

Preparation for the 500 never stops, even the morning of the race.



# MotorSports Moments

102nd Indy 500 and the Texas 2 Step photos and captions, Cindy Estes words Eddie Estes, Motorsports Moments

The Indianapolis 500 is the world's largest and most popular sporting event. There are so many activities leading up to the 500 that it is truly a three-week project starting with the Indianapolis Grand Prix in the infield of this enormous facility. Instead of go fast turn left, it is go fast turn right, with most of the drivers in both events. This year's 500 winner Will Power, also won the Grand Prix. What a month for Power.

The week leading up to the 500 begins with the testing session for the Indy Lights series. The Lights cars qualify on Thursday for the Freedom 100. The 100 has become one of the most exciting races of the entire season with the closest finish ever at the Speedway occurring last year. The race is one of the events of Miller Light Carb day. The Verizon Indy Car final practice, Pit Stop Challenge and a concert are the other events that draw a large turnout of fans.



Saturday at the track features the Autograph Session in the Pagoda Plaza area and the Public Drivers meeting where many awards are presented. The Indianapolis 500, Festival Parade is held downtown beginning at noon and features all 33 drivers competing in the 500 along with marching bands and a variety of floats. This is truly one of the United States' finest parades with thousands of viewers lining the streets.

### THE RACE

The biggest question at the 500 all week, actually upon the arrival at the track, would be how these cars would handle in traffic. One year ago it was announced that Dallara Automovil would manufacture the Universal bodywork kit that would fit the current Dallara IR-12 chassis for the 2018 Verizon IndyCar Series season. In the prior year, Chevrolet and Honda each were responsible for their Aero kits. The universal kit used by all teams was a collaboration between Indycar and Dallara with the style design support of Chris Beatty, a concept design and 3D animation consultant based in the



(Top picture) The parade and pace laps at the 500; there is nothing that compares to this in sports. Seeing is believing. (Above) The 'new look' of IndyCar. Marco Andretti's car headed for pit lane preparing for the 500.

United Kingdom. The goal was to make the car resemble past Indy car favorites with a sleek, bold look while incorporating the latest technological and safety advancements. During the practice and testing sessions there was considerable discussion among the team leaders regarding these concerns. The race would be the answer to these issues.

Another news event at this race was the retirement of Danica Patrick from auto racing. Danica was very successful in IndyCar and chose the 500 to be her last race. Go Daddy signed on to be her sponsor and the story and attention placed on Danica was almost too much. She could hardly move around in practice

and qualifying without a mob of reporters and cameras following her every step. Her race was another story.

The race itself was one that the drivers were concerned about with eight drivers in the field having problems causing 41 laps to be run under caution. Rear grip, mostly in the second turn, caused even the most veteran drivers difficulty. Danica was one who had this issue and did come to the media center for a brief press conference which she said, "I'm appreciative for all the fans, for Go Daddy, for Ed Carpenter Racing for giving me a good car. Today was a tough day, a little bit of it was okay, a lot of it was tough to drive, sorry I don't even want to be here because





Danica Patrick on media day at IMS. Every media outlet in the country was represented including the Wall Street Journal.

I'm pretty sad. "The fastest lap in the race was 224.138 mph by Helio Castroneves, who is running



USAC Quarter Midgets at TMS. Start them when they're young. These races are among the most exciting, with the young drivers and their moms and dads as crew members.

a limited Indycar schedule this year in his quest to become a four time Indy 500 winner joining A. J. Foyt, Al Unser and Rick Mears. In the post race media conference, Roger Penske indicated that Helio will certainly be back at the 500 next year in a Penske car.

There was a lot of drama in the

last 15 laps of the race with several drivers hoping for extending their fuel, and a caution. During the race, 15 different drivers led the 500 providing a very exciting event for the fans. In the end, Will Power won the 500 finishing 3.15 seconds ahead of a very disappointed Ed Carpenter, who started on the pole. Will was the

Eddie came to Dodge City with the Kyle Petty Charity Ride a couple of years back.

The IndyCar and Truck races in June include several other venues. USAC racing, quarter midgets, Offroad Ruckus, Offroad Rumble, Stadium Super Trucks, Qualifying day, there is something going on all the time. Plus the fabulous



Kyle Busch's winning car at TMS in April, after a intense battle with Kevin Harvick. Two of the very best drivers in Nascar today put on a show every week.

most excited and thrilled winner maybe ever seen at the 500. He finally did it, Just watching the celebration was very special. As Al Unser Jr. said some years back, "You just don't know what Indy means".

### TEXAS 2 STEP, HOW ABOUT 8!

Texas Motor Speedway is a very special place. It is Off Limits, Texas. In April and June this is the place to be. Nascar Cup and Xfinity in April and IndyRacing Series and Nascar Trucks in June. This track has made every attempt to make the racing the best it can be. Eddie Gossage and his crew do a very special job of making everyone feel right at home. Eddie now has his City of Dodge City badge, so he can keep everyone in line, just kidding.

Speedway Way club is a great place to relax. Check it out!

The ticket prices at the Speedway are terrific values.

The IndyCar race at TMS is one of the most exciting on the planet. Since the track had been reconfigured last year the racing just keeps getting better. Some of the drivers were expressing concerns this year, just like Indy, about passing, except Scott Dixon. He said this will work out to be one of the best races ever and he put on quite a show. Before the race began, the DXC Technology drone delivered the Green Flag to the starting line. This was the first FAA-approved UAV to fly at a sporting event in the United States. Only in Texas! What a way to start the race.

The race had seven leaders, ninelead changes and 29 caution

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laps, and the fast lap was 221.352 by the pole winner, Josef Newgarden. The first caution was for Matheus Leist of A. J. Foyt Racing for an engine fire, a scary moment for Leist, his crew and the fans. Dixon led 119 laps and trails only A. J. Foyt and Mario Andretti in total IndyCar wins. He is a truly great driver, one of the very best ever.

Johnny Sauter won the PPG 400 Camping World Truck event for the fifth time. He is a master at this track. The shoot-out with Stewart Friesen was a typical Truck exciting event. The finish was the closest in series history, 0.092 seconds ahead of Friesen. There were no seats needed for the final laps as everyone was standing! Sauter said he complained about the truck all night long, no grip, then they made adjustments and played the track position game. It paid off.



Scott Dixon in Victory Lane at Texas Motor Speedway. Scott is one of the greatest drivers, ever, in the IndyCar Series.

the press briefing after the race that: “Kevin probably was just a tick faster overall, but I just had to make sure to do everything I could to hit all my marks and to focus on making sure that I did the right things to block his air a little bit.” Harvick said he thought

Busch did a great job of protecting the bottom and avoiding errors.

Ryan Blaney was a first time winner at TMS with his #22 Ford Mustang, after he dominated the field. Brian Wilson, Blaney’s crew chief, won his third in a row victory around the TMS track. Team Penske is noted for in-a-row wins. Blaney said: “This Mustang was amazing all weekend, It’s finally nice to win one in Texas.” Weather conditions were not normal at all with the green flag waved at 34 degrees.

*P.S. Track Safety . . . just remember to never turn your back on a race car! Take care, hope to see you all soon.*



The Camping World Trucks will move their event to April in 2019.



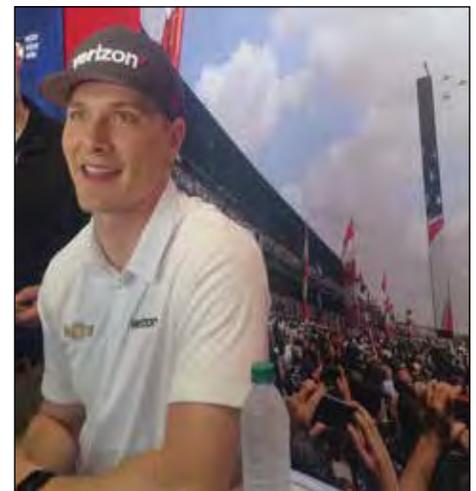
Will Power, the winner of the 102nd Indianapolis 500 three days before the race during Media Day. The Victory celebration was just terrific.



The Camping World Truck Series at TMS produces one of the Best Events of the Year.



The Speed Energy Stadium Super Trucks are a new addition to the activities at TMS during the IndyCar weekend. What a show!



Josef Newgarden, 2017 Verizon Indy Car champion on Media day at the Speedway. Josef is a very popular driver and is one of the Penske team.

