Rick Nitti  
Advertising Coordinator Sophia Lopez Reproduction Colorscope, Irvine, Calif. Thanks to the drivers, engineers, mechanics and PR/media staff of the IndyCar Series  
and Firestone Indy Lights teams; IRL media and marketing depts; Dean Marney and Jimmy Bullard; Dave Schwab and Jarrod Krisloff at IMS Productions; Ron McQueeny,  
Shawn Payne and Mary Ellen Loscar USA toll-free advertising line (800) 722-7140 Outside USA +1 (949) 417-6700 Advertising fax (949) 417-6116 Web site  
www.indycarmag.com Editorial/business office Haymarket Worldwide LLC, 16842 Von Karman, Suite 125, Irvine, CA 92606 Tel (949) 417-6700  
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One of the American Le Mans Series' jewels in the crown – Petit Le Mans at Road Atlanta – took on extra luster with an influx of IndyCar Series stars, including Scott Dixon,

Tony Kanaan, Marco Andretti and Dario Franchitti in Acuras, and Ryan Briscoe (left) and Helio Castroneves sharing a Penske Porsche in the Oct. 4 enduro classic



## 360 VIEW

Minutes before the Chicagoland finale, Scott Dixon gets a visit from Roger Penske



Danell Ingham/Getty Images

## Inside Line

Jeff Olson, Senior Writer



# BEFORE OUR VERY EYES

We're lucky to witness this era of open-wheel

our annual – and highly unofficial – take on the championships within the championship

## ROAD COURSES

Helio Castroneves (right, kissing his Infineon-winning car) can take pride in being the overall champ of road and street courses. The three-time Indy 500 winner finished second at times in '08 – and four of those came on the twisty tracks. Add that win at Infineon, and Helio took this unofficial championship with a stout 45 points over Tony Kanaan.

### HELIO'S HIGHLIGHTS

**PETERSBURG** 2ND  
**ATKINS GLEN** 16TH  
**INDIANAPOLIS** 2ND  
**INDIANAPOLIS** 2ND  
**INDIANAPOLIS** 2ND  
**INDIANAPOLIS** 1ST  
**INDIANAPOLIS** 2ND  
**TOTAL POINTS** 233  
**RUNNER-UP: TONY KANAAN, 188 PTS)**



## SUPER SPEEDWAYS

Just as he did on the short ovals, Scott Dixon also took our championship for the seven superspeedways on the roster. Of those, four ended with wins, with podiums in the other three. And, just as in the real championship, Castroneves was Dixon's closest pursuer for this title, but 50 points shy.

### DIXON'S DATA

**HOMESTEAD** 1ST  
**MOTEGI** 3RD  
**KANSAS** 3RD  
**INDIANAPOLIS** 1ST  
**TEXAS** 1ST  
**KENTUCKY** 1ST  
**CHICAGOLAND** 2ND  
**TOTAL POINTS** 322  
**(RUNNER-UP: CASTRONEVES, 272 PTS)**

Paul Webb/LAT



Honda Canada has signed a multi-year agreement for title sponsorship of the Honda Indy Toronto, the classic Canadian street race that joins the IndyCar Series schedule July 10-12 next year



NEWS NEWS NEWS  
NEWS NEWS NEWS

indycar.com



IndyCar Series viewers will still get the whole onboard experience in crisp high def – just a lot more of it, thanks to VERSUS' extended coverage

**VERSUS' 2009 RACES**

**St. Petersburg, Long Beach, Kansas, Texas, Richmond, Edmonton, Kentucky, Mid-Ohio, Infineon, Chicagoland, Detroit, Motegi and Homestead**

Dan Streck/LAT

**COVERAGE IN '09**

er shows, extra pre-race and re-air

ree hours, with  
verage. The burgeoning  
ne-hour preview show  
e, which will include  
d key stories.  
ier moving forward with  
ng-time partner ABC  
RSUS to the IndyCar  
George, the founder  
er of the Indy Racing  
rd to 2009 and beyond,  
y to team up with our  
y capitalize on  
e-year Indianapolis  
nnial Celebration."

VERSUS will feature at least 10 hours of IndyCar Series ancillary programming each season, focusing on the drivers, teams and tracks. Additionally, it will broadcast IndyCar Series re-air, as well as the Firestone Indy Lights schedule highlighted in weekly 60-minute telecasts.

"We are very excited to be entering into this multi-year partnership with the Indy Racing League," said Marc Fein, executive vice president of programming, production and business operations for VERSUS. "All of the great live programming will be a perfect complement to our ever expanding lineup of elite competition."

SILVER	BRONZE	TOTAL
2	4	12
10	6	19
1	3	7
2	2	7
1	2	6
1	0	1
1	0	1
0	1	1



Robert Laberge/Getty Images

**.COM NEVER SLEEPS**



News about the IndyCar Series and Firestone Indy Lights doesn't drop off with the championships won by Scott Dixon and Raphael Matos.

That's why **indycar.com** is your source for information and multimedia features leading into the first IndyCar Series race in Surfers Paradise, Australia, and throughout the off-season.

A special video highlights series of races on the streets of Surfers Paradise will be included on the homepage, along with on-site coverage in words, photos and video. Of course, live streaming video with corresponding Timing & Scoring will be available on the site.

From coverage of IndyCar Series drivers competing in off-season races such as the Petit Le Mans and the Rolex 24 Hours at Daytona, to the 2009 rules package, the official Web site of the Indy Racing League will have all the details.

Jonathan Ferrey/Getty Images

**WS\*\*BREAKING NEWS\*\*BREA**



Click on all the latest stories from **indycar.com**



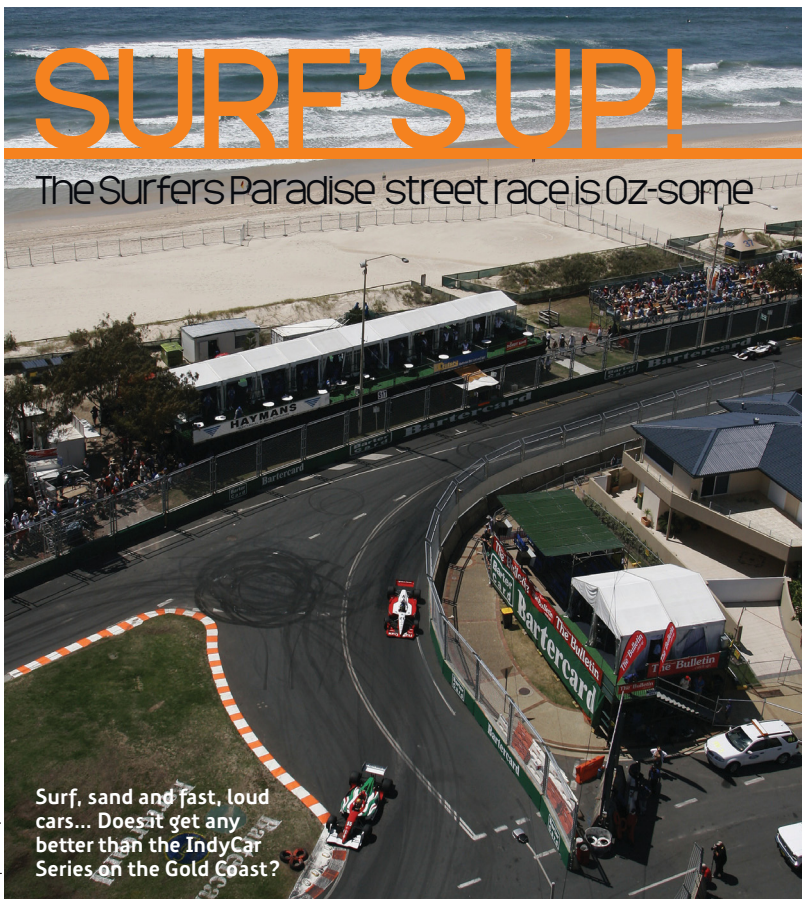
Cancel all plans for the evening of Saturday, Oct. 25: Watch the Nikon Indy 300 from Surfers Paradise live at 10:30 p.m. (ET) on ESPN Classic. There's also an Oct. 26 re-air at 11 p.m. (ET) on ESPN2. And, of course, it's all live on indycar.com



Mark Horschberg/LAT

# SURF'S UP!

The Surfers Paradise street race is Oz-some



Phillip Abbott/LAT

Surf, sand and fast, loud cars... Does it get any better than the IndyCar Series on the Gold Coast?



## This just in...



### VIDEO

Tony Kanaan has re-signed with Andretti Blue - er, Andretti Green Racing - for five more years. Here's TK's take on it



Perry Nelson/LAT

## DEC. 12 MAKE IT A DATE!

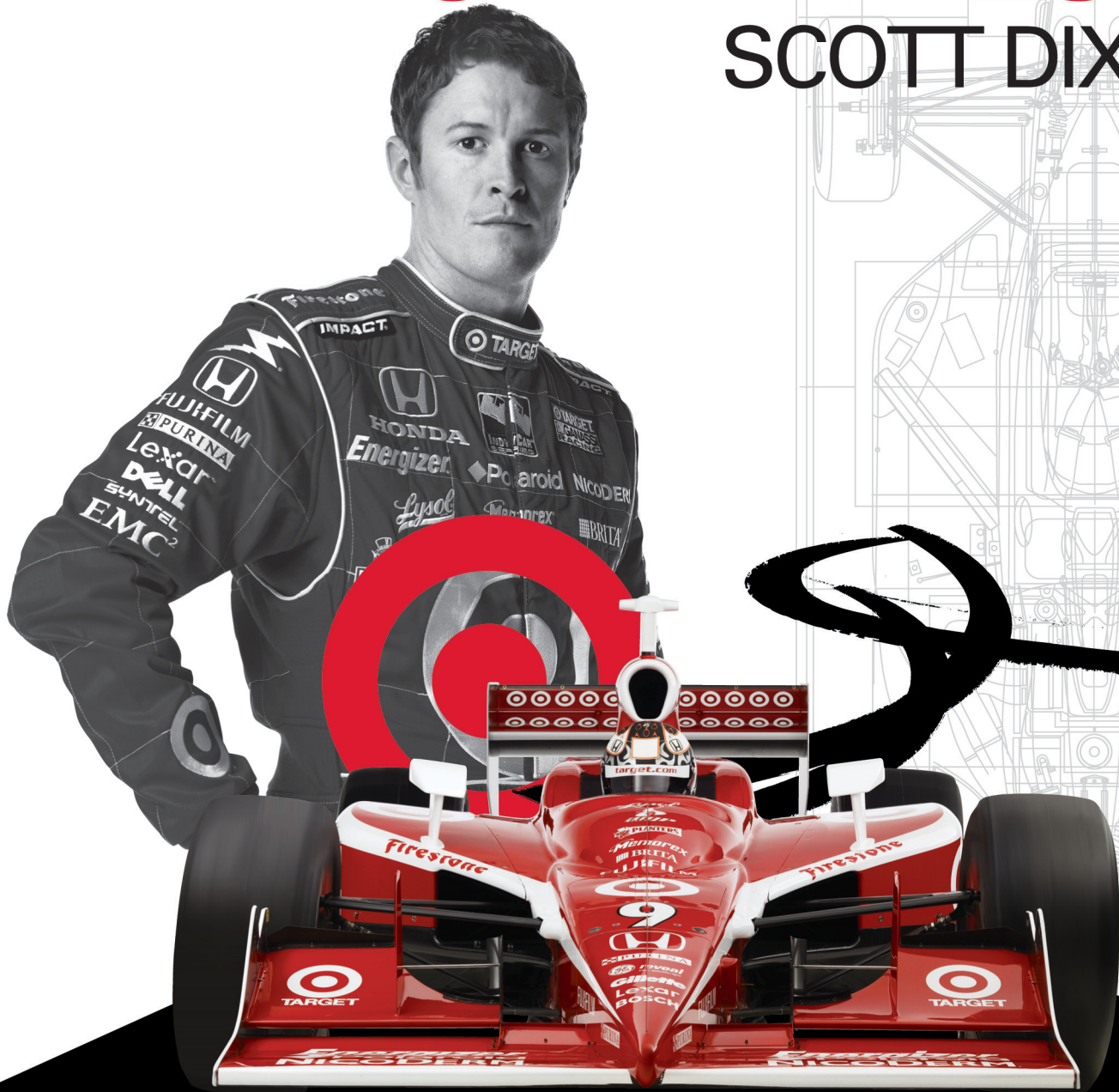
That's when the **IndyCar Series** winter **digital special** will go live. Get up to speed on what's happening with your **favorite drivers** over the off-season and check out what's new as they prepare to go racing again in the **2009 IndyCar Series**. It's **FREE**, so subscribe now!

**Go to [Indycarmag.com/digitalissue](http://Indycarmag.com/digitalissue)**

2008 INDYCAR® SERIES and INDIANAPOLIS 500

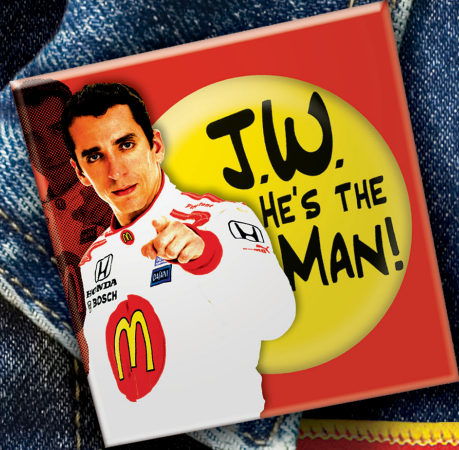
# CHAMPION

SCOTT DIXON



First, the Indianapolis 500 win.  
Then, the IndyCar Series Championship.  
We've never been prouder to have our logo so blurry.





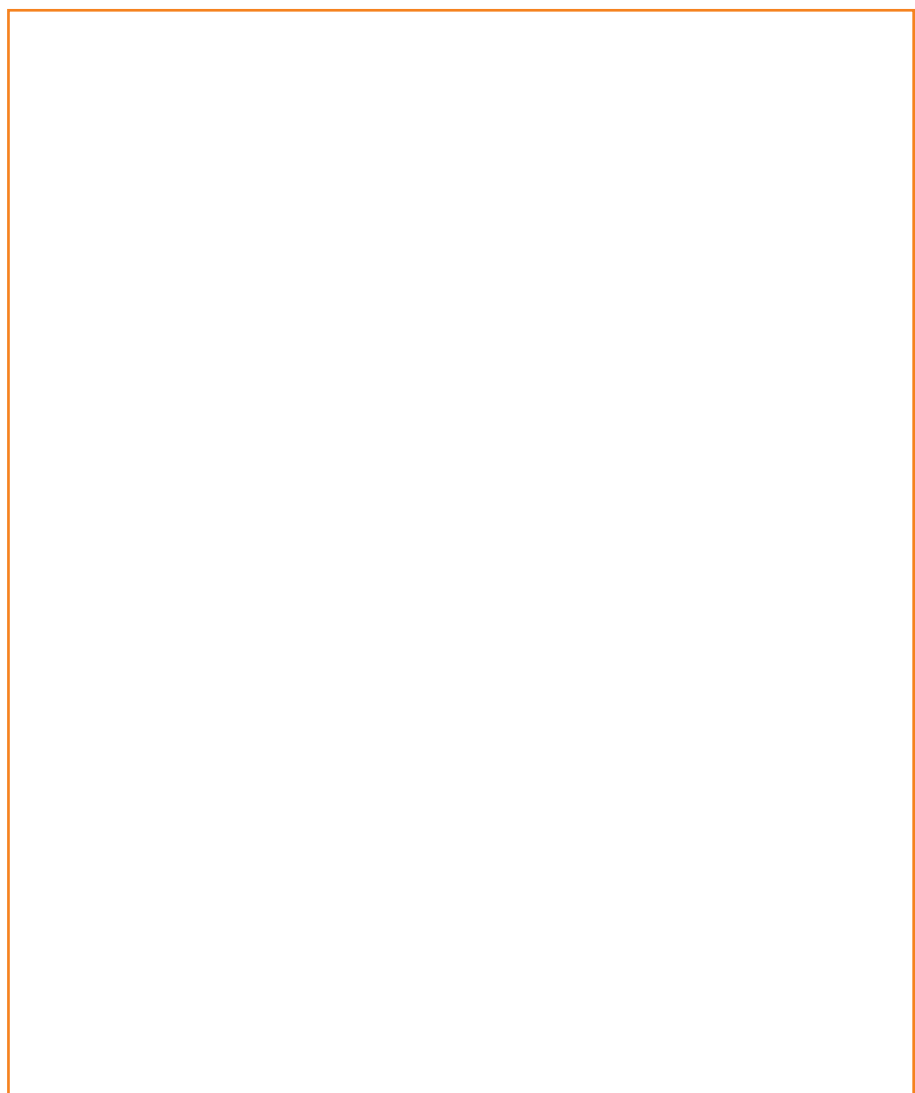
# Badge of Honor

IM's Photo



His role in the ESPN/ABC commentary booth means Scott Goodyear didn't miss a lap of the 2008 IndyCar Series. Add in his experience behind the wheel at the highest level of open-wheel racing and he's the perfect guy to tell us who gets the merit badges after an action-packed season of racing. Goodyear, start your opinions...

Main Image Eddie Melendreras/Philip Royle



LAT Photographic

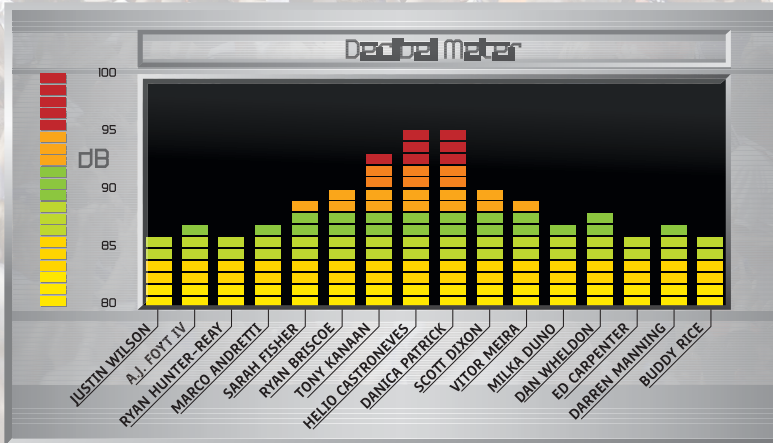
Finally! Arie Luyendyk Jr. (left) took a popular win in the Firestone Indy Lights finale at Chicagoland – it came in the 63rd start for the second-generation racer. Previously, he'd earned 12 top-three finishes



IMS Photo

# COME ON FEEL THE NOISE!

Who's the most popular driver in the IndyCar Series? You can probably hazard a pretty good guess, but we decided to apply a little science to that question at the Chicagoland Speedway finale. Using a hastily purchased decibelmeter positioned at the start/finish line, we measured how loud the cheers were for each driver at the pre-race intros. (Drum roll, please.) These, folks, are the results...



So, a tie at **95 decibels** for Danica and Helio, and some intriguing results lower down the order, too. As a comparison, our cheap and cheerful device read **120 decibels** inside Turn 1 for the start, and **116 decibels** next to Marco Andretti's pit when he exited after his first stop. How loud is that? It's difficult to make a direct comparison, because the decibel scale is logarithmic, not linear, and we're not clever enough. But back in 1976, a concert by The Who entered the Guinness Book of World Records as the loudest ever at **126 decibels**, and noise levels on the decks of aircraft carriers routinely exceed **140 decibels**.

It goes without saying, but we recommend that you take precautions to protect your hearing whenever you're at an auto racing event. That's a no-brainer, right?

## Variety is the spice of Lights



Paul Webb/LAT

### A POLISH THIS FAST CAN'T BE STREET LEGAL... OR CAN IT?

Lucky for you, the answer is YES.

Mo's Gold, the Official Polish of Firestone Indy Lights, is now available for your vehicle.

Buy online at [www.mosgold.com](http://www.mosgold.com)



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Helio Castroneves  
Two time Indy500® Champion



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Caribbean VENETIAN, ISLAND COMPANIES,  
EFFY, MILANO Indianapolis MOYERS  
New York KENJO Las Vegas CADORO,  
THE WATCH SHOPPE TREASURE ISLAND  
Little Rock KENNETH EDWARDS  
McAllen CARATS Naples PORT ROYALE  
Newport Beach SORAYA Palm Beach DELLA POLETTI  
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# RACE 14 Meijer Indy 300

Kentucky Speedway, Aug. 9

The field screams down the front stretch at Kentucky Speedway. Somewhere in there is Scott Dixon, headed to a – surprise – win No. 6. (below) Dan Wheldon gets ready for practice; he finished fifth in the race



## RACE 14

Meijer Indy 300  
Kentucky Speedway, Ky.  
Aug. 9

## RACE 15

PEAK Antifreeze and  
Motor Oil Indy Grand Prix  
Infineon Raceway, Calif.  
Aug. 24

## RACE 16

Detroit Indy Grand Prix  
The Raceway at Belle Isle,  
Mich., Aug. 31

## RACE 17

PEAK Antifreeze and  
Motor Oil Indy 300  
Chicagoland Speedway, Ill.  
Sept. 7

2008 INDYCAR  
SERIES POINTS

2008 SCHEDULE

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## Quote of the day - Helio Castroneves

*"We took a chance. I can't believe how close we were. Coming out of the last turn, the fuel pressure went on and I started to lift."*



## RESULTS

Pos.	Driver	Team	Laps
1.	Scott Dixon	Target Chip Ganassi Racing	200
2	Helio Castroneves	Team Penske	200
3	Marco Andretti	Andretti Green Racing	200
4	Vitor Meira	Panther Racing	200
5	Dan Wheldon	Target Chip Ganassi Racing	200
6	Ed Carpenter	Vision Racing	200
7	Ryan Briscoe	Team Penske	200
8	Tony Kanaan	Andretti Green Racing	200
9	Ryan Hunter-Reay	Rahal Letterman Racing	200
10	Buddy Rice	Dreyer & Reinbold Racing	200

Race Time 1h36m42.3467s Avg speed 183.650mph

Winning margin 0.5532sec Starters 26

Lead changes 10 among 5 drivers

Caution laps 21 Pole Scott Dixon, 218.968mph

All cars are Dallara-Honda-Firestone





# Champion unwrapped

2008 IndyCar Series champion Scott Dixon is such a mature and well-rounded kind of guy, we let him pick his own questions

Words Jeff Olson Main Image Michael Levitt/LAT

 VIDEO

It's the day after taking his second IndyCar Series title, and Scott Dixon's reflecting on what it all means to him



Michael Levitt/LAT

What 0.0033sec looks like in the IndyCar Series – 12-and-one-eighth inches. Dixon lost out to Helio Castroneves, but consoled himself with the title

## SWEET HOME CHICAGOLAND

*Scott Dixon's post-race thoughts on IndyCar Series Championship No. 2 – and the victory that wasn't...*

**For a couple of minutes after the race, everyone thought you were the winner – including you.**

What, we didn't win it...? But seriously, that definitely would have topped off the day; a record-breaking seventh win like that would have been fantastic. It was the craziest Victory Circle I've been in, where you see your car get rolled into position, get out like you've won the race, and then they roll it out, take the cap off your head and say you haven't. That was a little tough to take.

**How does this compare to 2003?**

You know, this means a lot more. I think this year was much tougher. Knowing the guys (below) who've been with Target Chip Ganassi Racing now for about seven years, knowing what they go through, how much

work they put in, it means a ton more than the first time. To accomplish what we have on short ovals, medium-sized tracks, superspeedways, street courses, road courses, I think you definitely get a true champion out of that. For us to be the first to win it on that kind of level I think is pretty special.

**Battling for the championship, was it such a good idea to be racing side by side so much?**

When you're with people like Briscoe, my teammate, T.K., Danica and Helio, you're pretty confident running side by side. They've got just as much to lose as me. Especially on the last few laps with Helio, he was definitely trying to put the squeeze on us. If we touched, 99 percent chance it would have been both of us going into the wall.

*"This means a lot more (than '03). The competition was a lot tougher"*

SCOTT DIXON



Paul Webb/LAT



Robert Laberge/Getty Images



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# BEHIND EVERY GR

...there's a great race team, and 2008 champ Scott Dixon can draw on the loyalty and expertise of a tight-knit group of guys at Target Chip Ganassi Racing

*Words* John Oreovicz  
*Main Image* Jamie Squire/Getty Images



(Main) S  
center, but ev  
Racing is cru  
and Indy 5  
with crew o  
Hull he  
engineers Er

# REAT MAN...



Maria W. Grady/LAT



Dan Strecek/LAT

Scott Dixon's the guy front and everyone at Target Chip Ganassi special to winning championships 00s. (Top right) Dixon confers chief Ricky Davis. (Right) Mike leads a brain-trust that includes Bretzman and Brian Welling

## A DIFFERENT DIXON

*The team has noticed a change in its main man*





Huge fields and competitive races marked 2008. At the front, it was Ganassi and Penske, with a little bit of AGR thrown in

Helio Castroneves fought him hard until the very last lap, but it still proved a dream year for Scott Dixon and his No. 9 crew

Words Richard James Main Image Jonathan Ferrey/Getty Images

All things financial have been in the news lately, with mortgage companies and banks in trouble, and an economy softer than anyone would like. Everyone with a retirement account has been keeping a wary eye on the stock market, wondering if they'll be able to abandon the working world as planned. It's certainly proving to be a bit of a roller coaster ride.

Just like the stock market, each driver has his or her ups and downs throughout the racing year. Some days a driver's stock price – their perceived worth – is higher, others it's lower. A win or a good finish can make a driver's market value soar. A crash or a general poor showing can send it into the basement.

Expectations can play a part as well. Often a company can come out with great earnings, only to watch the stock price stumble because analysts were expecting better returns. It's a cruel game and, in the IndyCar Series world, it's typified in the paddock saying: "You're only as good as your last race." You won last weekend? Good for you. Now move aside, you're blocking my view of the podium celebration, loser.

Any driver contending for the IndyCar Series championship is comparable to a blue chip stock. They're the ones you expect to perform week in and week out; the ones whose market value goes steadily up, without big short-term gains and the spectacular crashes that follow. If this year's results are any indication, there were four drivers that qualify as blue chippers – Scott Dixon, Helio Castroneves, Tony Kanaan and Dan Wheldon. These four were up front all season long, although some obviously more spectacularly and frequently than others. You know who had the greatest value at the end of the season. Now let's find out why.



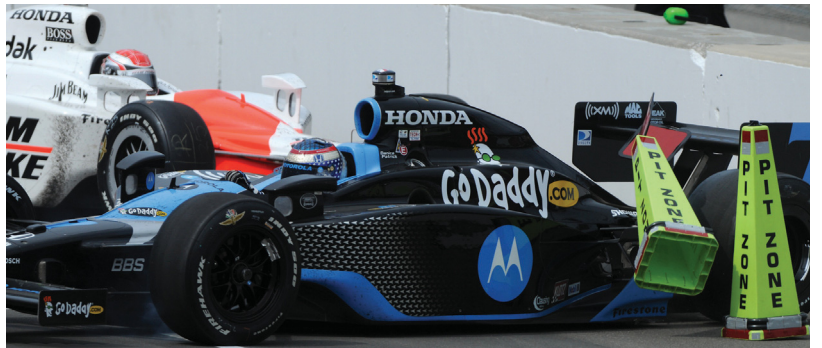
Michael Levitt/LAT

## HIGHS AND LOWS OF 2008 HOMESTEAD TO IOWA

Taking a cue from stock market analysts, we've rated the top four drivers on each race, from **SELL** (worst) to **BUY** (best) with **UNDERPERFORM**, **HOLD**, and **OUTPERFORM** in between.

# HIGHS AND LOWS, PART TWO

## RICHMOND TO CHICAGOLAND



(Above) The glory of Danica Patrick's Motegi win faded with a pit-lane crash at Indy. (Below) Job done, Scott Dixon celebrates with the Ganassi Racing crew

Walt Kuhn/LAT



Dan Strech/LAT

# Ahead of the class

Hideki Mutoh. Remember the name, 'cause this kid's got a big future

Words Richard James Main Image Darrell Ingham/Getty Images



Against the strongest rookie class in years, Hideki Mutoh finished on top. His experience gained should see him making big steps in 2009

# 2008 INDYCAR SERIES BY

It's not just baseball that can churn out the stats. Here are a few to ponder. How did your favorites do?

## RACE BY RACE

			Homestead	St. Petersburg	Motegi	Long Beach	Kansas	Indianapolis	Milwaukee	Texas	Iowa	Richmond	Watkins Glen	Nashville	Mid-Ohio	Edmonton	Kentucky	Infinite	Detroit	Chicago	POINTS TOTAL
1	Scott Dixon	Target Chip Ganassi Racing	1P	22	3*	-	3P*	1P*	2*	1P	4P	3	11	1	3	1	1P*	12	5P	2	646
2	Helio Castroneves	Team Penske	4	2	2P	-	4	4	5	2*	14*	2	16	3P	2P	2*	2	1P*	2*	1*	629
3	Tony Kanaan	Andretti Green Racing	8	3P	5	-	2	29	3	5	18	1P*	3	4*	7	9	8	3	3	4	513
4	Dan Wheldon	Target Chip Ganassi Racing	3	12	4	-	1	12	4	4	1	4	24	2	17	7	5	4	20	6	492
5	Ryan Briscoe	Team Penske	19	23	9	-	7	23	1	3	7	15	12P*	23	1*	6P	7	2	9	3P	447
6	Danica Patrick	Andretti Green Racing	6	10	1	-	19	22	9	10	6	6	14	5	12	18	11	5	16	10	379
7	Marco Andretti	Andretti Green Racing	2*	25	18	-	5	3	27P	19	3	9	5	24	25	17	3	14	18	8	363
8	Ryan Hunter-Reay	Rahal Letterman Racing	7	17	7	-	18	6	15	20	8	16	1	19	10	8	9	18	6	9	360
9	Oriol Servia	KV Racing Technology	12	7	-	5	11	11	6	26	16	5	23	16	5	5	12	15	4	17	358
10	Hideki Mutoh (R)	Andretti Green Racing	24	6	11	-	6	7	12	6	2	13	9	14	9	27	18	13	11	22	346
11	Justin Wilson (R)	Newman/Haas/Lanigan Racing	15	9	-	19P	9	27	7	27	12	7	25	18	11	3	24	9	1	11	340
12	Will Power (R)	KV Racing Technology	25	8	-	1*	27	13	14	13	9	25	15	11	4	22	26	25	8	5	331
13	Vitor Meira	Panther Racing	10	19	16	-	22	2	22	7	15	20	22	6	6	19	4	7	17	27	324
14	Darren Manning	A.J. Foyt Racing	13	13	8	-	24	9	13	28	21	12	2	9	8	10	19	22	12	7	323
15	Ed Carpenter	Vision Racing	5	18	6	-	10	5	20	9	23	11	17	8	15	13	6	23	14	28	320
16	Buddy Rice	Dreyer & Reinbold Racing	11	15	12	-	20	8	10	8	22	22	4	7	20	11	10	11	19	25	306
17	Graham Rahal (R)	Newman/Haas/Lanigan Racing	-	1*	-	13	12	33	25	11	10	18	8	12	16	26	25	8	13	19	288
18	E.J. Viso (R)	HVM Racing	17	4	-	9	14	26	8	14	13	10	10	-	22	15	13	6	24	23	286
19	A.J. Foyt IV	Vision Racing	9	11	15	-	8	21	17	12	5	24	19	22	18	12	20	20	10	13	280
20	Bruno Junqueira	Dale Coyne Racing	23	24	-	12	15	20	18	15	25	23	6	15	13	14	14	17	7	20	256
21	Mario Moraes (R)	Dale Coyne Racing	16	16	-	20	17	18	23	18	19	17	7	10	24	20	17	10	15	21	244
22	Enrique Bernoldi (R)	Conquest Racing	18	5	-	4	25	15	16	23	17	26	21	20	26	16	22	21	-	-	220
23	Jaime Camara (R)	Conquest Racing	-	-	-	-	21	31	24	24	20	14	18	21	14	23	16	24	25	18	174
24	Marty Roth	Roth Racing	21	26	17	-	26	32	27	22	26	19	-	13	21	21	23	26	26	16	166
25	Milka Duno	Dreyer & Reinbold Racing	20	-	-	-	16	19	-	17	24	-	20	17	23	-	21	-	23	14	140

\*Laps led bonus / P = polesitter / Italics = not running at finish / R = rookie / Rookie of the Year / All cars Dallara-Honda-Firestone

## RACE WINS TOP 5 FINISHES LAPS LED

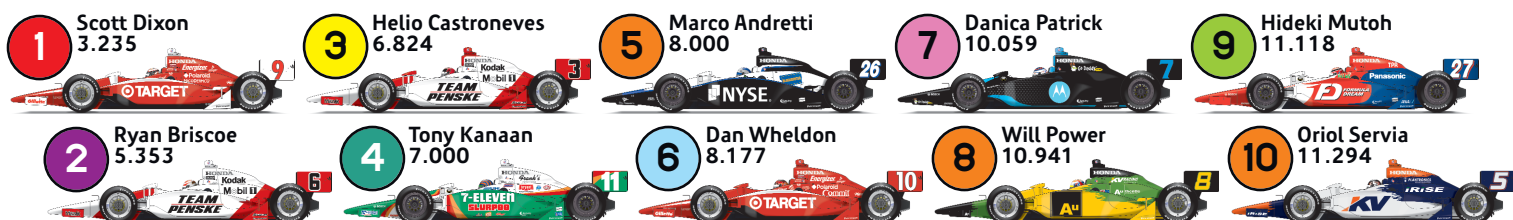
1 Scott Dixon 6	1 Helio Castroneves 15	1 Scott Dixon 899
2= Ryan Briscoe 2	2 Scott Dixon 14	2 Helio Castroneves 561
2= Helio Castroneves 2	3 Tony Kanaan 11	3 Tony Kanaan 415
2= Dan Wheldon 2	4 Dan Wheldon 10	4 Marco Andretti 330
5= Ryan Hunter-Reay 1	5 Marco Andretti 6	5 Ryan Briscoe 202
5= Tony Kanaan 1	6 Oriol Servia 5	6 Dan Wheldon 164
5= Danica Patrick 1	7= Danica Patrick 3	7 Will Power 84
5= Graham Rahal 1	7= Will Power 3	8 Vitor Meira 81
5= Justin Wilson 1		9 Justin Wilson 49
5= Will Power 1		10 Jaime Camara 44

(Below) Jaime Camara made the laps led top 10.  
(Right) Marco Andretti led eight races, won zero



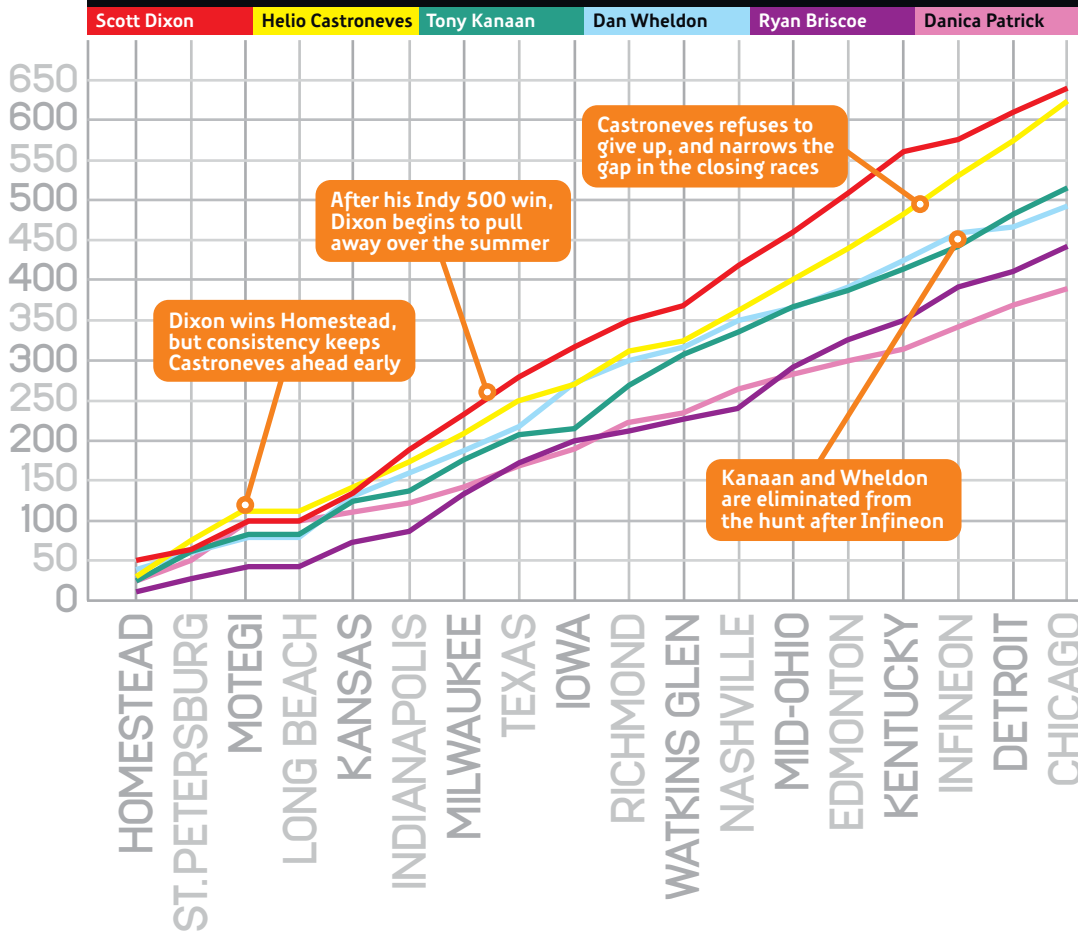
## SUPERGRID

Based on the average qualifying position for drivers making multiple starts



# THE NUMBERS

## THE CHASE FOR THE TITLE



### ANALYZE THIS...

*Some statistical highs and lows of the 2008 season*

**Most laps led by a race winner** 166, Tony Kanaan, Richmond, June 28

**Fewest laps led by a race winner** 3, Danica Patrick, Motegi, April 20

**Most laps led by a non-race winner** 147, Scott Dixon, Milwaukee, June 1

**Most lead changes** 22, Chicagoland, September 9

**Fewest lead changes** 3, Richmond, June 28

**Fastest race** 183.650mph, Kentucky, August 9

**Slowest race** 74.251mph, St. Petersburg, April 8

**Most cautions** 9, Richmond, June 28

**Fewest cautions** 1, Infineon, August 24

**Most cars on lead lap** 18, Infineon, August 24

**Fewest cars on lead lap** 4, Homestead, March 29

### RACES LED

- 1 Helio Castroneves 13
- 2 Scott Dixon 11
- 3 Tony Kanaan 9
- 4= Marco Andretti 8
- 4= Ryan Briscoe 8
- 6= Vitor Meira 6
- 6= Dan Wheldon 6
- 8 Justin Wilson 4

### POLES

- 1 Scott Dixon 7
- 2 Helio Castroneves 4
- 3 Ryan Briscoe 3
- 4 Tony Kanaan 2
- 5= Marco Andretti 1
- 5= Justin Wilson 1

### WINNINGS\*

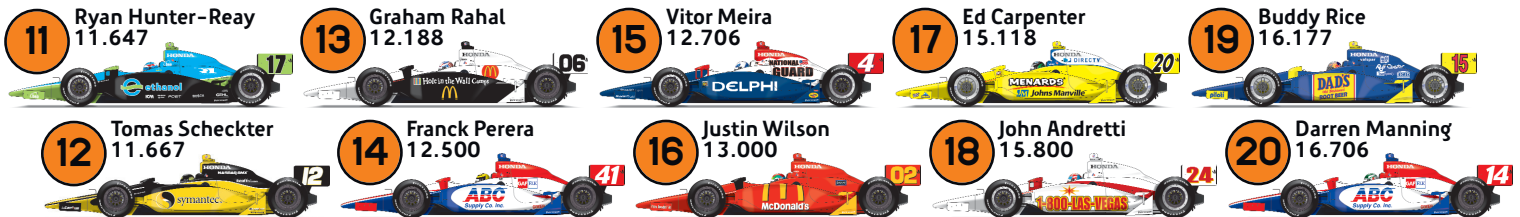
- 1 Scott Dixon \$3,415,565
- 2 Vitor Meira \$1,306,215
- 3 Marco Andretti \$890,315
- 4 Helio Castroneves \$883,065
- 5 Dan Wheldon \$586,815
- 6 Tony Kanaan \$571,215
- 7 Ryan Briscoe \$482,165
- 8 Ed Carpenter \$413,665
- 9 Justin Wilson \$385,315
- 10 Ryan Hunter-Reay \$379,065



Paul Weiby/LAT

\*Winnings do not include TEAM bonus or Long Beach

Car illustrations: Brad Walters and the IMS interactive team





# Mr. Positive



When Helio Castroneves is done racing, how about a new career in motivational speaking? He's winning proof that his philosophy works

*Words* Jeff Olson  
*Philosophy* Helio Castroneves  
*Main Image* Michael Levitt/LAT

TRONEVES

THE POWER OF

POSITIVE

THINKING!!!

RESULTS



Marc Serota/Getty Images

## HAD A BAD DAY? JUST MOVE ON

*If races don't go his way, Castroneves looks forward*

When the news arrived, Helio Castroneves nearly wept. Originally, he was told he'd finished second to Scott Dixon in the IndyCar Series finale at Chicagoland Speedway. Then, while still standing in his pit stall, he was told he'd won the race.

It didn't mean he'd won the championship – that still belonged to Dixon – but Castroneves celebrated as if he'd just been elected king of the world.

"I won?" he screamed on national television. "I won?! I knew I won! I knew it!"

Thus, Castroneves turned what could have been perceived as a negative into an enormous positive. Look at the negative aspects of the title battle upon which he could have dwelled: A controversial penalty in Detroit (above) that moved him from first to second and cost him precious points. A flat tire in Iowa that ended with a 14th-place finish. A fuel problem at Kentucky that cost him victory. A mechanical problem at The Glen that led to a 16th-place finish.

And so to Chicago. He'd beaten Dixon to the finish line by just 0.0033sec – making it the second-closest finish in IndyCar Series history – and he was thrilled by the competition.

"I turned a page on what had happened at Detroit," he said. "There was nothing we could have done. Same with Iowa, or Kentucky. You have to get over each scenario and move on. I moved on. That's why I was able to race in Chicago the way I did."

# US THEM

Why have those guys behind the wheel got what it takes to race at 220mph and...let's face it, most of us haven't? Natural talent is only part of the story

*Words David Phillips*

*Main Image Robert Laberge/Getty Images*



(Main) If this auto racing game was easy, we'd all be doing it...But it's a small and highly dedicated group who *can* do it.  
(Top) Even a guy like Tiger Woods has a coach to keep him on top of his game



Warren Little/Getty Images

## THOSE WHO CAN... GET COACHED

*No matter how much an athlete is on top of his game, coaching can still be beneficial to him*

# Self-assessment

Through the highs and the lows, the good days and the bad, **Danica Patrick**, **Marco Andretti** and **Graham Rahal** are constantly under the media microscope. Fact is, it comes with the territory.

For three drivers still finding their feet and learning their craft in the IndyCar Series, it's just another added pressure to cope with.

But here's the deal: instead of us offering yet another opinion on them, we're going to shut up and let them give you their own takes on the 2008 season.

Take it away and tell it like it is, people. No pressure...

*Interviews David Malsber*

*Main Image Robert Laberge/Getty Images*

*"OK, I'm smaller, lighter; But that also means it's physically harder for me, too"*

DANICA PATRICK

For Danica Patrick, that first win in Motegi (below) was an obvious highlight. Another? The fact that her growing experience means the flow of setup information between her and T.K. (below right) isn't a one-way street

Andretti Green Racing  
17 starts/1 win/10 top 10s/4 laps led

“ One of my shining moments this year was Kansas – when Tony [Kanaan] used my setup! We'd qualified well and he hadn't, and although I didn't end up finishing the race, he went out and finished second from qualifying midpack using my setup. It's a big compliment. I feel like, in my second year with the team, I'm contributing more and more. I'm the same basic driver I've always been, but I'm *constantly* learning.

I think I've progressed, although it hasn't seemed so amazing as '07. In 2008 there have been more drivers – good drivers – especially on road and street courses, and that's definitely made it harder and made our performances and results go up and down a bit more. For example, last year at Sonoma I qualified on the front row. This year, they slowed the track down, but we were all still going faster than last year's times. Also, you see such small fractions between us, and



# Danica Patrick

that's because we're all pushing each other that much harder.

I don't think the changes to the weight regulations made any real difference to me. My issue was with the principle of it: OK, I'm smaller, lighter; but that also means it's physically harder for me, too – harder still when you add more weight to the car! They came up with the variable steering rack, but

everyone got it – and not everyone got the weight put on that I did. But it is what it is, and I go along with the rules.

As I said, we've had some good weekends, but there have been bad ones, too. I think we're still a good, strong team – one of the top teams – and we're working hard, but between us, we only had two wins, so maybe we've lost a hair of that edge. We've got one driver up there, but not two or three, like we should each weekend. But I mean that in the sense of a top team's struggles – it's not like we can't figure it out.

We had bad luck, too. There were good top-six finishes at the start of the year, but it would have felt more rounded as a season if those had continued. But at least we got a win.

The media attention after that brought it home to me that people really are always watching. Anything from making a face, to not signing an autograph, to being in a bad mood, or whatever – it all comes back to haunt you. People are willing to talk about those negatives too, because it's a story,

When people watch golf, they want to know what Tiger's doing. They don't necessarily care how *well* he's doing; they just want to know *what* he's doing. Well, I feel it's the same thing with me: good time or bad time, the media puts something out because there's a demand for that stuff.



Dan Struck/LAT



Paul Weby/LAT

Sure, the results weren't fantastic in 2008, but as Marco Andretti points out, he hasn't suddenly taken a step backward as a driver. In his third year in the IndyCar Series, he's especially pleased with his progress on the ovals (below)

*“When we had the car to win the race, we'd mess up some other way”*

MARCO ANDRETTI



# Marco Andretti

Paul Webb/LAT

**Andretti Green Racing**  
17 starts/0 wins/1 pole/8 top 10s/330 laps led

“It's been a strange year, to be honest. I think on road courses we've struggled as a team because we went down a wrong path, and as a driver there's only so much you can do if your car isn't working. On the plus side, my feel on the ovals has gotten much better, and I'm almost able to lead the team as far as setups are concerned, and that's made all the difference. In a normal oval race weekend, from the first moment of practice, I'm thinking about the race and working on a race setup, because those are tracks where you can easily pass. So, sometimes you'll see me qualifying 14th, but I'll know I have a car that can win the race.

It's surprising that Andretti Green Racing won only two races, but if you just take what's happened to the 26 car, there have been a lot

of races where we could have had the win. A lot of the races we led, and not just because of fuel mileage or whatever. We've been fast, but just come up short, either through the wrong strategy call, or something happening in a pit stop, or I'd be in a wall because of a suspension breakage or my error. Iowa I could have won, but we had an airjack problem; at Kentucky and Richmond, we got let down by strategy; at Milwaukee, I pushed too hard at the end, and at Motegi, I went too hard at the start. So take away those mistakes, a couple of strategy errors and a couple of mechanical failures, and we'd have been there, looking good.



Streeter Lecka/Getty Images

Consistency is key. When we had the car to win the race, we'd mess up some way, and when we weren't running so well, we'd finish. All of a sudden the talk is, “Oh, is Marco really any good?” whereas in my rookie year the story was that I was the man on road courses, but I was afraid of the big ovals. Now, apparently, it's the opposite. So what happened with my driving? Nothing. I just gained more experience on ovals and we haven't had great cars on the road courses.

I know we're going to be right on it in 2009, because that's one thing I learned through the year: We have what it takes. We have the personnel and the resources to be with Ganassi and Penske. What we need is consistency from everyone. People are already talking about Ganassi having Dario Franchitti and Scott Dixon. Well, I'm ready to take them on, I really am, to fight them at every single race and to go for the championship.

”

*“It’s better that I made mistakes in a year when we weren’t expecting to win anyway”*

GRAHAM RAHAL

For Graham Rahal, switching from Champ Car to the IndyCar Series meant mastering a new car and learning to race on ovals. It was tough at times, but a hard-earned win at St. Pete (below) was a highlight

# Graham Rahal

Newman/Haas/Lanigan Racing  
15 starts/1 win/4 top 10s/19 laps led

**“** I think we’ve learned a lot in 2008. Sure, progress could have been a little bit better, but it’s been such a busy year, I don’t think anyone’s had a chance to step back and think about it. It’s been non-stop for all of us. We just needed engineering staff in the team who were used to these specific cars – which we now have. We got Mitch Davis from Ganassi: he has a lot of experience, and a lot of things he’s brought over have really helped us and we’ve made good strides. I think we have a great group of guys here now.

As a driver, too, switching from Champ Car to the IndyCar Series took a lot of learning – basic things like the handling characteristics of the car, its braking abilities and its weight. OK, we won St. Pete, but everything fell into our hands. We were legitimately quick, I’ll be the

first to say that – in that final restart, we were able to hold Helio off and drop him. But the pit strategy had worked our way, too.

As for the ovals, I like them and came to grips with them pretty quickly. Milwaukee was great – I wish we could race there almost every weekend! – but I still kick myself that I screwed up that one: I’d passed [winner] Ryan Briscoe and I truly feel we were quicker than him.

I’m disappointed with myself that I made a lot of mistakes this year and, of course, when you’re trying to make up for what you’re lacking, those things happen... A little bit of it could be getting used to these cars, but not much. Milwaukee

certainly wasn’t. Mid-Ohio was my error, too. Indy? I’ll take the blame if it was me, but Tony Kanaan was running a higher line than me later in the race when there would have been more marbles. And then my engineer called me afterward to tell me that we had a broken shock, too, so let’s put Indy to one side.

OK, it’s better that I made mistakes in a year when we weren’t really expecting to win anyway. But, although I’m only 19, I’ve got to look ahead, too. I want my future to be with this team, but if they decide that isn’t the way they want it, I need to have opportunities elsewhere, and with results like I’ve had, they’re not going to come. So it makes it even harder on me pressure-wise. I missed college so I could go racing; I’ve put a lot on the line to do this, so I need this to work out.

I’m happy, but it’s been a trying year...

**”**



Loan Hygens/LAT

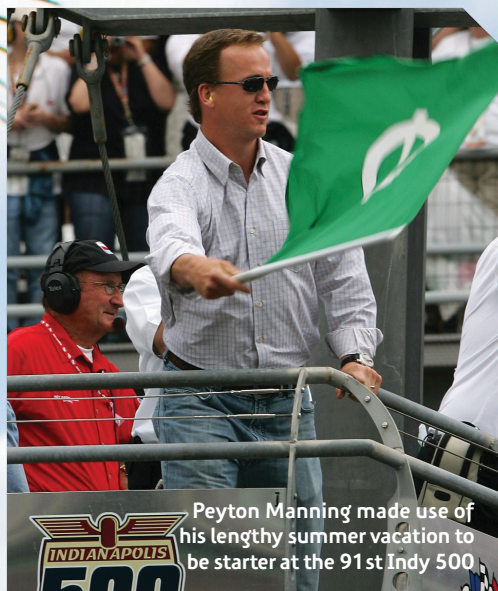
# School

(Main) For some, the winter is a chance to do very little. Others, such as Tony Kanaan (right), will take in some alternative race action. Former *Dancing with the Stars* winner Helio Castroneves will be supplying expert analysis on the latest series

Words Bruce Martin Main Image Sean Locke/Getty Creative

# ol's out

The next time the drivers of the IndyCar Series climb into their cars with points up for grabs will be April 5, in St. Petersburg, Fla. Between now and then, there's the non-points race in Surfers Paradise on Oct. 26, the awards banquet in Vegas on Nov. 5, a little testing here and there, and no doubt some quality time with their teams. But that leaves a lot of the winter still to fill, so how will the stars of the series fill those long, race-free months? Here's what they say...



Peyton Manning made use of his lengthy summer vacation to be starter at the 91st Indy 500

Darrell Ingham/Getty Images

## SEE YOU AGAIN IN, LIKE, SEVEN MONTHS

*How does the IndyCar Series off-season compare to other sports?*



Gavin Lawrence/Getty Images



ABC

THE INDYCAR SERIES IS PROUD TO PRESENT...

# B. J. WASSO

THE UNICYCLING WONDER



All the

mezuela

## VIDEO

Like its driver, E.J. Viso, HVM is new to the IndyCar Series. Take a tour of its race shop with team boss Keith Wiggins



(Above) After a promising debut season, E.J. Viso and the HVM Racing team could be ones to watch in 2009. The Venezuelan's also shown promise in his newest pursuit – unicycling (left)

Darrell Ingham/Getty Images

One wheel and four, E.J. Viso made a big impression in his first IndyCar Series season. Watch out for the unicycling Venezuelan making his move in 2009

Words David Malsber Main Image Dan Streck/LAT Special Effects Ree Tucker

## WHO IS THIS E.J. GUY?

E.J. Viso (then still known as Ernesto Viso) won the Skip Barber Dodge Eastern Championship in 2001, then headed to Europe. Two Formula 3 Winter Series titles in the UK led to him taking on the F3 Championship proper in '04. His season was curtailed early – but not before he'd taken two wins.

Two seasons in GP2 followed, with wins at Barcelona and Imola (below) in 2006, plus six more top-three finishes. But it's one of his one-off races in '07, at Magny-Cours, France, that most people associate with Viso and GP2. Check it out on YouTube to see why.

On that dramatic note, the Venezuelan might well have signed off on the European chapter of his career.

"There's still a chance I'll go back," he says, "but I'm not interested in being a third driver for a Formula 1 team – I want to race. GP2's good, but just because you win there doesn't mean you'll get to F1, and I don't like politics. That's why I came to this different world. I have never had so much fun in my career, and I believe I can make a difference and hopefully win the championship."



Andrew Ferraro/GP2

# BEAK

## Performance

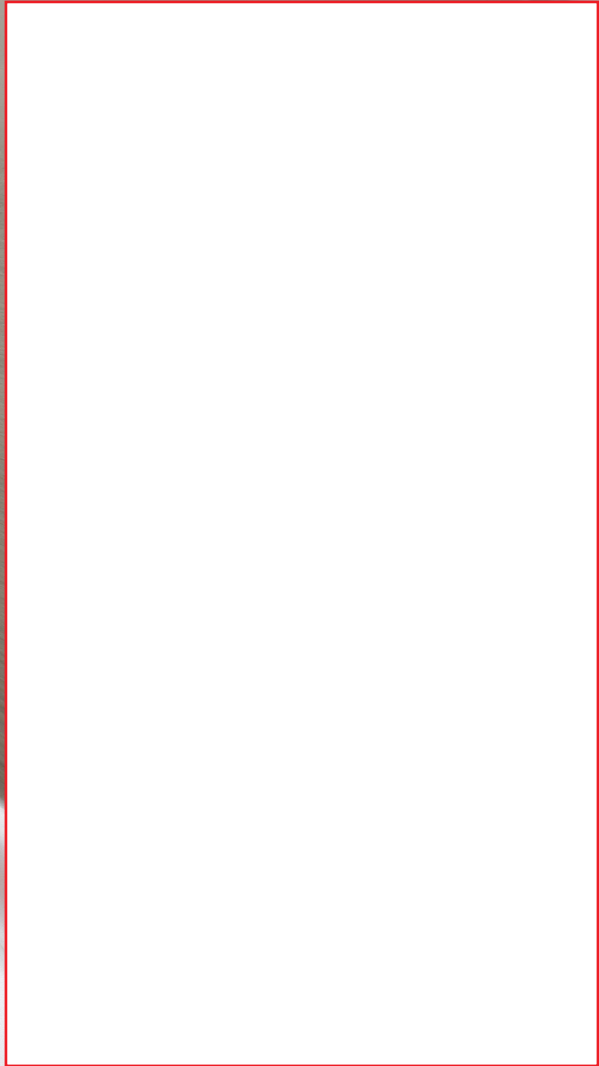
An IndyCar Series weekend wouldn't be the same without this guy to get the party started

*Words* The Firestone Firehawk, of course *Main Image* Michael Levitt/LAT

He's been on more podiums than Scott Dixon this season (actually, he's been on every podium this season), he's probably signed more autographs and posed for more photos than Danica and Helio combined, and he's fending off marriage proposals on a weekly basis. He's the Firestone Firehawk, the hardest working raptor in racing.

With a whole list of duties to perform around the IndyCar Series and Firestone Indy Lights, and thousands of fans to meet, greet and have fun with, race weekends are pretty much nonstop for the Firestone Firehawk. But the feathery phenomenon managed to take a few minutes out of his schedule to answer a few of our questions.

*"I've been proposed to over  
50 times! But my job's  
my first love"* **THE FIRESTONE FIREHAWK**



# Controlled Chaos





(Main) When Helio Castroneves wins, his trademark celebrations throw the standard post-race plan out of the window. That's when the call goes out to launch the "Helio plan..." (Right) Joe Hodge is the guy tasked with making the podium work to script

Crazy as it sounds, it takes a lot of meticulous planning to make an IndyCar Series podium such a fun and spontaneous moment. But it's always good to have a "Plan B..."

*Words* Dave Lewandowski *Main Image* Robert Laberge/Getty Images

In his exuberance to celebrate a victory Helio Castroneves style, the Team Penske driver bypasses the turn-off for Infineon Raceway's Victory Circle as directed and guides the No. 3 entry to a stop at the finish line, 200 yards farther down pit lane.

He gets out, high jumps the pit lane wall, then scales the grandstand support structure and railing to be a man of the people for a minute or two – until he feels someone pinching his butt. "That's when I knew it was time to leave" and join the formal celebration, he says.

The brief detour necessitates the Indy Racing League's event marketing staff to call an audible – the "Helio plan" – and soon everything is back on schedule.

"We knew Helio was going to find someplace to attempt to climb, we just didn't know where," says Ruthie Forbes, the Indy Racing League's director of special events. "At that point, you adopt the Helio plan, and if he's close enough to Victory Circle or pit lane, then we'll go out and put a hat on him and get ready. If not, we have to rely on the Delphi Safety Team and the pit techs to get him back for us. There is an underlying plan, it just happens to be 'OK, let's pull the trigger when we need to and here's what it's going to look like.'

"The hardest part of event logistics is you have to be as proactive as you possibly can and plan for anything. But you also have to be flexible, so you can adapt and roll with it."

There also is a "Danica plan," which was put in motion when she won at Twin Ring Motegi in April. With Patrick becoming the first female to win a major closed-course auto race halfway around the world from the U.S. mainland, "adapt and roll" took on a new meaning in getting the Andretti Green Racing driver front and center of the media.

The racing is action-packed and spontaneous, but the pre- and post-race activities must be more scripted, with multiple interests wanting a piece of the winner – print, TV and other electronic media, photographers, sponsors, team personnel and the race promoter – all within a brief time window.

"You have to take something that is jubilant and celebratory and keep it that way, while trying to control chaos," Forbes says. "You want the driver and team to enjoy the celebration and feel free and spontaneous but, at the same time, because of broadcast, media and sponsorship commitments, you have to keep it focused and organized.

"While the celebration wants to go on for two hours because the team is very excited and they have a lot of sponsors, the photographers and media have to be done by a certain time. So you have to find a happy medium.

"The plan covers enough of the broad bases that every group within Victory Circle has what it needs to do its job, while still allowing the ▶



Dan Strech/LAT

## TROPHY CABINET

Podium ceremonies? Sure, they vary a little from track to track. The trophies? They vary a lot. Check these out...



Michael Levitz/LAT

Homestead goes for bells, whistles and more bells with this "beat box"



Dan Srecky/LAT

Texas (where else?) adds a pair of six-shooters to the winner's glassware



Darrell Ingham/Getty Images

Nashville Speedway's hand-painted Gibson guitar is a Music City tradition



Jamie Squire/Getty Images

The most sought after of all: the Indy 500's majestic Borg-Warner Trophy



Paul Webb/LAT

Motegi follows the Borg-Warner tradition with this impressive piece of metal...



Paul Webb/LAT

...but goes for some offbeat extras, too. Er, an inflatable bowling pin?!



This wasn't in the plan... Dan Wheldon unleashes a moment of pie-based comedy genius upon newly crowned champ Scott Dixon at Chicagoland

*"You never know when your next victory is going to come, so enjoy it!"*

HELIO CASTRONEVES

driver to party like a rock star. It's all about the driver, but in actuality, it's about everybody else who needs to get what they need."

Castroneves, who at Infineon ended a 29-race winless streak, is oblivious to the loose time limit. His incandescent smile is unfailing throughout 10 minutes of photographs and the champagne fight with the second- and third-place finishers that inevitably veers into the crowd.

"I cannot contain myself very well; I try to enjoy the momentum," the IndyCar Series championship runner-up says. "I think everyone enjoys seeing it, but I don't do it for them. I do it because I have fun. You never know when your next victory is going to come, so enjoy it!"

Post-race podium celebrations for the top-three finishers are new in 2008 (held everywhere but at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway and Texas Motor Speedway), which adds to the logistical matrix, but the

differing sizes of Victory Lane and its proximity to the media center (the post-celebration destination for the top three) mean the plan has to be tailored for each venue. In the end, the nuances come down to experience and working closely with the staff at each venue.

"We go to each racetrack and develop a plan for that venue," says Joe Hodge, the Indy Racing League's senior manager of event marketing, who's the conductor of the Victory Circle operation. "It's primarily media-driven on when and where it needs to happen, because the primary focus of podiums is to get more of our stars in front of the media. It's a complex puzzle and you just have to make do and make it work. That's a collective effort between the league and promoter."

After recognizing second and third place, the spotlight is on the winner. The "hat dance" ensues, during which the victor poses for photographs with the event trophy and/or winning car wearing various logoed hats. There's even time allotted for photographs with the Firestone Firehawk and track mascot, followed by group shots with the team and sponsor guests.

Acknowledging requests while keeping the line moving, Hodge alerts crew members to prepare to release the car to the Indy Racing League technical inspection pad, where it will be checked for violations. Only then will he hand off the winner to Amy Konrath, the Indy Racing League's director of media and public relations, who lines up deadline interviews with TV outlets and Indianapolis Motor Speedway Productions, the in-house broadcast arm of the IndyCar Series.

Then it's off to the media center, where – if the timing is right – the winner will join the other podium finishers as they are finishing their news conference segments. From there, a half-dozen phone interviews await, along with an ESPN.com chat and a satellite media tour with TV sports anchors around the country.

Finally, the race winner can stop smiling and the marketing and public/media relations staffs can catch their breath.

"We have everything very detailed and scripted, knowing that it's an outline to keep everyone moving forward," Forbes says. "But it does take a lot of teamwork and flexibility." ■

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# Raphael

Raphael Matos, Indianapolis Motor Speedway, Sept. 8, 2008 – the day after taking the Firestone Indy Lights title at Chicagoland Speedway. Next time he poses at The Brickyard, he'll be hoping it's as an IndyCar Series driver

**VIDEO**

Raphael Matos talks about successfully completing his mission: taking the 2008 Firestone Indy Lights crown

**ONWARD AND UPWARD**

*Richard Antinucci fought hard to the final race*

# cated

**LIGHTS HEAVY ON GOOD NEWS**

*Big fields, Firestone in the title...and Ana Beatriz, too*

Spending another year in a feeder series might have seemed like a high-risk strategy to take. But for Firestone Indy Lights champ Raphael Matos, it's paid off. Strategy vindicated

*Words Tim Harms Main Image Michael Levitt/LAT*





# The long and winding

Forget all those transition teams trying to get a handle on ovals – over at Vision Racing, road courses are still the big challenge. But this just in: progress is being made

*Words Dave Lewandowski Main Image Chris McGrath/Getty Images*

(Main) It's been quite a learning curve for A.J. Foyt IV. (Opposite, from top) Ed Carpenter prepares to get streetwise; Carpenter (left) and Foyt confer; Carpenter at St. Pete, where he made his road race debut on in '05; Foyt overcooks it at Mid-Ohio

# ling road



Darrell Ingham/Getty Images



David Webb/LAT



Loran Hysena/LAT



Dan Strech/LAT

## GRANDPA WASN'T A BIG FAN...

*Road courses? A.J. Foyt can take 'em or leave 'em*

A.J. Foyt isn't lacking road course wins on his resumé. He's won the 24 Hours at Daytona twice, the 12 Hours of Sebring, the 24 Hours of Le Mans and the Nassau Trophy. He's won at Silverstone and Mosport. Why, he even won the Paul Revere 250 at Daytona in 1983 – with a cracked vertebrae suffered earlier in the day in a NASCAR Winston Cup crash.

But Foyt wasn't necessarily drawn to road racing during his illustrious career.

"I didn't go out of my way to go road racing; I mainly went when I had to go," the four-time Indianapolis 500 champion says. "If there was a choice between a road race and a sprint car race, I went to the sprint car race.

"I never enjoyed road racing as much as oval racing. In road racing, you can mess up in one corner and make it up in the next. It doesn't take that much finesse. With oval racing, you

have to be more precise at both ends of the track. Yeah, road racing is a lot more forgiving than racing on an oval, but if you make mistakes on an oval, it's going to cost you."

He learned that time and again on dirt and pavement, paying in points and places. But road racing almost cost Foyt his life – multiple times.

In 1965, at Riverside, a brake adjuster broke entering Turn 9. He was pronounced dead by a track medic, but Parnelli Jones saved him by scooping the dirt out of his mouth. Foyt suffered a broken back, bruised aorta and fractured heel.

In 1990, at Road America, a brake pedal broke on his Lola heading into Turn 1. He suffered injuries to his left knee and both feet and ankles that affect him to this day.

A.J. Foyt Racing driver Darren Manning has provided solid results for the team on

road/street courses, and Foyt is pleased to see the progress of his grandson, A.J. IV, with Vision Racing.

"He was good on them in the karts and formula cars, where you can throw the car around and recover quickly," Foyt says. "Now he's learned to handle them in the much heavier IndyCar Series car. I think he's doing a good job."



LAT Archive

(Above) A.J. Foyt's '67 24 Hours of Le Mans victory, with Dan Gurney, is the highlight of an impressive road racing resume – but he much preferred ovals. (Below) Four seasons into his task, Ed Carpenter is emerging from the road racing shadows

*"There are still a lot of rough days when we're not very happy with ourselves"*

ED CARPENTER



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RACE/FULL RICH MPG

3.3

**ACTUAL MILEAGE**  
WILL VARY WITH FUEL SETTING  
SELECTED, DRIVING CONDITIONS,  
DRAFTING PARTNERS, HEAVINESS OF  
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VIDEO

Close, but no cigar... Helio Castroneves finds himself a little short of the wet and flammable stuff in Kentucky

RACE/FULL LEAN MPG

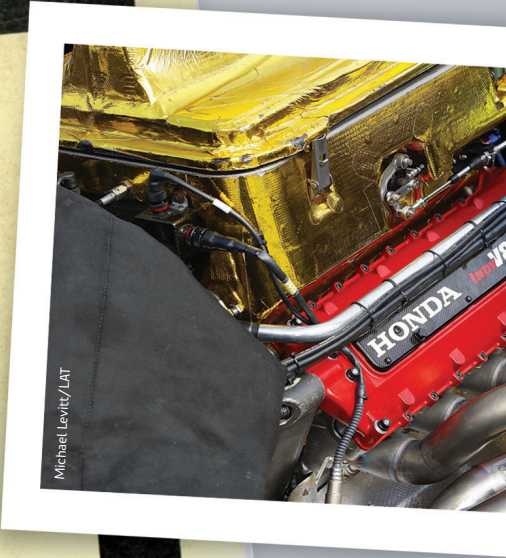
3.6

FOR COMPARISON SHOPPING  
ALL VEHICLES CLASSIFIED AS

INDYCAR SERIES  
OPEN-WHEEL RACE CARS

HAVE BEEN ISSUED MILEAGE  
RATINGS RANGING FROM

3.2 TO 3.4 MPG RACE/FULL RICH  
AND  
3.5 TO 3.7 MPG RACE FULL/LEAN



Michael Levitz/LAT

Race cars don't get an EPA rating (main), but if they did... (Far left) Helio Castroneves would have needed 3.8mpg to win Kentucky – a tall order. (Left) Safety car periods are dull, but save fuel. (Top) Honda's potent Indy V8 engine

Even when you're racing hard at 220mph, it pays to save a little ethanol. Sometimes it's not the fastest car that wins an IndyCar Series race, but the most frugal...

Words Richard James Main Image Eddie Melendreras

MEASURE TWICE,  
FUEL ONCE

*How much fuel went in?  
How much did it burn?  
Hmm, that's a tricky one...*

Unlike a street car, there is no fuel gauge in an IndyCar Series car. Measurements of how much 100 percent fuel-grade ethanol goes into the fuel cell and how much goes out, plus knowledge of the meters that make those measurements, is critical to knowing whether a driver can make it one more lap or not.

"We spend all weekend measuring every drop of fuel by weight and volume going into the car, and after every session we pump it back out to see how much is left," says Andretti Green engineer and fuel guru Bryan Page. "Honda gives us a number of how much fuel has been used. That's the hard part; it's got some error to it. So, we're always measuring how much the engine actually used compared to how much the engine says it used."

Like the gas gauge in a car that will let you run it past empty before the tank is dry, the flow meters show that more ethanol has been used than has actually gone into the engine. It ranges from 2 percent to 4 percent safe, Page explains, and that can be a lap's worth of fuel. So the first order of business is to figure out exactly how "safe" the engine is.

Once that's determined, "We measure every stop how much fuel is in the tank, by level and flow meters, and how much goes into the car. That's complicated because not all the fuel goes into the car – some of it comes back through the vent. So we're constantly measuring. Ultimately, there's nothing to tell us when we're going to be empty."



Dan Strebeck/LAT



At the ABC Supply/A.J. Foyt 225, Foyt himself gives the command – and it's usually a little different. In 2006, it was, "Boys and girl, start your engines!" This year, "Danica and gentlemen, start your engines!"

**BLAST FROM THE PAST**



Wilbur Shaw (left) was a three-time Indy 500 winner, but his legacy also includes making the command to start engines a spine-tingling moment

IMS Archive

What inspired your race helmet design?

**DANICA PATRICK**

"I actually started out in karts with a Paul Tracy design and that's sort of migrated into my design. We've added a little bit of real gold leaf and stuff like that into it to make it look better. It has changed a little here and there."



Michael Levitt/LAT

# Gentlemen, start your tradition

The story behind the most famous words in auto racing



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Long-limbed Ryan Hunter-Reay is definitely not a jockey-sized driver



changing oil and spark plugs - yet another one of Dixon's multiple talents

## HEY, DRIVERS, COULD YOU CHANGE OIL AND SPARK PLUGS ON YOUR OWN CAR?



## Do you feel beaten up after a race?

### RYAN HUNTER-REAY

"Since I'm so tall and crammed in the car, the ovals are tough on me sometimes. They make my knees go numb, because they're up in the steering column. The road courses are pretty good, and it's not that bad the next day. On a bumpy street course, it has an effect on my elbows. It all has to do with my being so tall. The little jockey drivers have it nice."

Paul Webby/LAT

# IS THE WINTER BREAK TOO LONG?

Six months on, six months off. Good or bad?



The rock 'n' roll lifestyle of a race car driver... It's post-season laundry for Darren Manning after a hectic few months spent on the road

Eddie the Wizard



Alex Tagliani raced in the Champ Car finale at Long Beach and finally made his IndyCar Series debut at Detroit. We had some catching up to do...

## ALEX TAGLIANI

## (RE)INTRODUCING

### Between Long Beach and your return to open-wheel racing at Detroit, what did you do?

Me and Walker Racing left Long Beach feeling we'd done really well – qualified second, run second and kept the pressure on Will Power. But it was a one-race deal, so then I raced the NASCAR Canadian Tire Series, and I did a little bit of driver coaching for Derrick [Walker]'s Atlantic team.

### How much time did you have to prepare for the Detroit race?

Not much! I got the call from Eric [Bachelart of Conquest Racing] on Friday. I'd missed the last flight to Detroit, so I drove from Hamilton and reached the Detroit paddock about 10:30 p.m. No time to do a seat, but we got my feet to touch the pedals. Went to bed at 3:30 a.m., had to be at the track at 6:30 for my medical. I got a half-hour of practice before qualifying. In the race the gearbox broke, but I ended up with fifth or sixth fastest lap of the race.

### Who were your motorsport heroes?

Gilles Villeneuve – a hero to all



Perry Nelson/LAT

Canadian kids. Ayrton Senna, an amazing driver who worked so much outside the car with the team. And guys I got to race with: Alex Zanardi and Michael Andretti.

### What's your favorite movie?

I like action comedies. The *Rush Hour* movies are great: Chris Tucker and Jackie Chan are totally hilarious.

### What Canadian music should we be listening to?

Simple Plan. They're a punk-pop band who I've gotten to know through my sponsor, Sennheiser. But the iPod was made for people like me: I like one or

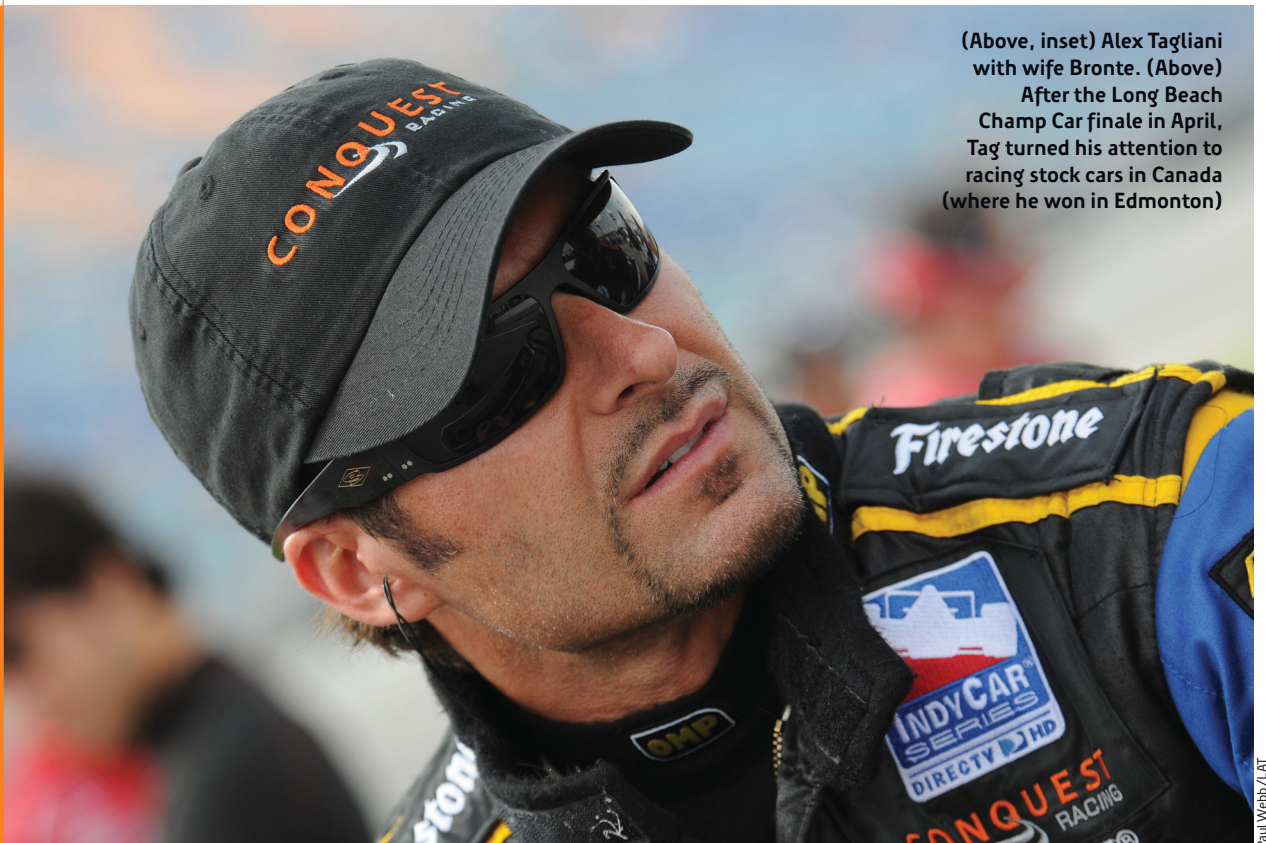
two songs from lots and lots of different bands. "Thunderstruck" by AC/DC is one of my favorite songs of all time. But I also like a bit of pop like "I kissed a girl" by Katy Perry, and a little bit of rap, too.

### What do you like to eat?

My wife Bronte's cooking – she's my mentor in this. I like my food to be pretty simple – chicken and steamed vegetables. I am very, very allergic to nuts, so I don't like to take risks at restaurants. Bronte also does the absolute best low-fat muffins and we stock them up in the freezer, so I can take them with me when I'm traveling.

### If you weren't a racing driver, what would you be doing?

Pfff...that's the worst question in my life! I have two loves: racing and my wife. If I lost those, I'd be the saddest guy in the world. Right now I have racing, and for the winter, construction/renovation. If I think about the long-term future, I'd like to have a proper kart track for kids to learn how to race. ■



(Above, inset) Alex Tagliani with wife Bronte. (Above) After the Long Beach Champ Car finale in April, Tag turned his attention to racing stock cars in Canada (where he won in Edmonton)

Paul Webb/LAT

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