Indy 500

PPG INDY CAR WORLD SERIES



Let's get ready to rumble

Things couldn't be better in 1995. I'm fortunate to be back at the Indianapolis for the first time in two years and I'm racing in a great team with Patrick Racing and Firestone. The fact that we're leading the PPG Cup championship after five races is proof of the team's ability.

Pat Patrick has shown his dedication and determination over the years, winning the 500 three times and the championship twice. Jim McGee is one of the greatest managers in the game, of course, and Steve Newey is an equally good engineer. Couple that with Firestone's return – especially here at Indy, because this is where the tyre company's heritage is – and I have by far my biggest opportunity ever in motorsport.

This is the first time at Indianapolis that I'm having fun. When testing tyres for Firestone last year, I was able to feel comfortable around this track for the first time in my career. It feels wonderful and I now understand why guys like Al Unser Jr, Emerson Fittipaldi and Bobby Rahal love this place so much.



SCOTT PRUETT

As far as the competition goes, it's the toughest I've ever seen in Indycar racing. The grids are closer this year than ever. We've had five different winners in five races, 12 different people on the podium, and Indycar racing is providing better racing this year across the board than anything else.

As for Patrick Racing and Firestone, I think we've shown on the ovals that, even though we haven't produced any results yet, we've been extremely fast. We felt that we could have won Phoenix providing luck was on our side. It wasn't, and we incurred a stop-go penalty and then had some contact with Tracy. We felt that we were in with a good shot to win Nazareth, but I bumped the wall before qualifying so we then had to race the back-up car. Despite that, we moved up from 10th to fifth, but then had an unfortunate problem in the pits with the air jacks and went down two laps.

For Indianapolis, I think we have excellent tyres and a well set-up car, but this is such a tough race. Everything has to come together. A reliable engine is absolutely essential and we have that with Ford, which, I feel, is due for a win here. After that, you also need a well-designed car, a properly organised crew and good, clean pitstops. Of course, you need some good breaks in the race, and you have to be smart the whole time. If all these things come together and we have a little bit of luck, we could just win the Indy 500.

In the meantime, I hope you enjoy reading AUTOSPORT's guide to the 79th running of America's greatest race. Once you've read this supplement, you'll be ready to sit back on Sunday afternoon and enjoy a fantastic event.

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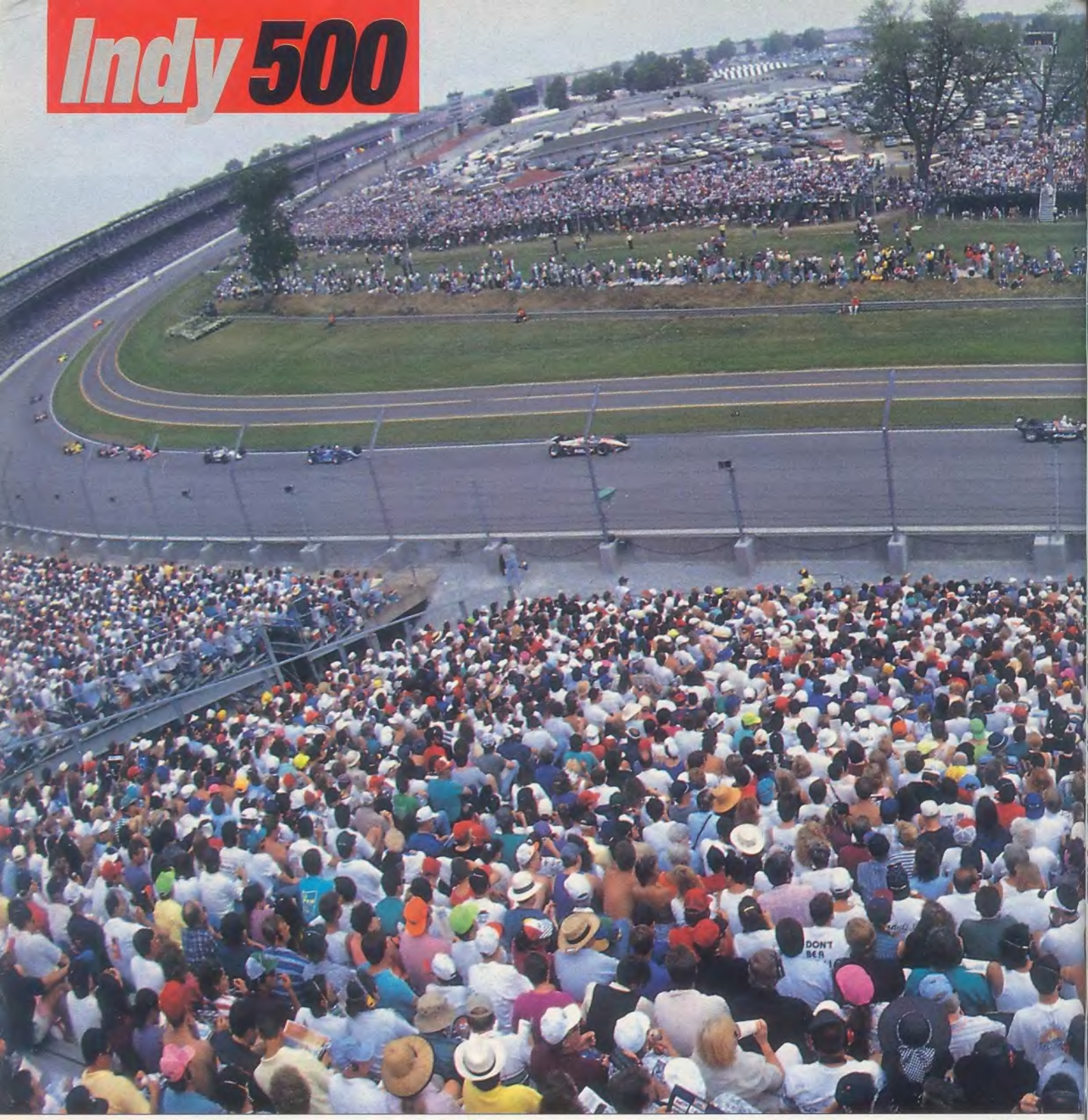
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Indy 500



Welcome to the wo

THE INDY 500 IS A RACING EXPERIENCE LIKE NO OTHER AND THIS SEASON ANYONE CAN WIN, SAYS OUR AMERICAN RACING EDITOR GORDON KIRBY

On Sunday morning at 11am Indiana time (5pm GMT), the Indianapolis Motor Speedway comes to life like no other track in the world. The giant, four-cornered, 2.5-mile superspeedway has no rival when it comes to seating capacity and when the house is full, as it always is on raceday, it makes for a fine sight.

Except for an outer stretch of the back-straight, the track is ringed with grandstands providing seating for almost 300,000 people. Add an infield crowd of roughly 100,000, and a veritable sea of humanity rises to its feet as the 33 starters in the world's largest one-day sporting event take the green flag.

Like most American races – and all Indycar races – the start is a rolling, high-speed affair. At Indianapolis, that means speeds of well over 200mph as the entire field pours into the first turn of lap one on cold tyres! That first corner and the opening lap of the race, more than any other, is a fretful, worrying time for both teams and spectators.

With an amazing five winners from this year's first five races and more than 10 drivers capable of winning any given race, Indycar racing can rightly be described as the world's most competitive



rld's greatest race

motorsport. The Indy 500 is the sixth of this year's 16 PPG Cup championship races and, going into the race, there's still no hint of a championship favourite. The field is now so close that even ninth-placed Michael Andretti could vault into the championship lead if he wins the 500.

Potential winners at the Indy 500 include former victors Arie Luyendyk, Bobby Rahal and Danny Sullivan. Possible first-time winners of the 500 include Michael Andretti, Paul Tracy and the Newman-Haas team itself, as well as last year's 'Rookie of the Year' Jacques Villeneuve.

Luyendyk's team-mate Scott Brayton, who claimed pole position a fortnight ago, is in with a good shout, but current PPG Cup points-leader Scott Pruett, the mercurial Robby Gordon and even former Formula 1 drivers Raul Boesel, Eddie Cheever and Stefan Johansson cannot be discounted.

The 200-lap, 500-mile race takes around three hours to complete, depending on the number and length of any full-course yellow-flag periods. The Indy 500 also requires at least five pitstops for fresh tyres and a full load of 40 gallons of methanol, so there's plenty of strategy to be played out, particularly during the yellows.

More than $6 million is on the line in total prize money this year, of which up to a staggering $1.5 million will go to the 500 winner.

This is by far the biggest purse posted for any motor race in the world, but then again, with 400,000 spectators arriving on raceday and around one million people buying a ticket of some type during the three weeks of practice and preparation, the Speedway can afford to be generous in paying its performers. So sit back and enjoy the show.

Penske on the edge?



Nobody could possibly have predicted the deep troubles that the Penske team has endured this month. Al Unser Jr and Emerson Fittipaldi are the two most accomplished Indy 500 veterans in the field, but neither was able to drive their Penske PC24s into the first and third turns without lifting off the throttle.

The team tried an endless series of set-up combinations with Unser and Fittipaldi running more than 2,500 miles in the first week alone.

In the second week of practice, Fittipaldi started testing one of last year's PC23s while Unser took to the track in a one-year-old Reynard 94I, bought from Pagan Racing and rebuilt in just one-and-a-half days by Penske's team.

Both drivers preferred to stick with the Penske, believing that if they could get the cars up to qualifying speed, they would be competitive in the heavy traffic and slick track conditions of raceday. As we closed for press, it was unclear which cars Unser and Fittipaldi will drive in the race.

This is not the first time Penske has changed chassis during the month of May from his own cars to replacement chassis. He did so most notably in 1987, putting aside the PC16 in favour of Marches and going on to win the race with Al Unser Sr. Can the team pull off the same turnaround again this year?

Big-boost Buicks give Brayton the edge

Scott Brayton has earned himself a handsome $100,000 reward by taking pole position in John Menard's turbocharged Buick.

Scott Brayton joined Menard's 'Month of May' team last year, after losing his sponsor and a full-time Indycar ride with Dick Simon at the end of 1993. Team-mate Arie Luyendyk joined the team over this winter after losing his seat at the end of last season and the pairing has answered all questions by continuing the dominance of stock-block engines, taking the first two places on the grid.

This year, Menard, who owns a very successful chain of hardware and building supply stores across the upper Mid-West, spent more than $6 million in fielding two new Lola T95/00s, purpose-built to take the latest version of his much-modified Menard/Buick V6 engine.

'We've worked really hard on the internal components of the engine,' commented Menard. 'Hopefully, we've built up the stamina for the race. This motor started out as a "hot rod", built by hot-rodders. It was low-budget in the '80s, made up of hot-rod parts right off the shelf. Anything was happening with them; things were coming out of them and they were blowing up.'



Swope

Scott Brayton and John Menard (centre right) show off the fruits of their pole position

Menard has spent millions on the engine in recent years, however, and with USAC continuing to allow the engine to run 10 inches more manifold pressure than the quad-cam V8s of Ford, Mercedes-Benz and Honda, Menard and his team have their best chance yet of a win.

Menard has run cars here for 15 years and for the past five has run stock-block-based, single-cam turbo Buick V6 engines in Lola chassis. His drivers have included Al Unser Sr, Gary Bettenhausen and Nelson Piquet. Unser finished third in 1992 – the best-ever finish for a Buick – and Bettenhausen was fastest qualifier in 1991, but as a second-day qualifier he started 13th.


Steve Swope

Al Unser Jr and Penske have found the road ahead at Indy very tough in 1995. Can they turn it around?

A Goodyear at last?

Scott Goodyear looks to be on the path to reviving his career after a disastrous move from Derrick Walker to Kenny Bernstein's team in 1994. With that team, he spent last years scratching around at the back of the grid, and only just made the field at Indianapolis.

Goodyear won the Michigan 500 because almost everyone else dropped out, but he was never again on the podium in 1994 and, at the end of the year, drag-racer Bernstein closed down his Indycar team. Goodyear was then out of work.


Swope

Goodyear's crew celebrate clinching a front-row slot

'There were some possibilities that came up over the winter,' commented Goodyear at the beginning of this month. 'But none of them were proper teams where I really felt I would have a chance to compete and win. I decided I'd be better off sitting the year out if I couldn't do it with a proper team. I think I learned my lesson last year.'

It wasn't until two months ago, with the new season already well underway, that Steve Horne and Goodyear entered into discussions with Honda to sign a contract for Scott to partner rookie-driver Andre Ribeiro at Indianapolis. Goodyear needed no persuasion and jumped at the one-off opportunity. Thus far, he has repaid everyone by qualifying on the front row.

'Scott has been excellent,' commented Horne, who team-managed Bobby Rahal to victory with Truesports in the 1986 Indy 500. 'His feel for the car and ability to communicate to the engineers is as good as anyone I've ever worked with, Rahal included.' From Horne, that is the ultimate compliment.

If Goodyear can win the Indy on Sunday, it will be a fairy-tale story, not only for him, but also for Horne's Tasman Motorsports team, Firestone and Honda. Already, with two weeks of promotion for both Honda and Firestone from a front-row starting place, Goodyear has come close to erasing his horrible memories of 1994.

An injection of fun...

In recent years, attendance at Carburetion Day - the final warm-up on Thursday before the race - has been on the rise as many corporations schedule track outings to reward their workers. No one seems to care that no really high speeds are posted, nor do they seem too bothered that carburetion is a thing of the past - even at tradition-laden Indianapolis.


DPPI

All hands on deck in the 1994 Pit Stop contest

According to the Speedway historian Bob Laycock, the last time a normally-aspirated car ran at the Brickyard was in 1953, when Bill Taylor failed to qualify. Laycock says Lee Wallard qualified in a carbureted car in 1951, but switched to fuel-injection for race day.

The other reason why Carburetion Day attracts so many fans is the annual Pit Stop Championship. This is the 19th year of the contest, in which pit crews challenge each other head-to-head in a four-tyre change.

Fun is the real name of the game in this friendly competition, although with a $25,000 first prize at stake, some of the teams take it very seriously. One driver tells a story of his team owner, a legendary Texan, electing to use his car in the Pit Stop Competition. The young protege was not amused at the start of the 500 three days later when he found the owner had buzzed the motor in his zeal to win.


Swope

The focal point of 33 racers' aspirations at Indy is the Borg-Warner Trophy. Nearly five feet tall, and valued at $1million, the trophy has every Indy winner's face etched on it

NEWS IN BRIEF

The huge purse of the Indy 500 has always attracted teams whose entire programme for the year is limited to the Brickyard. This year, all three front-row starters are 'Month of May Specials,' and three others have qualified soundly for the field.

Former TV reporter Hideshi Matsuda was the fastest second-day qualifier in his Lola-Ford, beating Indy regulars like Bobby Rahal and Raul Boesel.

Roberto Guerrero's Indy 500 track record – set in 1992 – was the result of a one-off drive, and the Colombian returns in a similar capacity. He starts 13th, driving Pagan Racing's Reynard-Mercedes-Benz. While Stan Fox, as ever, will be out there, starting 11th.

This year marks the 50th race for track announcer Tom Carnegie, whose booming call of 'And . . . he's . . . ON IT!' is an annual highlight of qualifications.


Swope

Football legend Joe Montana at Indy

American footballers are making their presence felt at Indy. Two legends of the game – Joe Montana and Walter Payton – have bought into Indycar teams. Montana has joined up with Chip Ganassi who runs Bryan Herta, while Payton/Coyne Racing will be running Alessandro Zampedri.

The total prize list for this year's Indy 500 is expected to add up to $8 million, with around $1.25 million going to the winner, but ask any team owner and they will tell you that the race is a financial loser unless you win.

Last year, winner Al Unser Jr was paid a grand total of $1,373,813 with second-placed Jacques Villeneuve taking home $622,713 and third-placed Bobby Rahal earning $411,163. The next seven finishers won roughly a quarter of a million dollars each, with most of the rest of the field receiving cheques for around $160-180,000.

'It sounds very nice,' commented owner/driver Bobby Rahal, 'but the fact is that we spend 30-35% of our annual budget on Indy. We're here for so many days and run the cars for so many miles that the costs add up very quickly.'

By Rahal's estimation it costs anywhere from $2-4 million to run a two-car team at Indianapolis. 'Sure the prize money looks good,' noted Rahal. 'But we run for $1 million in prize money at other races and we're only there for three days. In fact, a normal PPG Cup race is much more cost-effective.'

The closest Indy 500 in history?



The 1995 Indy 500 has got the makings of the most competitive race ever at Indianapolis. It'll be a tight bunch in the race and it's going to be nerve-wracking to watch. There are too many good cars out there and too many teams have the right set-ups, so it's a matter of not making mistakes and getting the right breaks.

I think its going to go down to the last pitstop and the last few laps of the race, just like the races we've seen so far this year. It will be very tense, with a lot of anticipation, so there's no way you can predict the winner. You're not going to have a favourite driver or team like Penske in '94. Not even Arie Luyendyk and Scott Brayton with Menard, because as quick as they're going, there's always the spectrum of reliability for them, otherwise they would be clear favourites.

Menard's other problem is that the month of May is like practising for a Broadway show. You rehearse and rehearse until you're blue in the face, but all of a sudden it's opening night and you're nervous and you fluff the lines. There could conceivably be a lot of that with them, because although they have experienced people in the pits they haven't done the job yet.

Some people believe that this will finally be Ford's year and there certainly are enough Fords in the



MARIO ANDRETTI

field that I think a lot of them will finish. Many of the problems we had in the last few years have been dealt with and the Ford is the quick engine because it breathes well.

The Ford has also been doing well on the superspeedways and the Mercedes, even though it's showing some muscle, isn't quite up to it. You've also got to give the Ford the edge because of potential better reliability. It's not as new as the Mercedes and everybody's out there with a Series 1 that's tried and tested. Nobody's running a Series 2 which is another big difference.

Between Reynard and Lola right now, it's a toss-up. There's nothing to choose between the chassis and most of the field will be running those cars.

As far as Michael and Newman-Haas is concerned, the pairing has been a factor at every race and test this year. That's the important thing and his energy makes up a lot for the rest of it. I think both he and Paul Tracy will be very strong. They were up there near the top of the list everytime they ran in the first week.

They haven't been doing too much to the car which is actually a hell of a good sign. Michael refused to run in practice if conditions were too perfect. He wanted to try to work the car when he knew it really had to have the balance in hot and windy weather conditions. I commend him for his control.

Let's not overlook Honda. There's a dark horse. They have the straightline speed to get by lapped traffic not necessarily to just pass an immediate competitor. Straightline speed is more important here than at any racetrack.

So that's your darkhorse - the Tasman team and Scott Goodyear. It's a good, well-run team. Steve Horne has been there. He's won the race before with Rahal and Truesports. You know damn well he's capable.

Penske has had its problems but it is a team with too much dimension not to figure in the race. I still count them in the mix, big-time. They may have qualified short, but this race can be won from anywhere in the field. Obviously they're not where they want to be but the team's too strong. There's too much talent there to discount them.

Track facts

- Speedway land encompasses 559 acres
- Reserved seating can hold more than 250,000 people with over 100,000 more on the infield
- Indycars pull three to four lateral Gs on the banked turns
- 3.2 million bricks were used to pave the Brickyard in 1909
- The track was totally resurfaced with asphalt in 1976, but a 36 inch strip of original bricks was left at the startline
- The track varies in width from 50ft on the straights to 60ft at the turns

CURRENT POINTS

After 5 of 17 rounds

DRIVERS

1	Scott Pruett	51
2	Jacques Villeneuve	47
3	Bobby Rahal	38
3=	Mauricio Gugelmin	38
5	Christian Fittipaldi	35
6	Al Unser Jr	34

JACQUES VILLENEUVE'S LAP OF INDIANAPOLIS

A simple track that demands perfection

A lap of Indianapolis is actually very simple. Once you get your car well set-up with low fuel and new tyres for qualifying and the conditions are good, you're just flat-out all around the racetrack. It's almost too easy.

The four corners at Indianapolis are pretty similar, but they're very different as well. A lap here depends a lot on the direction and strength of the wind. If it's windy, the four corners start to be very different.

Going into Turn One there's a big bump where road traffic crosses the track. It's very bumpy going into Turn Three and just before Turn Four its bumpy again. There are also some ripples all around Turn Four.



Jacques Villeneuve: looking for the perfect lap

Swope

The secret here is to have a car that you can go around the racetrack flat or almost flat. That's when you're able to work on the car and make progress. When you have to lift, it is very difficult to make any changes and feel what's happening. That's the case for qualifying, but there's not much you can do in the race. You just hope that your set-ups are going to work well behind other cars.

The funny thing about Indianapolis is that once you get your car set up, there's no limit. The faster you go, the more downforce you make, so you can still do the whole lap flat.

You want to turn in pretty late to the corners. The later you manage to turn in, the faster you'll go because you don't slow the car down so much at the apex. The key is to try to have as little steering lock as possible. You try to make it as smooth as possible so maybe you pick up a quarter of a mph, which makes a difference. The revs also have a big effect on the balance of the car. At Indianapolis, you have to be perfect.



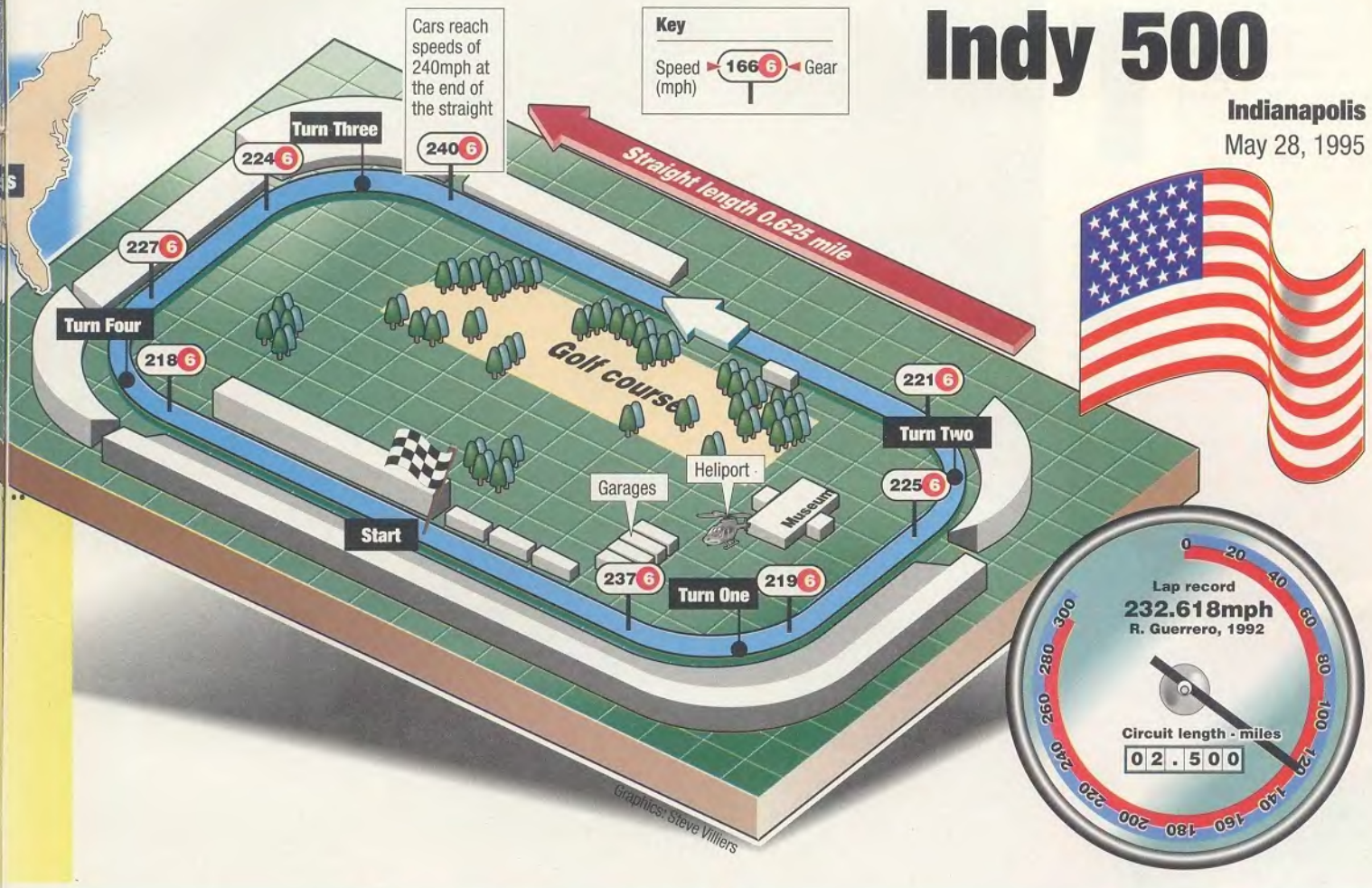
Steve Swope

Arie Luyendyk's rapid Menard machine

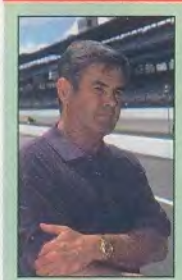
SKY SPORTS 2
Sunday, May 28
1630 Exclusive live coverage of the Indy 500 for all you satellite and cable owners. Scheduled to finish at 2030, but don't set your videos... yellow flags can mean a long race!

Indy 500

Indianapolis
May 28, 1995



WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY



Al Unser, four-time Indy 500 winner
I think it's just like everybody says about the Buicks. If they are capable of withstanding the long pressure, they're going to be very hard to beat. You'd have to almost say that they are the favourites, but first they have to run 500 miles.

So if you discount the Buicks you have to come back to the regular possible winners. There's Michael, Gordon, Rahal. There's a whole list of them who can do it if it's their day. Rahal's already done it in the past. You take Villeneuve. He's capable. He's got a smart crew and Jacques is a very talented young man. He can do it, if it's his day.

I think that if you look at the whole field there's probably a good eight of them who, if it's their day, they're gonna win. You can stand there and scratch your head and do everything else in the world, but if it's your turn and your pitstops are right and you get the breaks you've got it made.

The Penske team right now has got problems, but in the second week of practice it can find what it needs. Right now they're not with it. But they've been working very hard. It's a very dedicated crew and they can do it in a week. They're capable of making the car work on raceday or making something that will work for them. It's like everyone says, don't ever count them out.

Robin Miller, veteran motorsport reporter and associate sports editor of the *Indianapolis Star*
To start with I don't think this is a typical Buick year where they're going to fart and fall early and get smoked. I think Lola's John Travis and the team's engineer Tim Wardrop really make them better this year than they've been before.

The Menard Lolas are running fast through the corners as well as down the straightaways. I think it's really hard to count them out. But, having said that, I think a Reynard's going to win it.

I think the Reynards are more consistent. It's either going to be Robby Gordon or Jacques Villeneuve. The dark horse in this whole thing might be Teo Fabi, because he's run strong all year and all month. The other dark horse is the Honda with Scott Goodyear. What they've done has got to be the biggest turnaround of all time. And of course, Michael Andretti and Paul Tracy are certainly among the contenders.

WHAT HAPPENED LAST YEAR

One team took the Indianapolis 500 by the scruff of the neck in 1994 – Penske.

After dominating the entire month of testing and qualifying, Roger Penske's Mercedes-Benz-powered cars were equally strong in the race.


Sutton

The Penske-Mercedes Benz dominated Indy in '94

Emerson Fittipaldi looked all set to clinch his third Indy 500 when, after leading for a total of 145 laps, he inexplicably crashed out with just 16 laps to run. To make matters worse, he did it while attempting to lap his team mate Al Unser Jr, who went on to secure the win under yellow flags.

An impressive second place went to Indy rookie Jacques Villeneuve, who was the only other driver to complete the full 200 laps. Third place fell to Bobby Rahal after Michael Andretti incurred a one lap penalty for overtaking under a yellow flag. Andretti was relegated to sixth place as a consequence.

Jimmy Vasser was bumped up a spot thanks to Andretti's misdemeanour, while Robby Gordon took fifth place for the Walker Racing team.

But perhaps the most famous incident of the 1994 Indy 500 was the demise of Indycar champion Nigel Mansell in bizarre circumstances when he was taken out by backmarker Dennis Vitolo 92 laps into the race.

Mansell was running in a strong third place when Vitolo lost control under a yellow flag caution and spun directly into Mansell's path as the Newman-Haas racer was heading for the pits.

Vitolo's car came to rest on top of Mansell's machine and the Briton was dragged clear of the car, lucky to escape without serious injuries.

LAST YEAR'S TOP SIX

Pos	Driver	Car
1	Al Unser Jr.	Penske
2	Jacques Villeneuve	Reynard
3	Bobby Rahal	Penske
4	Jimmy Vasser	Reynard
5	Robby Gordon	Lola
6	Michael Andretti	Reynard

Indy 500



A n
the

ECK

month in making

WHEN THE FORSYTHE TEAM UNDERTOOK THE MAMMOTH TASK OF QUALIFYING FOR THE INDIANAPOLIS 500, JOHN OREOVICZ HAD EXCLUSIVE, FLY-ON-THE-WALL ACCESS. PHOTOS BY SWOPE

PPG INDY CAR WORLD SERIES

The month of May is a hallowed tradition in the state of Indiana. It's a statewide party with parades and fashion shows, and lots of folks who play hooky to spend a day at the track. They are afforded this luxury because the Indianapolis Motor Speedway has deemed it necessary to spend no fewer than 22 days preparing for the Indianapolis 500.

Unless it's raining, which happens quite often in the Indiana springtime, you'll find race cars circulating the Speedway every day from the first Saturday until the third Sunday in May. That makes a great show for the punters, but it doesn't give much thought to the folks who put on the show. For racing insiders, 30 days in May seems like 90. 'Hostage crisis at Indianapolis', quipped one wag; 'The Greatest Spectacle In Waiting' added another.

No matter how you look at it, 22 days is an awfully long time to prepare for one race, no matter how important it is. Still, record numbers of entries show up every year, attracted by the largest single pay-day in motorsport, so we decided to experience the slog first-hand by joining the Forsythe team in the period leading up to qualifications. Gerry Forsythe rejoined the ranks of Indycar owners last year when he teamed up with Barry Green to field a Reynard for Jacques Villeneuve.



When Green elected to fly solo for 1995, Forsythe decided to continue on his own, and he hired the experienced Italian Teo Fabi.

SATURDAY 6 MAY

The opening day of practice is traditionally a quiet one, although some take it very seriously; Dick Simon holds an annual mini-race between his cars for 'First on the Track' honours. Higher-profile teams like Newman-Haas and Penske often pass to avoid the hubbub. The Forsythe team ▶

◀ takes a middle ground by planning an afternoon shakedown run to do systems and leak checks on the primary car. But this is cut short when Fabi pits the Reynard after only five laps complaining of a loose left front wing. The problem is simple, a faulty adjuster mechanism, but it ends the day before any meaningful information can be obtained. Teo's best lap of the day is 209.927mph.

SUNDAY 7 MAY

A full and productive day as Fabi turns 81 laps, his 226.986mph best lap being sixth-fastest of the day. Fabi's day is interrupted by a fund-raising event for the Special Olympics, a favourite charity of the Hulman family.

After presenting a cheque on behalf of sponsor ABB, Fabi takes part in a softball home-run hitting contest with other drivers and Special Olympians. Although his swing is unorthodox, Fabi connects with every pitch, even sending a hard-line drive to left field which handcuffs a surprised Gil de Ferran.

MONDAY 8 MAY

Two days of tests are combined into one, and a short one at that, because rain hits the Speedway at mid-afternoon, just giving Fabi time to produce a best lap from 31 of 225.722mph.



Fabi takes time out for a charity event

TUESDAY 9 MAY

Fabi cracks into the elite 230mph club by clocking 230.716 late in the day. This lap, turned during the 'Happy Hour' between 5 and 6pm when most of the track is cooled by afternoon shade, doesn't impress Fabi, though. Afterwards, he prefers to talk about a series of 228s he had run at 4pm, when the track temperature was over 120 degrees. 'It's far more important to run quick when it's hot, since that's probably what the race conditions will be,' Fabi says. 'It's nice to run a fast speed to please the sponsors, but the conditions have such an effect on the speed it's meaningless.'



Fabi and former Larrousse Formula 1boss Robin Herd discuss tactics (above). Earnest discussions in the pit lane (below)

WEDNESDAY 10 MAY

A slow day at the speedway with warm, windy conditions. Fabi, contending with a tired engine and a finicky pop-off valve, completes only 37 laps, topping out at 227.946mph. Despite the drop in speed, this is still enough for fifth on the charts.

THURSDAY 11 MAY

Back up to 230.055, but only ninth-fastest as the team continues to log data. By now a pattern is emerging: Fabi runs short stints throughout the day to master all the weather conditions he might face for qualifying. So it's a dozen laps when the track opens at 11am, then back to the garage for a few changes. Another dozen laps at 1pm; later a mid-afternoon run and finally a 'Happy Hour' run to post a number. There are up to 43 hours of free practice at Indianapolis before the first qualifier takes to the track. Fabi, with a good-handling car straight off the trailer drives 385 laps in these seven days. Emerson Fittipaldi and Al Unser Jr, in their recalcitrant Penskes turned 764 and 620 respectively. Yes, it's going to be a long month!

FRIDAY 12 MAY

Team owner Gerry Forsythe arrives from Chicago. The Forsythe team entered Indycar racing in the early 1980s, and was successful from 1983 to 1984, when Fabi first drove. This year's combination is a kind of reunion then, and while the wins haven't yet materialised, the signs are encouraging.

Like most people, Forsythe believes the time at Indy should be



cut. 'Okay, it's a show and a tradition, but the month wears a team out,' he declares. 'We're fortunate to be based here, because it probably costs outside teams an extra $100,000.'

Fabi soon gives Forsythe something to cheer about, running a simulated four-lap qualification run at around 5:30 and the 231mph mark. When the track closes at 6pm, Fabi is a contender for the first couple of rows.

SATURDAY 13 MAY

The rain on pole day is as traditional as Jim Nabors singing *Back Home Again In Indiana* on race day.

All change in the morning when Forsythe decides to change the car's livery from Combustion Engineering to parent company ABB.

The rain lets up in the afternoon, and by 2pm the cars are practising. Fabi finds the ABB Reynard to be an understeering handful on the freshly-cleaned track, but his 228.845mph is eighth-fastest. We'll never know how quick Fabi would have been if he could have run on Saturday, as he is second in line to qualify when the 6pm gun to close the track sounds. With a hot and humid forecast for Sunday it means long faces in the Forsythe camp.

SUNDAY 14 MAY

To compound this bad luck, overnight rain washes the track of what little rubber had been laid down yesterday. Although quickest in the morning practice at 228.664mph, Fabi is unhappy with the handling: 'We could only do 217 in the morning and although we were later up to 228 the car was understeering. We made a change for qualifying, but it wasn't enough. Because, with the temperature rising, the car was getting worse. The changing conditions make it very difficult as you have to guess, and we never had such a hot day during the entire week.



The slog is over, now the real fun begins

'We gave a degree more front wing, which is a lot on a superspeedway, because normally you go in half-degree steps. On the stagger on the rear tyres we went from 34 to 37, also a big change.'

TUESDAY 16 MAY

As we go to press, it appears the initial set-up work is going well, as the team posts the day's fastest speed in the first of eight more free-practice days leading up to the 79th Indianapolis 500. The qualifying slog is over, now the fun begins.

Too close to call?

THIS YEAR'S INDY IS AS WIDE OPEN AS LAST YEAR'S WAS A CERTAINTY, BUT GORDON KIRBY GUIDES YOU THROUGH ALL THE FRONT-RUNNERS

Finally, after over three weeks of practice, qualifying, preparation and anticipation, it's down to business at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway on Sunday. It's almost impossible to predict a winner, but if there's a favourite at this stage, it has to be Michael Andretti.

Back with Newman-Haas this year after a season in Formula 1 and another with Chip Ganassi, Michael has been fast everywhere this season, taking three poles and leading every race. But he has yet to win this year. Andretti has a similar record over the years at Indianapolis, always competitive but never a winner of the race. Neither Michael nor Newman-Haas have ever won here. In fact, it's the only Indycar race the team hasn't won.

Andretti dominated the 500 with Newman-Haas in 1992, before dropping out a mere 11 laps from the finish because of an engine failure. In '91, he led much of the race but was beaten in the end by Rick Mears after a superb battle; a classic in Indy history. Last year, with Ganassi's Reynard, he was the only man to challenge the Penskes of Unser and Fittipaldi.

But this year Andretti is ready. The Newman-Haas Lolas have been almost effortlessly fast right from the start of practice, with both Michael and team-mate Paul Tracy running fast in all types of weather and track conditions.

I believe the team has a better handle on Indianapolis in raceday conditions this year than anyone else and Andretti is ideally positioned on the inside of the second row to attack immediately. Starting from the midfield, team-mate Tracy should also move up quickly and if he's able to keep his nose clean he has as good a chance of winning as Andretti.

Also, Ford's Cosworth XB has been the dominant engine in superspeedway races since it was introduced in 1992. The Ford breathes better, revs higher and makes more top-end horsepower than Ilmor's Mercedes-Benz V8 and is much more user-friendly than the single-cam Buick V6s of the front row starters – and team-mates – Scott Brayton and Arie Luyendyk. Most railbirds believe that Ford and Cosworth are due to break Ilmor's string of victories at the Speedway.

What about Brayton and Luyendyk? Even though Brayton has started more Indy 500s (13) than anyone else in the field, he's only led one lap at the Speedway and has a reputation for being a brainless racer. Luyendyk on the other hand is at his best at Indianapolis, witness his victory with Doug Shierson's team in 1990 and his superb drive to second place in 1993, finishing behind Emerson Fittipaldi and in front of Nigel Mansell after a great late-race duel.

In the early laps, Brayton and Luyendyk will be very fast. But as the race wears on pitstops, fuel, mileage and the sharpness of the Menard team's strategy will come into play as well as the driveability of the relatively baulky Buick. There are



If there is a favourite, Michael Andretti, (pictured right, with father Mario) must be it. The Newman-Haas Lolas have been effortlessly fast since practice began. Mercedes-Benz's strongest hope Bobby Rahal (below right) emerges from his car after practice



Sutton



Sutton



Steve Swope



Sutton

Arie Luyendyk made it a Menard Racing 1-2 on the grid with his Lola-Buick (above left). Team-mate Scott Brayton (above right) took a stunning pole at 231.604mph in his Lola-Buick

(Above, from left) Jacques Villeneuve on his way to fifth place on the grid; Scott Goodyear took a front-row spot in a Reynard-Honda; Robby Gordon will be tough to beat; will Firestones hold the edge for Scott Pruett?


Steve Swope

Indycar victory at Phoenix last month. He's practised hard and prepared very thoroughly for this year's race and if he behaves himself over the 500 miles – and is able to keep his Reynard from going loose – the irascible Robby will be very tough to beat.

Other possible winners include Scott Pruett, Bobby Rahal and of course, Al Unser Jr and Emerson Fittipaldi. PPG Cup points leader Pruett starts his Firestone-shod Patrick Racing Lola-Ford from the third row and should be in the hunt all the way. He is ready to win and is quietly confident that his Firestones will serve him well on race-day.

Rahal has been close to the pace all month and appears to be Mercedes-Benz's strongest hope for victory in the 500 this year. He and team-mate Raul Boesel have fought a series of niggling problems, sometimes struggling to obtain full boost and also with the handling of their Lolas in changeable weather and track conditions. I'd be surprised, however, if Bobby, and possibly Raul too, aren't right in the hunt on Sunday.

Unser, Fittipaldi and the Penske team have had a soul-testing month, of course, but only a fool would count them out on raceday. Roger Penske has a record 10 wins at Indianapolis, including three of the last four 500s, and in Al Jr and Emerson he has two of the wiliest, most relentless drivers in the sport.

Long shots include Teo Fabi with Jerry Forsythe's Reynard-Ford, second-row starter Mauricio Gugelmin in one of PacWest's Reynard-Fords, Jimmy Vasser and Bryan Herta in Chip Ganassi's Reynard-Fords and Eddie Cheever in AJ Foyt's Lola-Ford.

As you'll see, the 1995 Indy 500 is as unpredictable as last year's race was a dead cert. Without Penske to dominate the proceedings, this is one race that will definitely hold the attention from start to finish.




Swope


Swope


Swope

also questions about whether the latest version of the Menard/Buick will be able to run the 500 miles.

The big dark horse in the field, of course, is Scott Goodyear, who is starting from the outside of the front row in one of Steve Horne's Firestone-tyred, Honda-powered Reynards. Goodyear was second at Indianapolis behind Al Unser Jr in 1992 and won the Michigan 500 in 1992 and again last year, so he knows about 500-mile races.

Steady and smooth with a sharp mind, Goodyear is under-rated as a racer but with Horne's team behind him, Firestone's seemingly excellent tyres and Honda's powerful and torquey, aluminum-blocked HRH V8, he might be capable of pulling off one of the biggest upsets in modern motor racing history.

On the second row beside Andretti is last year's 'rookie of the year' and second-place finisher, Jacques Villeneuve. This year, Jacques goes into the race as one of the favourites. With Team Green's Reynard-Ford, he has been quick this year and has been right on the pace throughout practice at Indianapolis. Second in PPG Cup points going into Sunday's 500, Villeneuve is ready to win this year. With the right breaks, he can do it.

So, too, can Robby Gordon with Derrick Walker's Reynard-Ford. Gordon seems to be coming into his own this year, scoring his first

PPG INDY CAR WORLD SERIES

Get to grips with the grid

POLE

60 SCOTT BRAYTON — LOLA-MENARD/BUICK



Team: **Menard/Quaker State Special**
Nationality: **American** Age: **36** Indy starts: **13** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Led '500' in 1985; finished in top 10 four times

ROW ONE

40 ARIE LUYENDYK — LOLA-MENARD/BUICK



Team: **Menard/Glidden Special**
Nationality: **Dutch** Age: **41** Indy starts: **10** Indy wins: **1**
Notes: 1990 '500' winner with record average speed –185.98mph

24 SCOTT GOODYEAR — REYNARD-HONDA



Team: **Tasman Motorsports**
Nationality: **Canadian** Age: **35** Indy starts: **5** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Second in 1992

ROW TWO

6 MICHAEL ANDRETTI — LOLA-FORD



Team: **Newman-Haas/Kmart/Texaco-Havoline**
Nationality: **American** Age: **32** Indy starts: **10** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Led an amazing 337 laps in all, but always the bridesmaid

27 JACQUES VILLENEUVE — REYNARD-FORD



Team: **Team Green/Player's**
Nationality: **Canadian** Age: **24** Indy starts: **1** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Second on debut; Indycar Rookie of the Year in '94

18 MAURICIO GUGELMIN — REYNARD-FORD



Team: **PacWest/Hollywood**
Nationality: **Brazilian** Age: **32** Indy starts: **1** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: 11th on debut in 1994

ROW THREE

5 ROBBY GORDON — REYNARD-FORD



Team: **Walker Racing/Valvoline**
Nationality: **American** Age: **26** Indy starts: **2** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Fifth in 1994, but led for two laps in 1993

20 SCOTT PRUETT — LOLA-FORD



Team: **Patrick Racing/Firestone**
Nationality: **American** Age: **35** Indy starts: **3** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Best ever 10th in 1989. Leading points table in 1995

12 JIMMY VASSER — REYNARD-FORD



Team: **Chip Ganassi Racing/Target/STP**
Nationality: **American** Age: **29** Indy starts: **3** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Finished fourth in 1994

ROW FOUR

25 HIRO MATSUSHITA — REYNARD-FORD



Team: **Arciero Wells Racing/Panasonic**
Nationality: **Japanese** Age: **34** Indy starts: **3** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: The perennial Japanese had a best ever 14th in 1994

91 STAN FOX — REYNARD-FORD



Team: **Hemelgarn Racing/Delta Faucet**
Nationality: **American** Age: **42** Indy starts: **7** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Best finish seventh on debut in 1987

31 ANDRE RIBEIRO — REYNARD-HONDA



Team: **Tasman Motorsports/LCI**
Nationality: **Brazilian** Age: **29** Indy starts: **0** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Second in Indy Lights championship in 1994

ROW FIVE

21 ROBERTO GUERRERO — REYNARD-MERCEDES



Team: **Pagan Racing/General Components**
Nationality: **Colombian** Age: **36** Indy starts: **10** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Polesitter in 1992 but crashed on warm-up lap!

14 EDDIE CHEEVER — LOLA-FORD



Team: **Copenhagen Racing**
Nationality: **American** Age: **37** Indy starts: **5** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Best ever finish fourth in 1992 after starting second

33 TEO FABI — REYNARD-FORD



Team: **Forsythe/ABB/Indeck**
Nationality: **Italian** Age: **40** Indy starts: **7** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Polesitter on debut in 1983. Dark horse for '95?

Indy 500

PPG INDY CAR WORLD SERIES

ROW SIX

3 PAUL TRACY — LOLA-FORD



Team: **Newman-Haas/Kmart/Budweiser**
Nationality: **Canadian** Age: **26** Indy starts: **3** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Consistent bad luck at Indy and poor grid slot in '95

34 ALESSANDRO ZAMPEDRI — LOLA-FORD



Team: **Payton-Coyne Racing/Mi-Jack**
Nationality: **Italian** Age: **25** Indy starts: **0** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Serious accident injuries in Michigan race in '94

4 BRYAN HERTA — REYNARD-FORD



Team: **Chip Ganassi Racing/Target/Scotch**
Nationality: **American** Age: **25** Indy starts: **1** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Ninth on Indy debut then injured in Toronto practice shunt

ROW SEVEN

17 DANNY SULLIVAN — REYNARD-FORD



Team: **PacWest/Visa**
Nationality: **American** Age: **45** Indy starts: **11** Indy wins: **1**
Notes: Winner in 1985 and two other top 10 finishes

8 GIL DE FERRAN — REYNARD-MERCEDES



Team: **Hall Racing/Pennzoil**
Nationality: **Brazilian** Age: **27** Indy starts: **0** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Looks quick in Indycars, but needs consistency... and luck

54 HIDESHI MATSUDA — LOLA-FORD



Team: **Beck Motorsport/Zunne Group**
Nationality: **Japanese** Age: **40** Indy starts: **1** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Crashed out on '500' debut in 1994

ROW EIGHT

9 BOBBY RAHAL — LOLA-MERCEDES



Team: **Rahal-Hogan/Miller Genuine Draft**
Nationality: **American** Age: **42** Indy starts: **12** Indy wins: **1**
Notes: Winner in 1986; second in 1990; third in '94

11 RAUL BOESEL — LOLA-MERCEDES



Team: **Rahal-Hogan/Duracell**
Nationality: **Brazilian** Age: **37** Indy starts: **8** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Third in 1989; second on grid in '94

80 BUDDY LAZIER — LOLA-MENARD/BUICK



Team: **Menard/Glidden Special**
Nationality: **American** Age: **27** Indy starts: **2** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Best of 14th in 1992; set grid time in Scott Brayton's T-car

ROW NINE

7 ELISEO SALAZAR — LOLA-FORD



Team: **Dick Simon Racing/Cristal/Mobil**
Nationality: **Chilean** Age: **39** Indy starts: **0** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Successful GT racer

10 ADRIAN FERNANDEZ — LOLA-MERCEDES



Team: **Galles Racing/Tecate Beer/Quaker State**
Nationality: **Mexico** Age: **30** Indy starts: **1** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Ran just 30 laps on debut last year

19 ERIC BACHELART — LOLA-FORD



Team: **Payton-Coyne Racing/Agfa**
Nationality: **Belgian** Age: **34** Indy starts: **1** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Just four laps on debut in 1992 before engine blew

ROW TEN

15 CHRISTIAN FITTIPALDI — REYNARD-FORD



Team: **Walker Racing/Marlboro/Chapeco**
Nationality: **Brazilian** Age: **24** Indy starts: **0** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Can he make the leap to the ovals from F1?

90 LYN ST JAMES — LOLA-FORD



Team: **Dick Simon Racing**
Nationality: **American** Age: **48** Indy starts: **3** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Qualified sixth in 1994; late entry for '95

22 CARLOS GUERRERO — LOLA-FORD



Team: **Dick Simon Racing/Herdez Viva Racing**
Nationality: **Mexican** Age: **38** Indy starts: **0** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Big leap for perennial Formula 3 racer

ROW ELEVEN

41 SCOTT SHARP — LOLA-FORD



Team: **AJ Foyt/Copenhagen Racing**
Nationality: **American** Age: **27** Indy starts: **1** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Finished 16th on Indy debut last year

16 STEFAN JOHANSSON — PENSKE-MERCEDES



Team: **Bettenhausen Motorsport/Alumax**
Nationality: **Swedish** Age: **38** Indy starts: **2** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Veteran F1 racer looking for '500' success

77 DAVY JONES — LOLA-FORD



Team: **Jonathan Byrd/Dick Simon Racing**
Nationality: **American** Age: **30** Indy starts: **3** Indy wins: **0**
Notes: Best finish of seventh in 1989



Richard Smith

WHERE DO INDYCAR DRIVERS COME FROM? ADAM COOPER EXAMINES AMERICA'S JUNIOR FORMULAE

Barber Dodge gives budding drivers a first taste of action. Below: Indy Lights are one step below Indycars. Greg Moore won three races in 1994

Climbing the Indycar ladder

The PPG/Firestone Indy Lights series is the natural final stepping-stone into Indycar racing proper, not least because all 12 races are run at Indycar events.

Lights graduates at this year's Indy 500 include Paul Tracy, Bryan Herta, Adrian Fernandez and rookie Andre Ribeiro. Teams can also make the jump; after achieving great success last year. Tasman Motorsports made the step up, while both the Walker and Simon teams compete in both categories.

The series is designed to keep costs down and emphasise driver talent. Everyone uses the same Lola chassis and 425bhp Buick engines, and, as in most formulae, it's up to the team to get as much out of the equipment as possible. But while the teams can fine-tune the car's set-up, the engines are sealed to guarantee equality.

Costs are contained by rules stability, which means that cars have a life of several seasons. It's very different from Formula 3000, and more successful, which is why



Michael Levitt

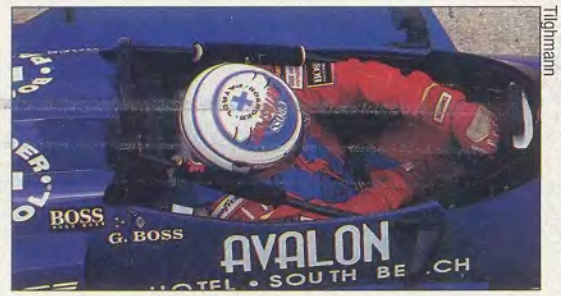
the European series's future is as a similarly controlled formula.

Success in Lights doesn't guarantee graduation to the big league, but it certainly helps. Full exposure is ensured by the fact that the races happen right in front of the Indycar teams and media. But as 1994 champion Steve Robertson found, you still need a multi-million-dollar budget in order to move up, unless you're so good that the Indy teams are vying for your signature.

Starring in this year's series is talented Canadian teenager Greg Moore, who has attracted strong ▶


Sidell Tilghmann

◀ support from Players and a great deal of interest from the Indycar community. Last year he battled with the three Tasman drivers – Ribiero, Robertson and Eddie Lawson – and won three races. Now in his third year in the series, he seems certain to have a bright future in the sport. Don't be surprised to see him chasing rookie honours at the 1996 Indy 500.



Tilghmann

Exciting, close racing in Barber Dodge series (top), in which Geoff Boss (left) leads the field. Toyota Atlantic cars (below) are a real pleasure to drive compared to their European cousins

TOYOTA ATLANTIC

The Players/Toyota Atlantic series is a direct descendent of the category that produced Gilles Villeneuve and Bobby Rahal in the 1970s plus Michael Andretti and Scott Goodyear in the early 1980s.

The cars and engines may have changed, but the series is still a useful stepping-stone to the top.

The most successful recent graduate is Jacques Villeneuve, who was a close third in the highly competitive 1993 series. After four years in F3, Jacques found a year in Atlantic a vital part of the learning process before his stunning debut in Indycars last season.

When Jacques did Atlantic he was already assured of graduation, thanks to a long-term deal with Players and his team. As ever, success in the category is not a ticket to the top, unless the right opportunity lands in your lap; Canada's David Empringham, title winner in 1993-94, has stayed in the category in search of a third title.

His rivals include Richie Hearn, one of America's most promising youngsters, and Patrick Carpentier, yet another in the current wave of talented Canadians. Brit Jonathan Clues is taking an unconventional route by opting for America, and has done well. Clint Mears, son of Rick, has attracted much attention.

Unlike Indy Lights and Barber Dodge, Atlantic is not a 'spec' formula. Everyone uses identical Toyota engines, but several chassis are available. However, to cut costs, the organisers have put a stop on development, and there's a list of eligible chassis. Ralt is the most popular and competitive choice.

Most drivers who try Atlantic after F3 prefer the North American category; the cars have a much better power-to-grip ratio, and are a pleasure to drive in comparison to their European cousins.

All the races are high-profile; all but two of them support Indycar events. There's also a race at the Canadian GP meeting, plus the Trois Rivieres street classic, where Atlantic tops the bill. As in Lights, drivers gain useful oval experience, with the series including events at Phoenix, Nazareth and Milwaukee.

While there are many older drivers racing purely for fun, Atlantic is still a worthwhile choice for aspiring Indy drivers.

BARBER DODGE

Skip Barber's successful 'spec' series has undergone a major change for this season's racing, as Dodge has replaced Saab as the sole engine supplier.

The Mondiale-built chassis are still basically the same as before, but along with the engine change, a revised bodywork package has modernised and transformed the look of the cars.

The Barber series is one of the most cost-effective ways of going single-seater racing in the States. All the cars are prepared by the Skip Barber organisation, and are tested and tweaked until they are as equal as possible. Drivers pay a fee, and simply have to turn up and race.

Barber Dodges are very similar to Europe's GM Euroseries machines, and, as such, are a useful training ground before Atlantic or Lights, and ultimately Indycar racing. The most successful Barber graduate is Bryan Herta, who made it to Indycars via the Lights series.

Few British drivers have ever tackled the full series, but Jamie Spence shone in this year's opening races at Miami and Sebring.

Races support Indycar, IMSA, TransAm and even – at Watkins Glen – NASCAR events. Dodge's new involvement has also helped to raise the profile of the category, so drivers' sponsors get pretty good exposure for their investment.



Susan Majoy