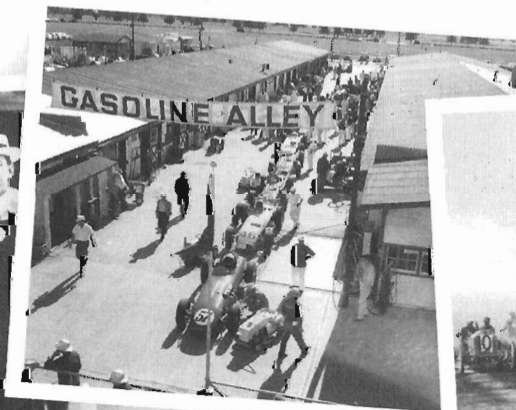




INDIANAPOLIS MOTOR SPEEDWAY A HISTORY

by Donald Davidson, IMS Historian



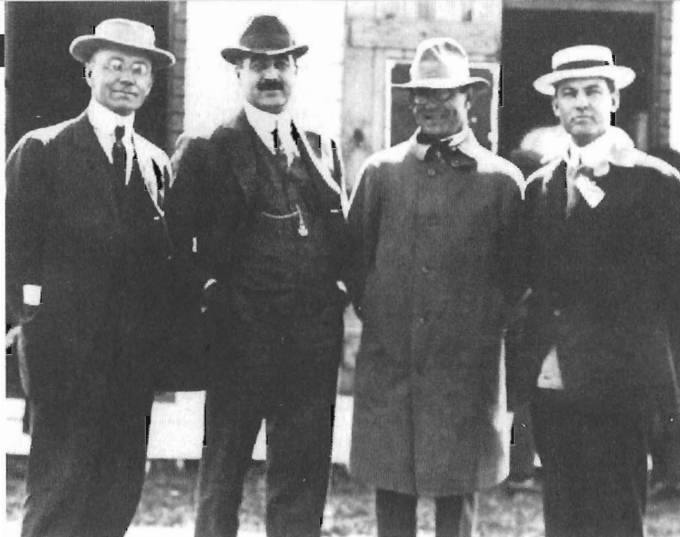
THE MAGNIFICENT

Indianapolis Motor Speedway is steeped in history and tradition and it has been in existence for a lot longer than perhaps is generally realized.

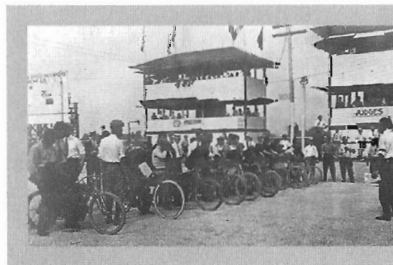
The home now of not only the Indianapolis 500 but also NASCAR's Brickyard 400, and starting in 2008, motorcycle racing's Red Bull Indianapolis GP, the track was built in the spring of 1909.

The Indianapolis 500, perhaps the best-known automobile racing event in the world, was held for the first time in 1911, and with the exceptions of 1917-18 and 1942-45, when activity was suspended due to America's involvement with the two World Wars, it has been held every year since. The NASCAR event was added in 1994, and between 2000 and 2007, Formula One's Grand Prix of the United States was held here.

Located less than six miles northwest of the center of the City of Indianapolis in a neighborhood which since 1926 has officially been the Town of Speedway, the track's original purpose was to serve as a common testing facility for the rapidly growing local automobile industry. With dozens of companies like Marmon, Cole, National, Marion, Overland and American Underslung operating in and around the city limits—Stutz and Duesenberg would come later—Indianapolis had by 1908 risen to fourth in the country in terms of numbers of automobiles produced. By 1913, it would rank



Perhaps the only photograph ever taken of all four of the Speedway's founding partners together. Left to right: Arthur Newby, Frank Wheeler, Carl Fisher and James Allison.



Motorcycle races are conducted on the original surface of crushed rock and tar on August 14.

1909

second. Indiana roads were generally not yet developed and automotive technology had increased so rapidly that many passenger vehicles had become capable of greater speeds than any dirt road would permit.

Recognizing that something far more substantial was needed for testing purposes, four local businessmen joined forces to build a huge "motor parkway" on which long straightaways and gradual turns would permit any automobile to be stretched to its fullest extent. In addition to private testing, they reasoned, occasional automobile racing events in which the entrants were the manufacturers themselves would give the general public an opportunity to witness, in competition,

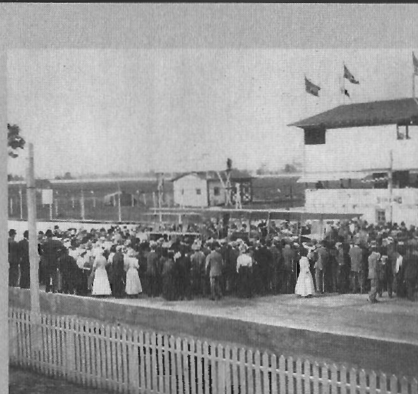
stripped-down versions of the very vehicles one could purchase from the showrooms for personal transportation. The result of this vision was that numerous products, now taken for granted, were either

to be developed or perfected through vigorous testing at the Speedway. These included supercharging, turbocharging, high-compression engines, front-wheel drive, four-wheel drive, hydraulic shock absorbers, four-wheel brakes, suspension systems, experimental

fuels and lubricants, low-profile tires and composite materials, not to mention more efficient tires, spark plugs, piston rings, seat belts, crashworthy fuel systems and aerodynamic designs.

The founding partnership was spearheaded by Carl Fisher, a Greensburg, Indiana, native who would eventually develop Miami Beach from swamplands into an exotic resort area. Later, he would form the Lincoln Highway Commission, which built the first drivable highway across the United States. His partners in the track project were Arthur Newby, head of the prestigious National Motor Vehicle Company; Frank Wheeler, of the Wheeler-Schebler Carburetor concern; and James Allison, who a half dozen years later would start up the firm destined to become the massive Allison Engineering Company.

Even aviation had a role in the early days of the Speedway. Fisher was, among other things, president of the Indianapolis Aero Club, and he managed to land the U.S. National Championship event for gas-filled balloons by outbidding



The June 1910 air display draws many curious spectators, the first powered flight by the Wright Brothers having taken place only 6½ years earlier.

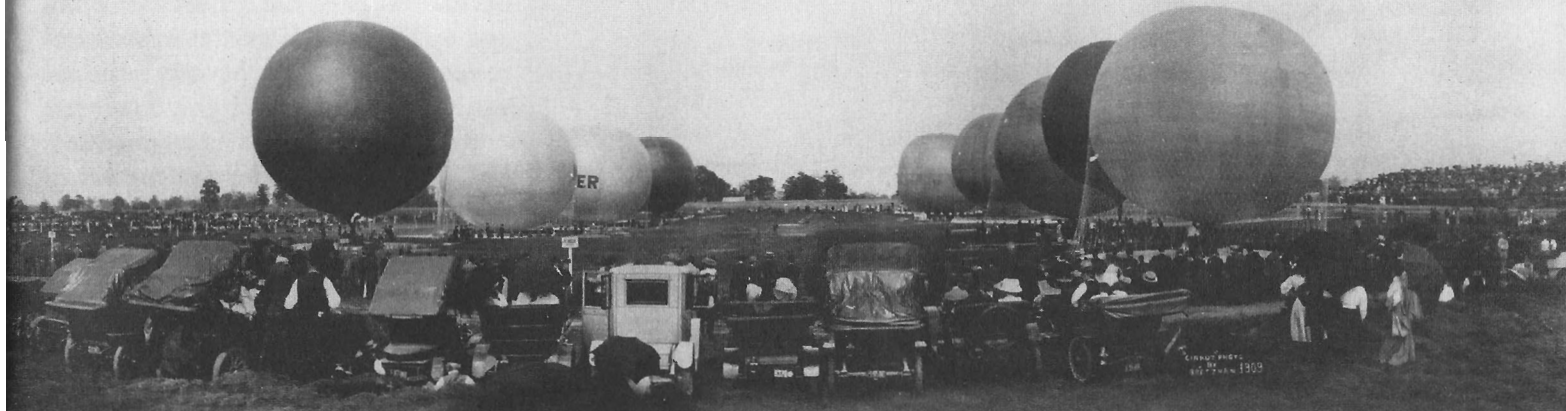
1910

several other major cities. It was held on June 5, 1909, and was, in fact, the first competitive event ever held at the track, conducted more than two months before the original racing surface was completed. A year later Fisher arranged with the Wright Brothers to bring several biplanes to an ambitious week-long air display, the famed Walter Brookins taking one of the craft

up to 4,938 feet on June 17, 1910, to establish a new world record for altitude.

JUNE 5, 1909

The National Championship for gas-filled balloons becomes the first competitive event ever held at the track.

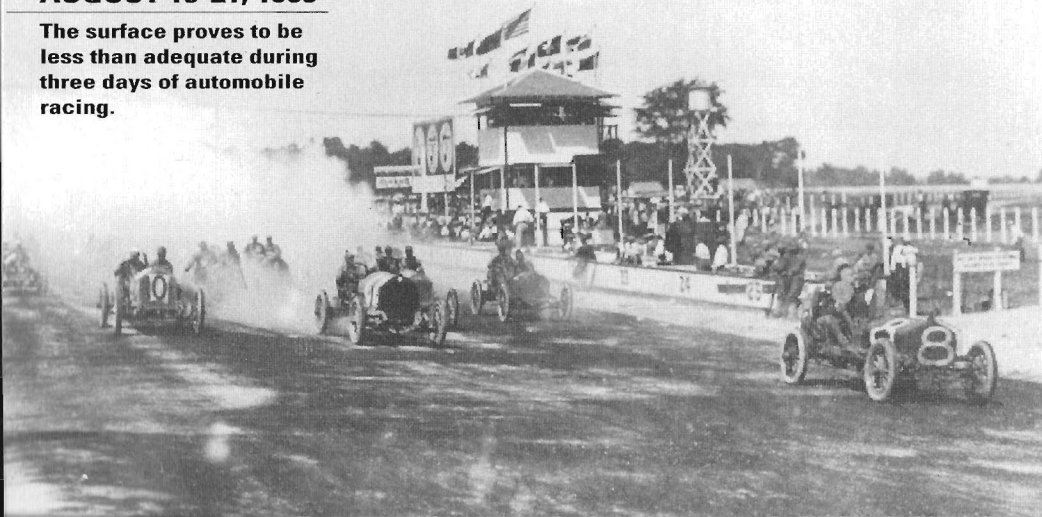


● **EARLY IN 1909,** workers began the task of laying out as large a track as was possible on the 328 acres of farmland the partners had obtained. The eventual specifications became exactly as they are today: two long 50-foot-wide straights (the front stretch and the back stretch), each of 3,300 feet (5/8 mile) in length, and two short straights (at the north and south ends of the property), of 660 feet (1/8 mile) apiece, linked by four 60-foot-wide turns banked at 9 degrees and 12 minutes and each measuring exactly one quarter of a mile from entrance to exit so that one full lap around the huge rectangle would cover 2½ miles.

The surface, of course, has changed several times over the years, although virtually everything ever laid down remains there to this day. The original choice of crushed or powdered rock, mixed in with tar for bonding purposes, lasted only through the initial programs, consisting of an abbreviated day of motorcycle racing on August 14, 1909, and three days of automobile racing events held a week later. The surface deteriorated so badly and caused so many accidents, especially on the final day of August 21, that the 300-mile Wheeler-Schebler Trophy

AUGUST 19-21, 1909

The surface proves to be less than adequate during three days of automobile racing.



A new surface in place by Christmas, comprises 3,200,000 paving bricks.

1909

event had to be flagged to a halt 65 miles short of the full distance.

Obviously, something far more substantial was needed, and in short order, an arrangement was made with the Wabash Clay Company of Veedersburg, Indiana, to cover

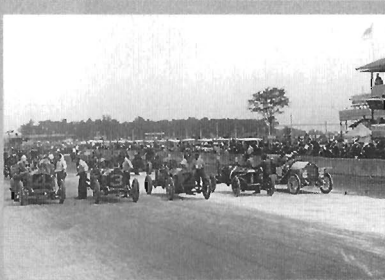
the entire track with 3,200,000 ten-pound street paving bricks. They were shipped in by rail, laid on their sides in a bed of sand and had mortar poured between them for greater durability, the entire job requiring only 63 days. The bricks were to serve well for the next quarter of a century until it became necessary to apply patches of asphalt to deteriorated portions of the turns in the spring of 1936 and 1937. A year later it was decided to pave the turns completely and by 1939, the backstretch had been covered over as well. Several hundred yards of the mainstraight, however, remained deliberately untouched as a nostalgic link with the past until they too were finally covered over—save for the start/finish line—in October 1961.

Plans had called for a series of races to be held as soon as the new brick

surface was completed but the participants on December 17 and 18, 1909, were greeted by freezing temperatures. Instead, a number of short record runs were made, Lewis Strang turning two consecutive laps with a huge Fiat at an average speed of 91.8 mph, then blazing through the flying quarter mile at an amazing 111.8 mph.

A trio of multi-day meets were held over major holiday weekends during the summer of 1910, typically with a dozen or so short sprints for various classifications of passenger cars being run off during a morning and afternoon, to be followed by a longer event of 100 or 200 miles to conclude the day's proceedings. The races were fast and safe but attendance was to become a disappointment. One of the Memorial Day weekend programs had drawn an enormous crowd of 50,000 people, but as the summer wore on the numbers began to diminish. As soon as the two-day Labor Day meet was concluded, Fisher and his partners agreed that perhaps too much racing was being offered. They decided instead to try one major event for 1911, choosing the Memorial Day holiday as the most logical date and offering for it a huge purse of \$25,000, of which \$10,000 would go to the winner. The nature of the event, however, required further discussion and Fisher was rather surprised when the manufacturers—polled for their suggestions—came back in favor of a 24-hour race. He felt that, in fairness to the paying spectator, something spread over six or seven hours between mid-morning and late afternoon would be more appropriate. A few calculations were made and the formal announcement came during the first week of October 1910.

The special event for May 30, 1911, would be a grueling contest over a distance of 500 miles.



Forty cars line up for the start of the first "500" on the morning of May 30, next to what may well have been the first-ever pace car at a major event.

1911



Although many spectators arrive by train, horseback and on foot, more and more have acquired automobiles.

The inaugural Indianapolis 500 was a huge success, drawing trainloads of spectators from major cities like Chicago, New York, Cleveland, Cincinnati and St. Louis. All but two of the 46 entries appeared for practice and 40 of them met the qualification requirements by being able to average at least 75 mph, from a flying start for a distance of a quarter of a mile down the mainstraight.

The race was won in a time of six hours and 42 minutes (an average speed of 74.602 mph) by Ray Harroun, driving a racing version of the locally built Marmon passenger car. Because a number of the other participants had complained during practice that the car's streamlined single-seat design represented a safety hazard by having no provision for a riding mechanic, driver/engineer Harroun had been forced to come up with a solution. Remembering something he had seen on a horse-drawn taxi in Chicago seven years before, he rigged up four rods above the cowling to which he attached a three-by-eight-inch mirror, believed to have been the first ever used on an automobile.

Further history was made when Carl Fisher determined that 40 cars were too many to dispatch from the traditional standing start. He decided it would



Ray Harroun wins the first 500, aided by what is believed to have been the very first rearview mirror ever used on an automobile. It's on rods above the cowling.

1911

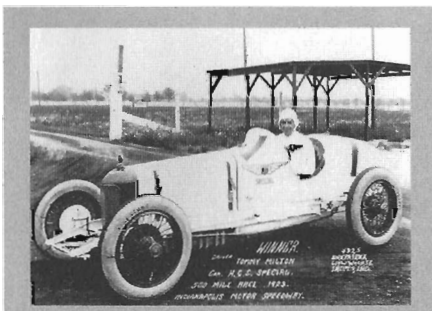
be safer instead to have them follow his passenger car around for one unscored lap at about 40 mph and then release them to the flagman as he pulled into the pits. It is believed to have been the very first mass rolling start for any automobile race anywhere in the world, and quite possibly the first use of a pace car.

The 500-mile race was a huge success and Fisher promptly announced the purse for 1912 would be doubled to \$50,000, with \$20,000 plus accessory prizes going to the winner.

Because of the rising speeds—David Bruce-Brown recorded a lap at 88.85 mph in qualifying for the 1912 race—it was decided to reduce the engine sizes for 1913, thus beginning a trend over the next several years of challenging the

engineers to develop “more out of less.” Engine sizes were to be reduced five times during the next 14 years, from an original maximum of a massive 600 cubic inches allowable in 1911 and 1912, down to 450 cid in 1913, then 300 in 1915, 183 in 1920, 122 in 1923 and finally 91½ in 1926. In a further attempt to make the 500 a truly international affair, the final three changes had been made to correspond with the European Grand Prix Formula of 3 liters, 2 liters and 1½ liters, respectively.

In spite of the cuts, the speeds kept going up. In 1914, Frenchman Georges Boillot lapped with a 345-cubic-inch Peugeot at 99.86 mph and five years later his fellow countryman, Rene Thomas, the 1914 winner, won the pole position with a 296-cubic-inch Ballot at 104.7 mph. Italian-born Ralph DePalma averaged 89.84 mph for the full 500 miles in a privately entered Mercedes in 1915 and a decade later his own nephew, Peter DePaolo, became the first to complete the 500 miles in under five hours, averaging 101.13 mph with a locally built Duesenberg, which was boosted by one of the Speedway’s first superchargers.



Tommy Milton becomes the first driver to win the 500 for a second time.

1923

Nineteen twenty-six winner Frank Lockhart, who would later lose his

life while trying to break the World Land Speed record on the sands of Daytona Beach, turned an official lap at 120.918 mph in 1927, topped the following year by Leon Duray (real name George Stewart), whose front-drive Miller lapped at 124.012 mph, a record that would stand for nine years.

IN THE MEANTIME, much had changed within the racing industry and the track had been transferred to new ownership. With Wheeler deceased, Newby in poor health and Fisher and Allison both now heavily involved in other projects, the track was turned over on August 15, 1927, to a new group headed up by the famed WWI flying “ace,” Captain Eddie Rickenbacker, who had, in fact, driven in several of the first half-dozen 500s before he had ever learned how to fly an airplane.



Captain Eddie Rickenbacker

Rickenbacker had a variety of concerns, not the least of which was that the automobile manufacturers had all but dropped out completely. The 500-mile race had turned into a competition for purpose-built racing cars, most of them produced by a specialist named Harry Miller who had no direct connection with the automobile industry. In an effort to encourage the manufacturers into making a return, the limit on cubic-inch displacement was raised to 366 and supercharging was no longer permitted, except on two-cycle engines. Riding mechanics—mandatory between 1912 and 1922, but optional ever since—were required once again. Although it has often been stated the new “specs” came out of necessity due to the Great Depression, the fact is they were announced in January of 1929, some ten months before the Wall Street “crash.” The timing, however, was excellent.



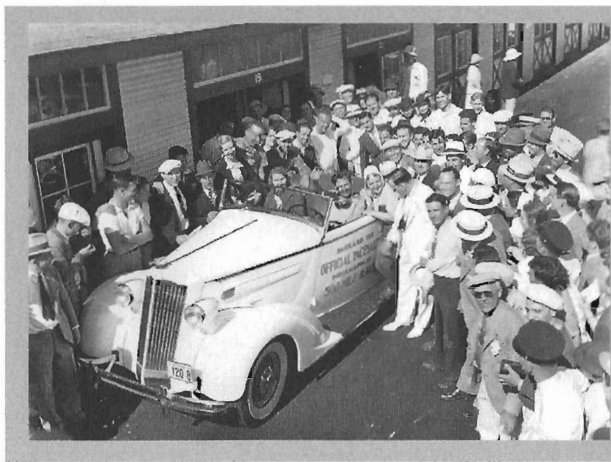
The original Pagoda, erected in 1913, is replaced in 1926 by a larger version which will survive until 1956.



In spite of the country being plunged into the Great Depression, the largest starting field ever, 42 cars, lines up on the morning of May 30.

1933

A number of production-based cars did compete during the next few years but virtually all of them were private entries and few of them enjoyed much success, as non-supercharged versions of the specialized Millers normally dominated the first 10 finishing positions. Studebaker, however, did manage a fine 3rd in 1932 with Cliff Bergere driving one of five racing cars the firm



Louis Meyer, the first driver to win the 500 for a third time, is also the first presented with the keys to the pace car, a Packard in this case.

commissioned, housing its straight-eight President engine, while all five of its entries placed among the first 12 finishers the following year.

Although the 500-mile race managed to survive the Great Depression under Rickenbacker's leadership, the sacrifices and concessions were many. On the financial side, for instance, a drastic cut had to be made to the purse for 1933. While Billy Arnold's share for winning the 1930 event from the pole had been in excess of \$50,000—a huge amount of money for the time—Louis Meyer's total take in 1933, including lap prizes and accessory money, was only \$18,000.

The winner's basic share was returned from \$12,000 to \$20,000 for 1934, but a limit was placed on oil consumption, mandating that none could be added after the race had started. Qualification runs, which had been increased from a



single lap to four laps in 1920, were increased still further during the period 1933-38 to 10 laps as a way of emphasizing endurance rather than out-and-out speed. Fuel limitations were imposed, starting in 1934, both for qualifying and for the race. The total allotment for 500 miles was only 45 gallons. This was cut to 42½ in 1935 and then to a mere 37½ in 1936, with the result that several cars occupying a top-ten position “ran dry” within sight of the checkered flag. Happily, the fuel restrictions were lifted for 1937, but the use of commercially available “pump gas” was enforced for the next several years. And taking advantage of the fact that supercharging was permitted for the first time since 1929—but with the maximum allowable cubic-inch displacement still at 366—Jimmy Snyder blasted around on one of his qualifying laps at over 130 mph.

For 1938, it was decided to adopt the new European formula of 3 liters (183 cubic inches) for supercharged engines and 4½ liters (274 cubic inches) for those unsupercharged.

Not only is Louis Meyer the first to drink milk in Victory Lane, but he is also the first to win the brand new Borg-Warner trophy.

1936

Although the European formula was to change numerous times during the next several years, it remained basically unaltered at Indianapolis until 1957, when a slight reduction was made to 2.8 liters (170-cubic-inches) supercharged and 4.2 liters (255-cubic-inches) unsupercharged. Reduced further to 161-cid supercharged (turbocharged) in 1969, this formula was still in effect as recently as 1996, after which 4-liter (244-cid) production-based “stock block” engines were mandated. Further reductions were made in 2000 to 3.5 liters (213-cid) and in 2004 to 3 liters (183-cid), followed by a return in 2007 to 3.5 liters when the mandated fuel was changed from methanol to ethanol. Turbocharging returned for 2012 with a new formula calling for 2.2 liter (134-cubic-inch) V6 engines, boosted by either a single turbocharger or duals.



Wilbur Shaw, the first to win in consecutive years, continues the newly established tradition of drinking milk in Victory Lane.

1940

Safety had been another of Rickenbacker's concerns and in 1935 the Indianapolis Motor Speedway became the first track in the world to have warning lights installed. This was also the year in which helmets became mandatory at the Speedway, something that did not take place in Europe until 1952.

In 1945, the track was to change hands again.

Shut down while America was involved in the Second World War, the track had fallen into a terrible state of disrepair. During WWI, it had been used as a military aviation repair depot and refueling point for military aircraft flying between Dayton, Ohio, and Rantoul, Illinois, but during its most recent four years of inactivity, no maintenance had been carried out whatsoever. The wooden grandstands were on the verge of collapse, weeds had sprung up between the bricks and mortar and the infield had overgrown to the point of resembling a jungle. The locals resigned themselves to



The track falls into a terrible state of disrepair while shut down during WWII.

1944

the fact that as soon as the war was over, the track would probably become a housing development.

In late November 1944, Firestone Tire and Rubber Company received special permission from the government to test a new synthetic rubber tire it had been developing. Wilbur Shaw, the Indiana-born and reared winner of the 500 in 1937, '39 and '40, had spent the war years in Akron, Ohio, as head of Firestone's aircraft division and when he arrived to begin the test, he was horrified at what he found. As soon as the test was completed, he flew to New York to meet with Rickenbacker—now head of Eastern Airlines—to confirm that the track was for sale.

Shaw immediately set out to find someone who would be willing to take over the track and save it from possible extinction. His search led him to Terre

Haute, Indiana, where he was introduced to shy and retiring Anton Hulman, Jr., the grandson of a German immigrant

who had founded a very successful wholesale grocery business. While friends were apprehensive about such a



The crowds had become huge and the starts typically tightly packed by 1959.

1959

purchase, Tony was undeterred by the terrible condition of the track. He assumed responsibility on November 14, 1945, and with Shaw hired as President and General Manager, they began the Herculean task of trying to get the track in shape for a 1946 race.

Work was carried out at a frantic pace as weeds were torn out, paint hurriedly applied and dilapidated grandstands patched up as safely as possible until something more substantial could be undertaken...after the race was over. Telephone wires



The track changes hands for the second and most recent time, Tony Hulman (left) taking it over from WWI flying "ace" Eddie Rickenbacker (center) on November 14 as newly named President and General Manager Wilbur Shaw looks on.

1945

were still being strung and grass was being cut even as the qualifying runs were taking place. But any concern Tony may have had over whether or not the general public would return to the track after a nearly five-year layoff were completely unfounded. Enormous crowds showed up on race morning, causing major traffic jams for miles around, which only became more complicated as people trying to get a head start for home by leaving early found themselves entangled with those still trying to get in.

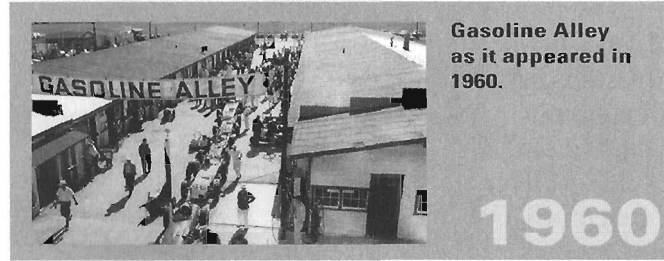
Preparations for 1947 began immediately and since that time, millions upon millions of dollars have been poured into the facility, all of it coming from the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Corporation.

The old wooden grandstands were soon replaced by those of steel, the first double-decker stand being erected on the outside of turn one in 1949. Today, grandstands and vistas virtually encircle the track, except along the back straightaway, with nearly two miles of continuous and in many cases multiple-level seating structures. The Tower Terrace section on the inside of the main straightaway provides nearly a half-mile of seating. Corporate luxury hospitality is provided by 132 executive suites in four complexes: the

Turn Two Suites (1973), Hulman Terrace outside the main straightaway (1984), the Tower Suites inside the main straightaway (1990), and the Gasoline Alley Suites above the Formula One garages (2000).

For the first 45 years of the track's existence, the Speedway's business offices and ticket department were located not on the grounds themselves, but rather in downtown Indianapolis at a variety of different addresses on North Capitol Avenue. It was not until the spring of 1956 that an office building was finally erected on the grounds, the single-story brick construction on the corner of West 16th Street and Georgetown Road housing not only the offices but also the track's first museum. An avid collector of antique automobiles before he ever acquired the Speedway, Tony Hulman had expressed the desire to build a museum as early as 1947. No sooner had it opened, however, than it became obvious that not nearly enough space had been allocated. A considerably larger building was to open in April 1976, displaying approximately 75 vehicles and a plethora of memorabilia, trophies, artwork and other artifacts.

The appearance of the mainstraight changed dramatically between 1956 and 1961, both a separated pit lane being installed and the pagoda replaced by the Master Control Tower by 1957, followed by the installation of the scoring pylon in 1959.



While many of the world's leading racetracks did not have permanent garage facilities until the 1970s and '80s, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway had

such a luxury in 1909 with a series of barn-like buildings set up inside turn one. By 1915 a single bank of garages had been erected behind the pit area on the ground where the current Garage Area, built in 1986, now sits. A second bank was erected in 1929, and while partially replaced after a 1941 fire and occasionally updated, it remained much the same in appearance until taken down in 1985.

A famous Speedway landmark for many years was a Japanese-style pagoda, which sat next to the start-finish line. Serving as a judges' stand and VIP area for the timing and scoring crew, radio commentators, press and other dignitaries, there were, in fact, two of them. The first was erected in 1913 and lasted for 12 years until it was razed the day after the 1925 race in order to make way for a somewhat larger version, which survived from 1926 until June of 1956. For the next 40 years, a glass, steel and concrete construction

known as the Master Control Tower was to occupy this space, becoming a landmark of its own until work began on the massive construction currently in place. Built to somewhat resemble the old pagodas, this colossal ten-story complex rises to the equivalent of a 13-story building and can be seen from miles away.

At the same time the Master Control Tower was being built—between the 500-mile races of 1956 and '57—a new tower terrace was going up and a separated pit lane installed. Designed with safety in mind, the new pit lane required that cars making stops would have to come off of the track, thus allowing working crew members to be protected from speeding race cars by a wall.

By the summer of 1998, the pit area was beginning to take on yet another appearance, as was the entire infield. Tony George, the grandson of Tony Hulman (who had passed away in October of 1977) had completed arrangements to host the United States Grand Prix for Formula One cars and a brand-new road



A.J. Foyt becomes the first driver to win the 500 for a fourth time.

1977



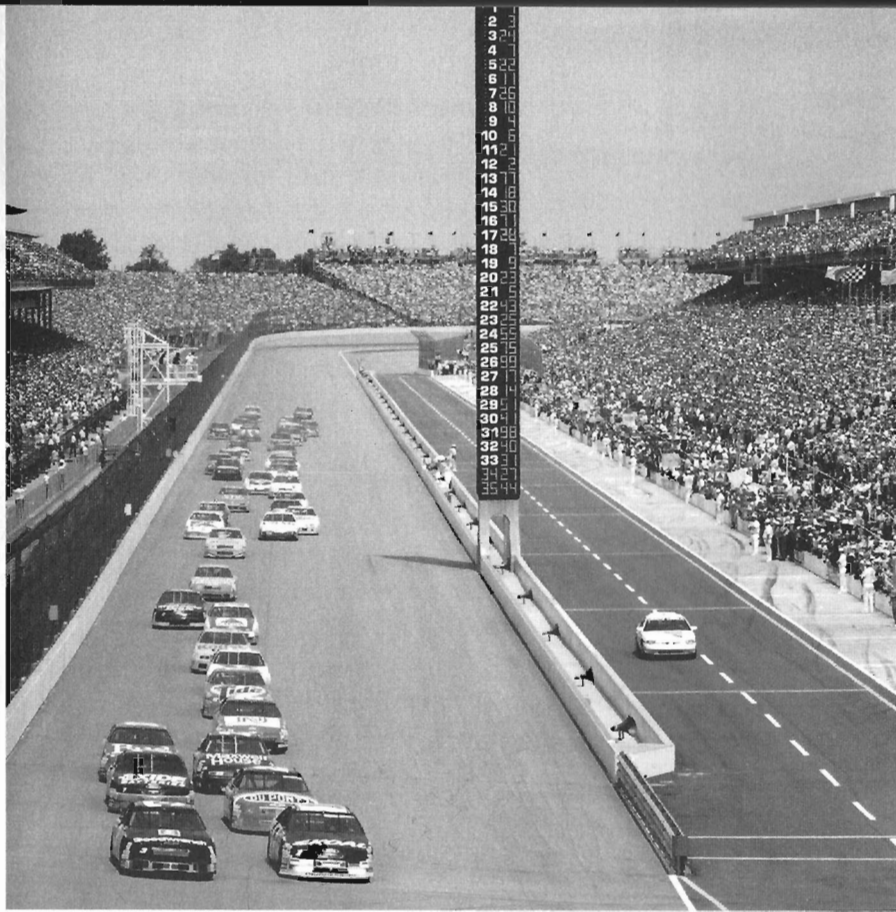
Al Unser Jr. edges Scott Goodyear for the closest finish in history, a margin of only 0.043 seconds.

1992

course was being laid out through the infield. A road course had, in fact, been part of Carl Fisher's original plans in 1909, but the trials and tribulations of those early months had precluded it from being built. Now it was, or at least there was something very similar in concept. And to the south of the new pagoda, taking shape were the pit side team garages and VIP suites as required by the F1 participants. Remaining true to Tony Hulman's philosophy of reinvestment, the Hulman-George family continually upgrades the physical plant with an eye toward safety and comfort of participants and fans alike, with the process being never-ending.

Records are there to be broken, and just as Parnelli Jones was the first to officially lap the track at better than 150 mph in 1962, so Tom Sneva would reach a new plateau in 1977 by turning a couple of laps in excess of 200 mph. And in 1996, the final year for turbocharged engines, Arie Luyendyk was to register one of his four consecutive qualifying laps at 237.498 mph.

Tommy Milton, the first to win the 500 twice (1921 and 1923), was joined and then surpassed a decade later by Louis Meyer, who won in 1928, '33 and '36. Wilbur Shaw came along to triumph in 1937, '39 and '40 as the first to win in consecutive years, followed



August 6, NASCAR comes to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway for the inaugural Brickyard 400.

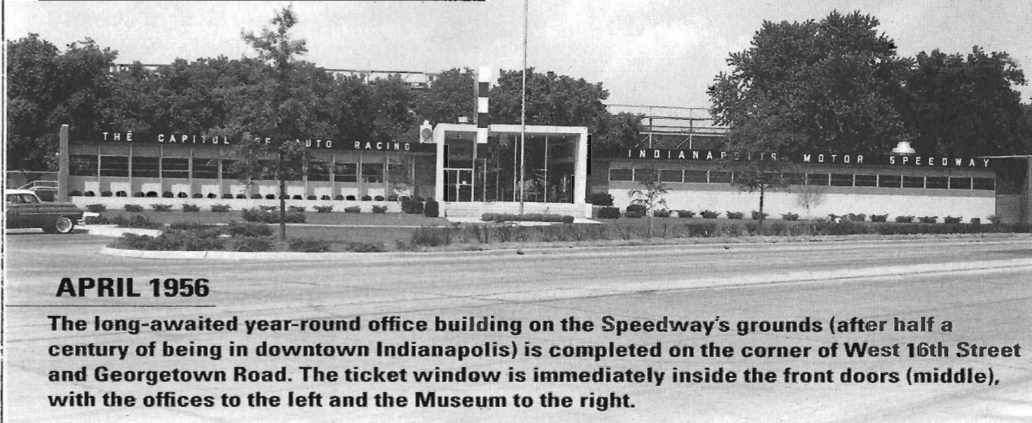
1994

in 1977 by A.J. Foyt, who added to his wins of 1961, '64 and '67 to become the first to win the 500 for a fourth time. By winning for the third time in 2009, Helio Castroneves, the 2001 and 2002 victor, became the 9th different driver to have triumphed more than twice, joining four-time winners Foyt, Rick Mears and Al Unser, and three-time winners Meyer, Shaw, Mauri Rose, Johnny Rutherford and Bobby Unser. The double winners have been Milton, Bill Vukovich, Rodger Ward, Gordon Johncock, Emerson Fittipaldi, Al Unser Jr., Arie Luyendyk, Dario Franchitti and Dan Wheldon.

Prize money, which for many years was a basic \$60,000, plus a lap prize fund and accessory awards, began to climb dramatically after Tony Hulman acquired the track. From a record \$115,450 in 1946 it had soared to \$300,252 by 1957 and still further to \$506,575 by 1964. It topped \$1 million for the first time in 1970 and subsequently surpassed \$2 million in 1982, \$3 million in 1985, \$4 million in 1986, \$5 million in 1988, \$6 million in 1990, \$7 million in 1991, \$8 million in 1995, \$9 million in 1999, and \$10 million in 2002. In 1989, the winner's share alone—Emerson Fittipaldi for the Patrick team—was in excess of \$1 million. In 2008, the purse topped \$14 million.

New legends added their names to Indianapolis Motor Speedway lore with the addition of the tremendously successful Brickyard 400 NASCAR event on August 6th, 1994. Jeff Gordon led the way the first year and was joined by Dale Earnhardt, Dale Jarrett and Ricky Rudd as Brickyard 400 winners before Gordon became the first two-time victor in 1998, a feat equaled a year later by Jarrett. Gordon won for a third time in 2001 and a fourth time in 2004. On September 24, 2000, Ferrari's Michael Schumacher sped to victory in the much-anticipated inaugural United States Grand Prix at Indianapolis. In 2006, Schumacher became a five-time winner of the now discontinued Grand Prix. In 2008, Valentino Rossi won MotoGP's rain-shortened inaugural Red Bull Indianapolis Grand Prix.

● GENERAL INFORMATION



APRIL 1956

The long-awaited year-round office building on the Speedway's grounds (after half a century of being in downtown Indianapolis) is completed on the corner of West 16th Street and Georgetown Road. The ticket window is immediately inside the front doors (middle), with the offices to the left and the Museum to the right.

Ticket orders for Speedway events are accepted by mail the day after each race, and thousands of fans make reservations in that manner so that tickets for the following year's events normally sell out almost immediately. Ticket order blanks showing seat locations and prices are always available by either visiting in person or by contacting the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, at P.O. Box 24152, Speedway, Indiana, 46224, or online at imstix.com.

The Speedway maintains a permanent staff of more than 300 full-time employees, which grows in number to several thousand during racing events. For example, a safety patrol of 2,000 people (security, parking, ushers) is assembled for the month of May and the concession department employs another 1,100 individuals. Medical care for the huge throng of 350,000 is provided by 250 doctors, nurses and technicians assigned to the medical center, 12 ambulances and seven first-aid tents.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1975 and named a National Historic Landmark in 1987, the Speedway is home to the magnificent Hall of Fame Museum, presenting one of the largest



Bus rides around the track are normally available except when the course is otherwise in use.

and most diversified collections of cars in the world. It includes more than 30 "500" winning cars, including Ray Harroun's historic Marmon "Wasp," winner of the first "500" in 1911. The museum is open every day of the year except for Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. A nominal admission is charged.

NARRATED BUS TOURS of the racetrack (also for a nominal charge) are available year round, weather conditions permitting and providing the course is not otherwise in use for competition or testing.

Another special attraction is the impressive Louis Chevrolet Memorial near the southwest corner of the museum. A snack bar and gift shop located near the memorial are open during the tourist season.

OFFICIAL TRACKSIDE GIFT SHOPS, just inside the main entrance of the museum, feature the most complete inventory of "500" souvenirs, novelties, books, DVDs, racing apparel, jewelry, film and other racing items to be found anywhere. Brochures are available and mail orders should be addressed to "Indy 500" Gift Shop, P.O. Box 24152, Speedway, Indiana, 46224.

THE IMS PHOTO SHOP (same address as the gift shop) is also in the museum and has a vast collection of current and historic "500" photos. Prints (8x10") are available of race action as well as individual cars and drivers, at a price of \$10 each for both black & white and color prints (plus postage and applicable tax) while much larger sizes may also be custom ordered. An annex photo shop is set up in the Plaza area near the Pagoda during racing events. The year-round telephone number for the Photo Department is **(317) 492-6771**.

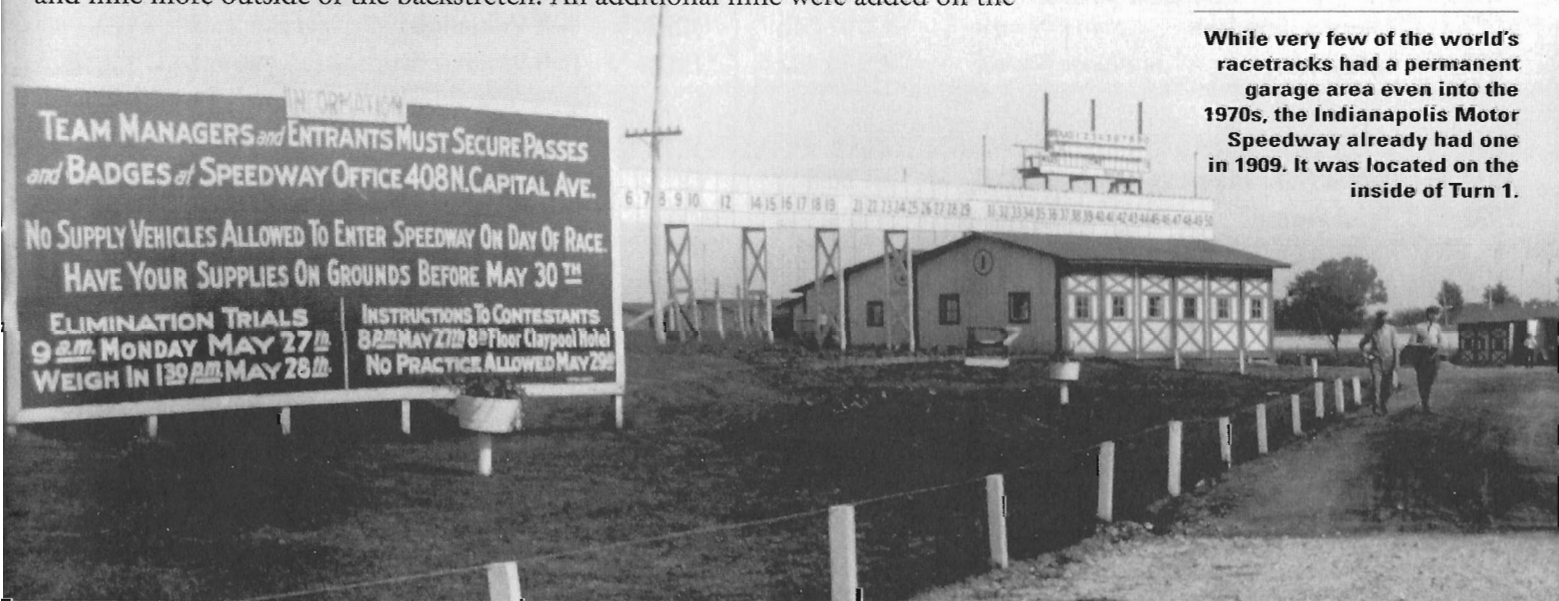


Race winners Parnelli Jones, A.J. Foyt and Jim Rathmann check out the Speedway's golf course.

THE BRICKYARD CROSSING GOLF COURSE dates back to 1929 when, under the direction of Rickenbacker, nine holes were installed inside the track and nine more outside of the backstretch. An additional nine were added on the

backstretch in 1965, by which time the track had already been hosting a major stop on the PGA tour, the 500 Open being held between 1960 and 1968. It underwent a major overhaul in 1992 and was completely redesigned by the world-famous Pete Dye. The new course was made up of four holes on the inside and 14 outside, laid out between a series of hills and lakes that had not previously existed. The PGA Seniors competed on the new course between 1994 and 2000. The Gift Shop for Brickyard Crossing is also located in this facility. The number to call for golf course information is **(317) 492-6572**. The switchboard number for all Speedway departments is **(317) 492-8500**.

While very few of the world's racetracks had a permanent garage area even into the 1970s, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway already had one in 1909. It was located on the inside of Turn 1.



TEAM MANAGERS and ENTRANTS MUST SECURE PASSES and BADGES at SPEEDWAY OFFICE 408 N. CAPITAL AVE.

**NO SUPPLY VEHICLES ALLOWED TO ENTER SPEEDWAY ON DAY OF RACE.
HAVE YOUR SUPPLIES ON GROUNDS BEFORE MAY 30TH**

**ELIMINATION TRIALS
9 AM MONDAY MAY 27TH
WEIGH IN 1:30 PM MAY 28TH**

**INSTRUCTIONS TO CONTESTANTS
8 AM MAY 27TH 8TH Floor Claypool Hotel
NO PRACTICE ALLOWED MAY 29TH**

INDIANAPOLIS 500 WINNERS & AVERAGE RACE SPEEDS

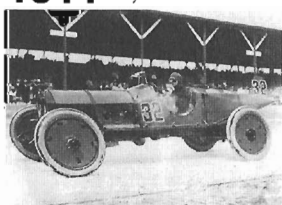
LEGEND

2 - Two-Time Winner
 3 - Three-Time Winner
 4 - Four-Time Winner
 * - Race Record

1911	Ray Harroun (relieved by Cyrus Patschke)	74.602	1935	Kelly Petillo	106.240
1912	Joe Dawson (relieved by Don Herr)	78.719	1936	3 Louis Meyer	109.069
1913	Jules Goux	75.933	1937	Wilbur Shaw	113.580
1914	Rene Thomas	82.474	1938	Floyd Roberts	117.200
1915	Ralph DePalma	89.840	1939	2 Wilbur Shaw	115.035
1916	Dario Resta (300-mile race)	84.001	1940	3 Wilbur Shaw	114.277
1917-18	World War I — No races scheduled		1941	(b) Floyd Davis and Mauri Rose	115.117
1919	Howard Wilcox	88.050	1942-45	World War II - No races scheduled	
1920	Gaston Chevrolet	88.618	1946	George Robson	114.820
1921	Tommy Milton	89.621	1947	2 Mauri Rose	116.338
1922	Jimmy Murphy	94.484	1948	3 Mauri Rose	119.814
1923	2 Tommy Milton (relieved by Howard Wilcox)	90.954	1949	Bill Holland	121.327
1924	(a) L.L. Corum and Joe Boyer	93.234	1950	Johnnie Parsons (345 miles, rain)	124.002
1925	Peter DePaolo (relieved by Norman Batten)	101.127	1951	Lee Wallard	126.244
1926	Frank Lockhart (400 miles, rain)	95.904	1952	Troy Ruttman	128.922
1927	George Souders	97.545	1953	Bill Vukovich	128.740
1928	Louis Meyer	99.482	1954	2 Bill Vukovich	130.840
1929	Ray Keech	97.585	1955	Bob Sweikert	128.209
1930	Billy Arnold	100.448	1956	Pat Flaherty	128.490
1931	Louis Schneider	96.629	1957	Sam Hanks	135.601
1932	Fred Frame	104.144	1958	Jimmy Bryan	133.791
1933	2 Louis Meyer	104.162	1959	Rodger Ward	135.857
1934	Bill Cummings	104.863	1960	Jim Rathmann	138.767

(a) - Boyer took over from Corum at lap 109; (b) - Rose took over from Davis at lap 72.

1911 - Ray Harroun



1920 - Gaston Chevrolet



1930 - Billy Arnold



1940 - Wilbur Shaw



1950 - Johnnie Parsons



1961	A.J. Foyt Jr.	139.130	1987	4 Al Unser	162.175
1962	2 Rodger Ward	140.293	1988	3 Rick Mears	144.809
1963	Parnelli Jones	143.137	1989	Emerson Fittipaldi	167.581
1964	2 A.J. Foyt Jr.	147.350	1990	Arie Luyendyk	*185.981
1965	Jim Clark	150.686	1991	4 Rick Mears	176.457
1966	Graham Hill	144.317	1992	Al Unser Jr.	134.477
1967	3 A.J. Foyt Jr.	151.207	1993	2 Emerson Fittipaldi	157.207
1968	Bobby Unser	152.882	1994	2 Al Unser Jr.	160.872
1969	Mario Andretti	156.867	1995	Jacques Villeneuve	153.616
1970	Al Unser	155.749	1996	Buddy Lazier	147.956
1971	2 Al Unser	157.735	1997	2 Arie Luyendyk	145.827
1972	Mark Donohue	162.962	1998	Eddie Cheever	145.155
1973	Gordon Johncock (332.5 miles, rain)	159.036	1999	Kenny Bräck	153.176
1974	Johnny Rutherford	158.589	2000	Juan Pablo Montoya	167.607
1975	2 Bobby Unser (435 miles, rain)	149.213	2001	Helio Castroneves	141.574
1976	2 Johnny Rutherford (255 miles, rain)	148.725	2002	2 Helio Castroneves	166.499
1977	4 A.J. Foyt Jr.	161.331	2003	Gil de Ferran	156.291
1978	3 Al Unser	161.363	2004	Buddy Rice (450 miles, rain)	138.518
1979	Rick Mears	158.899	2005	Dan Wheldon	157.603
1980	3 Johnny Rutherford	142.862	2006	Sam Hornish Jr.	157.085
1981	3 Bobby Unser	139.084	2007	Dario Franchitti (415miles,rain)	151.776
1982	2 Gordon Johncock	162.029	2008	Scott Dixon	143.567
1983	Tom Sneva	162.117	2009	3 Helio Castroneves	150.318
1984	2 Rick Mears	163.612	2010	2 Dario Franchitti	161.623
1985	Danny Sullivan	152.982	2011	2 Dan Wheldon	170.265
1986	Bobby Rahal	170.722			

1960 - Jim Rathmann



1970 - Al Unser



1980 - Johnny Rutherford



1990 - Arie Luyendyk



2000 - Juan Pablo Montoya



BRICKYARD **400** WINNERS & AVERAGE RACE SPEEDS

1994	Jeff Gordon	131.932
1995	Dale Earnhardt	155.218
1996	Dale Jarrett	139.508
1997	Ricky Rudd	130.828
1998	2 Jeff Gordon	126.770
1999	2 Dale Jarrett	148.194
2000	Bobby Labonte	* 155.918
2001	3 Jeff Gordon	130.790
2002	Bill Elliott	125.033
2003	Kevin Harvick	134.554
2004	4 Jeff Gordon	115.037
2005	Tony Stewart	118.782
2006	Jimmie Johnson	137.182
2007	2 Tony Stewart	117.379
2008	2 Jimmie Johnson	115.117
2009	3 Jimmie Johnson	145.882
2010	Jamie McMurray	136.054
2011	Paul Menard	140.762

LEGEND

2 - Two-Time Winner
3 - Three-Time Winner
4 - Four-Time Winner
*** - Race Record**

RED BULL **INDIANAPOLIS GP** WINNERS & AVERAGE RACE SPEEDS

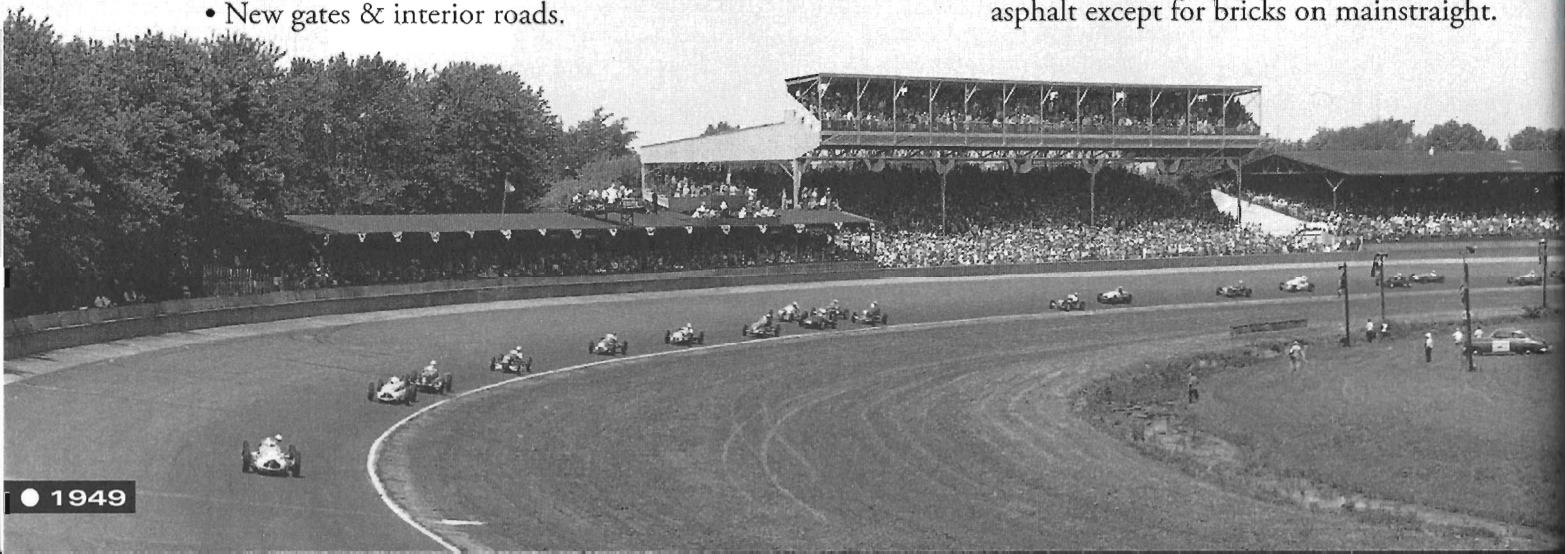
2008	Valentino Rossi (20 of 28 laps, rain)	84.201
2009	Jorge Lorenzo	*93.205
2010	Dani Pedrosa	92.600
2011	Casey Stoner	93.880

INDIANAPOLIS MOTOR SPEEDWAY CHRONOLOGICAL RECORD

- 1909**
- Track opens for motorized competition in August with surface of crushed rock and tar.
 - Grandstand A built along with Judges' Stand, Press Stand, and bleachers, later called Grandstand D.
 - Track resurfaced between October and December with 3.2 million street paving bricks.
- 1910**
- Grandstand B. Garages inside Turn 1.
- 1911**
- First Indianapolis 500.
 - Paddock Grandstand & Grandstand C.
- 1912**
- First tunnel under Turn 2.
- 1913**
- First Pagoda (replaces Judges' Stand and Press Stand).
 - Second tunnel constructed (under main straightaway just north of start/finish line).
- 1914**
- Grandstand E, F, and Starter's Bridge.
 - Grandstand C enlarged and roofed.
- 1915**
- Grandstand G and 30 new garages east of start/finish line (approximately the current location of Gasoline Alley).
 - Third tunnel constructed (under north end of main straightaway).
- 1917-18**
- No races due to World War I.
- 1920**
- Grandstand H.
- 1923**
- James A. Allison succeeds Carl G. Fisher as president (June 11).
- 1925**
- Pagoda razed day after race.
- 1926**
- New Pagoda erected farther back from trackside.
- 1927**
- Track purchased by Captain Eddie Rickenbacker.
- 1929**
- Opening of 18-hole golf course (9 holes inside track and 9 outside of backstretch).
 - Addition of second bank of garages in the garage area.
- 1934**
- Lesser-known drivers required to pass a test before attempting to qualify for the race.
- 1935**
- New concrete walls around racing surface.
 - Steep outer lip around turns removed and outside wall modified, some asphalt patching in turns, and inside concrete wall removed and safety aprons substituted (in fall).
 - Green and yellow warning lights installed.



- 1936** • Mandatory driver's test required of all newcomers.
- 1937** • Turns surfaced with asphalt.
- Magnaflux inspection made mandatory.
- 1938** • Pit wall constructed as safety precaution.
- 1939** • Backstretch paved. Track now completely asphalt except for about 600 yards of mainstraight.
- 1940** • New guardrail installed, backstretch.
- 1942-45** • No races due to World War II.
- 1945** • Track purchased by Anton Hulman, Jr., November 15th. Three-time 500 winner Wilbur Shaw named president and general manager.
- 1946** • Gasoline Alley rebuilt following 1941 fire.
- New steel and concrete Paddock Grandstand and Grandstand G, parquet seats, first section.
- 1947** • Press box constructed atop Paddock.
- New gates & interior roads.
- Additional parquet seats & accessory buildings.
- 1948** • Second addition of parquet seats.
- New emergency medical center & 8 new garages.
- 1949** • New Grandstand E, first section (first double-deck grandstand).
- 1950** • New Grandstand E, second section.
- 1951** • New Grandstand A.
- 1952** • New Grandstand E, third section.
- Washrooms - 8 new garages.
- 1953** • Grandstand E completed & 2 new garages.
- 1954** • New Grandstand B.
- Wilbur Shaw perishes in small private plane, October 30th. Anton Hulman, Jr., later named president.
- 1955** • Reconstruction of tunnel under main straightaway.
- Most of track resurfaced (in fall) with asphalt except for bricks on mainstraight.



● 1956



- 1956**
- USAC replaces AAA as sanctioning body effective January 1st.
 - Office/Museum opens at corner of 16th & Georgetown in April.
 - New Main Entrance gate.
- 1957**
- Master Control Tower replaces Pagoda (taken down in June 1956) and new pit area with separated pit lane.
 - Tower Terrace & Terrace extension.
 - New tunnel constructed under backstretch, replacing overhead bridge.
- 1958**
- Infield drainage developed.
 - Tower Terrace extension continues.
- 1959**
- Electric scoring pylon.
 - Grandstand K, first section.
- 1960**
- Grandstand K, second section.
 - First "500" Open PGA Golf Tournament (held for last time in 1968).

1961

- New double-deck Paddock Grandstand & Press Box.
- New concrete outside wall on backstretch.
- New inside retaining wall in Turn 3.
- Mainstraight paved with asphalt in October. Only "Yard of Bricks" at start/finish line remaining of 1909 surface.



1962

- New Grandstand J on Turn 4.
- New Grandstand M on backstretch.
- Four new garages.

- 1963**
 - 600-foot addition to Paddock.
 - New Grandstand C.
 - Speedway Motel (96 units) opens in March.
 - New Clubhouse for golf course.
- 1964**
 - Grandstand L on Turn 3.
 - Resurfacing of backstretch and Turn 3.
 - Fifth tunnel under north end of track leading to 30th Street.
 - Installation of new safety cable on outer edge of entire track.
 - Scoreboard installed in north field.
 - Grandstand J.
- 1965**
 - Grandstand J continues.
 - Golf Course expanded to 27 holes (9 holes in infield, 18 outside backstretch).
- 1966**
 - New Grandstand H (replacing original Grandstands F & H).
 - Southwest Vista Grandstand, first section.
 - New 3-lane tunnel at head of mainstretch, replacing 2-lane unit.
- 1967**
 - Southwest Vista Grandstand, second section.
 - 14 new garages.
- 1968**
 - Southwest Vista Grandstand, third section.
- 1969**
 - Northwest Vista Grandstand, first section.
 - New L - South Grandstand and new North Bleachers.
 - Resurfacing (in July) of all portions of track except those resurfaced in 1961 and 1964.
- 1970**
 - New Pressroom adjacent to garage area.
 - Northwest Vista Grandstand continues.
- 1971**
 - First two sections of Southeast Vista outside Turn 2.
 - Rotating signs & electric scoreboards at north & south ends of track.
 - Victory Circle relocated from south end of pits to "horseshoe" area at foot of Master Control Tower.
- 1972**
 - Enlarged Emergency Medical Center.
 - Electropacer system installed for caution periods.
 - New rooms for accessory companies & new gift shop.
- 1973**
 - Construction of Tunnel 2 (new 4-lane) main entrance under short chute.
 - Turn 2 VIP Suites constructed.
 - Additions to Northwest, Southwest, and Southeast Vista Grandstands.
- 1974**
 - Pit entrance rebuilt and pit area enlarged.
 - Retaining pit wall raised to 32 inches.
 - Pit boxes lengthened to 40 feet.
 - Turn 4 rebuilt and widened.
 - Northwest Vista grandstand extension.
 - Elevated Starter's Stand on west side of mainstraight.
 - New Museum/Office construction begins (inside track between Turns 1 & 2).
- 1975**
 - New fence and safety cables inside Turn 3.
 - Louis Chevrolet Memorial dedicated near front of Museum.

- First two sections of Southeast Vista outside Turn 2.
- Rotating signs & electric scoreboards at north & south ends of track.
- Victory Circle relocated from south end of pits to “horseshoe” area at foot of Master Control Tower.
- Enlarged Emergency Medical Center.
- Electropacer system installed for caution periods.
- New rooms for accessory companies & new gift shop.
- Construction of Tunnel 2 (new 4-lane main entrance under short chute.
- Turn 2 VIP Suites constructed.
- Additions to Northwest, Southwest, and Southeast Vista Grandstands.
- Pit entrance rebuilt and pit area enlarged.
- Retaining pit wall raised to 32 inches.
- Pit boxes lengthened to 40 feet.
- Turn 4 rebuilt and widened.
- Northwest Vista grandstand extension.
- Elevated Starter’s Stand on west side of mainstraight.
- New Museum/Office construction begins (inside track between Turns 1 & 2).
- New fence and safety cables inside Turn 3.
- Louis Chevrolet Memorial dedicated near front of Museum.

● 1976



1976

- Entire track resurfaced in fall.
- Hall of Fame Museum and offices completed on April 5th.

1977

- Resurfacing of track completed.
- 300-foot addition to Paddock Penthouse.
- Anton Hulman, Jr., passes away, October 27th. Joseph R. Cloutier later named President.

1978

- Four new sections added to south end of Tower Terrace.

1979

- Fourth floor added to Turn 2 VIP Suites.
- Packup procedure utilizing pace car instigated for caution periods.
- John R. Cooper replaces Joseph Cloutier as President, late October.

1980

- New Turn 1 bleachers.

1981

- New accessory rooms near Control Tower.
- Inside pit wall raised.
- Pit exit widened and curbs installed.

- New pedestrian walkway along 5th Street.
- Expansion to Emergency Medical Center.
- New restrooms added to Stand B and Penthouse A & B.
- New Maintenance Facility built.
- Old Golf Course Maintenance building removed.
- New attenuator installed at pit entrance.
- Construction begins on new Pete Dye-designed Championship Golf Course (October).

1992

- Golf Course construction completed. Now 18 holes total, with four inside and 14 outside.
- Golf Course Maintenance Facility & Maintenance Building.

1993

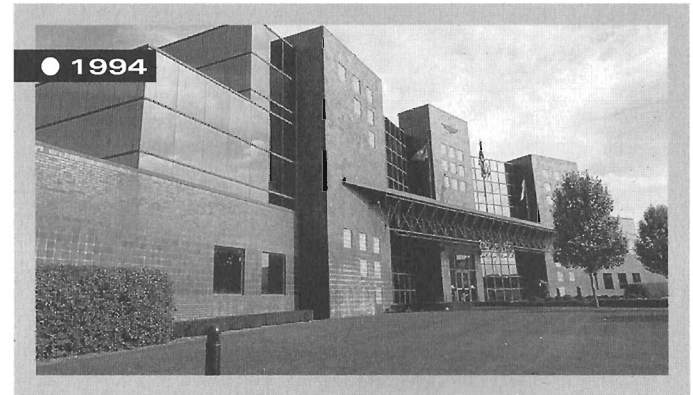
- North Vista Grandstand constructed.
- New outside walls and safety fences.
- New warm-up lanes and warning strips.
- New Golf Course opens to limited play, September.
- Construction begins on new Administration Building at 16th & Georgetown.

1994

- New Administration Building completed in October.
- New Scoring Pylon.
- Pit Renovation – grass strip removed, second barrier wall installed.
- New Victory Lift installed in horseshoe at foot of Master Control Tower.
- Fencing installed inside first turn and in front of Tower Terrace stands at the

north end.

- Inaugural NASCAR Brickyard 400 (later the Allstate 400 at the Brickyard), August.
- Inaugural Senior PGA Golf Tournament (last held in 2000)



1995

- Renovation of Gasoline Alley Café.
- Automatic Garage Openers installed in all 96 garages.
- Four Garages in C Block modified to accommodate technical inspections.
- Paddock renovation begins.
- N.E. Vista construction begins.
- Removal of Stands L & M.
- Hulman Terrace Catering Facilities constructed.
- Constructed a new Golf Pro Shop.
- Brickyard Plaza exterior renovation.
- New Concession Administration office in Brickyard Plaza.
- New facility for WNDY/Telex in

Brickyard Plaza.

- Transporter facility in Brickyard Plaza.
- Indy Racing League founded.
- Racetrack is completely resurfaced.
- Tunnel 4 & backstretch wall reconstructed.
- Renovation of H & J Stand completed.
- New Motel Banquet Pavilion.
- (Two) N.E. Vista pedestrian bridges are renovated and widened.
- New Motorcycle Lot.
- Renovation of C Stand.
- New Motel Sign (Brickyard Crossing Golf Resort & Inn).
- Paddock renovation continues.
- White barn adjacent to Goodyear warehouse renovated.

1996



1997

- Construction of a new vehicular bridge in Lot 1.
- Tunnel 3 renovation begins.
- Paddock renovation continues.
- Installed new curbs, sidewalk entrances and fencing along Georgetown Road.

1998

- Renovation of Turn 2 VIP Suites begins (exterior).
- Indy Racing League replaces USAC as sanctioning body in August.
- Renovation of Turn 2 VIP Suites continues.
- New entrance at Gate 9, located at 25th & Georgetown Road.
- New Gift Shops under A and H Grandstands.
- Completion of the Paddock Grandstand renovation.
- New Gift Shop under the Paddock Grandstand.
- Completion of Tunnel 3 renovation.
- Begin Tunnel 6 renovation.
- Begin dismantling of existing Master Control Tower and first stages of construction of new Pagoda Control Tower.
- Construction of Formula One Road Course begins.
- Accessory rooms north of Gasoline Alley razed.

1999

- Renovation of A Stand begins.
- Continuation of New Pagoda construction.
- Seven large screen video displays installed in infield.
- Tunnel 6 renovation completed.
- Renovation of South Vista stand.
- Accessory rooms south of Gasoline Alley razed.
- Begin construction of Media Center, Legends' Row, Formula One Garages and

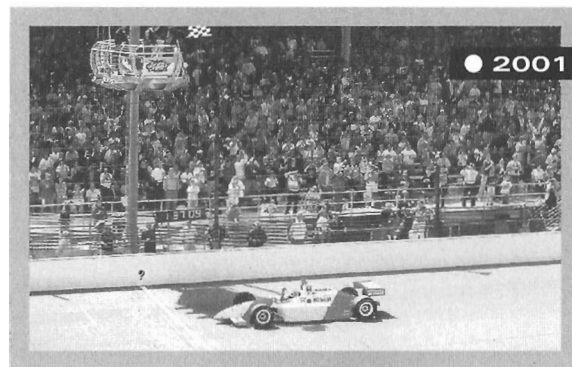
Suites, and south compound.

- Renovation of Stand A, Stand E Penthouse, and South Vista.
- New fuel tanks and pumps in Garage Area.
- Construction of debris fence in North Pits.
- Construct viewing mound in Turn 3.
- Construction of Formula One Victory Podium.
- Completion of A Stand and South Vista, April.
- Six additional large screen video displays installed.
- Completion of Formula One Road Course, Legends Row Rooms & South Compound.
- First United States Grand Prix at Indianapolis, September.
- Completion of new Pagoda Control Tower, Formula One garages and suites.
- Five additional screen video displays installed on outside of mainstretch.

2000

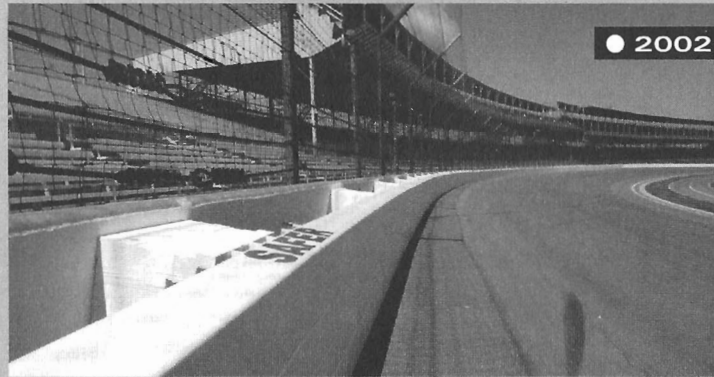
2001

- Removable debris fence in front of Formula One Garages.
- New flag stand constructed.



2002

- Track surface smoothed through “diamond-grinding.”
- SAFER Barrier installed in all four turns.
- Begin installation of complete P.A. audio system.
- Renovation of Southwest Vista and South Vista.



2003

- Installation of victory podium car lift and podium backdrop.
- Begin major renovation of Grandstand B.
- Completed the replacement of the P.A. audio system.
- Installed LED scoreboards in the Paddock Grandstand.
- Completed the renovations of the Paddock Penthouse Plazas and the South/Southwest Vista Grandstand.
- Begin restoration and renovation of the Tower Terrace Grandstand north of the start/finish line.

2004

- Acquired several properties on the south side of West 16th Street across from the track, demolished the buildings and replaced with parking lots (in spring).
- Constructed five wooden pedestrian bridges on Georgetown Road parking lot properties, plus laid gravel in the new lots and black topped sidewalks (in spring).
- Joie Chitwood III named President in December.

2005

- Completely repaved 2½ mile oval (in fall).
- Original SAFER System (installed in 2002) replaced with latest enhanced version of the SAFER System. Removed original version, then updated and installed on inside of exits of Turns 2 and 4 for greater driver protection in the event of secondary impacts with inside walls.
- Latest surface (laid in fall 2004) smoothed

by “diamond-grinding” in spring.

- Permanent fence constructed around Victory Circle.

- Guardrail configuration revised at Turn 8 of road course.
- “Opening Ceremony” band stage constructed on roof of timing and scoring area.

2006

- Commence complete renovation of Northwest Vista (to be completed in 2008).
- Removal of all remaining wooden seat boards in Paddock grandstand, concrete structure patched and encased with waterproof membrane, new aluminum seats with backs installed.

2007

- Modification of area inside Turn 1, rerouting and covering over the creek, in order to install a four-turn addition to the road course which travels through the infield, bypassing Turn 1 of the oval. Also, reconfigured the three-turn infield portion just north of the Museum to enable higher speeds.

2008

- Ramps to Museum front entrance rebuilt.
- Renovated (galvanized) Northwest Vista.

2009

- Dismantled motel portion of Brickyard Crossing Golf Resort and Inn (formerly Speedway Motel), leaving restaurant, “Flag Room” and banqueting facilities still operating daily.

- Jeffrey Belskus named President in July.

2011

- Repaved infield road course

SOME ANSWERS TO **FREQUENTLY** ASKED QUESTIONS

Why the distance of 500 miles?

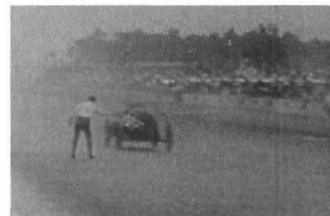
Having decided to dispense with multi-race programs and concentrate instead on one major race for 1911, Carl Fisher and his partners envisioned an event that would appeal to the general public by lasting approximately seven hours between mid-morning and late afternoon. A distance of 500 miles was settled upon, and Ray Harroun's elapsed time for winning the first race certainly fell within their calculations by requiring six hours, 42 minutes and eight seconds.

What determined the actual shape of the track?

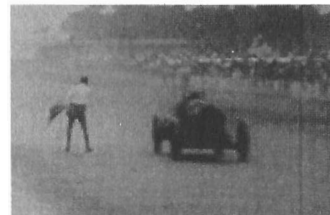
Management wanted to build as large a track as possible on the 320 acres of farmland it purchased, the dimensions being four 80-acre tracts measuring almost exactly one mile from north to south and half a mile from east to west. Legend has it that in striving for the lap they requested of three miles around, engineer P.T. Andrews cut out a circle from a piece of cardboard, quartered it and then laid the four pieces (each representing one turn) on a map of the property. He then pushed the pieces to the four corners of the acquired acreage and penciled in the "straights." When he reported back that a three-mile track would fit but that it would leave no room for grandstands around the outside, the agreed-upon compromise was for slightly shorter straights, thereby producing a lap of 2½ miles instead.

What is the origin of the checkered flag?

Although there has never been a definitive answer to this often-asked question, most theories point to an origination in bicycle racing in France sometime in the 1860s, thus preceding, by several years, not only automobile racing but even the automobile itself.



Still frames from the video of Ray Harroun taking the checkered flag in the first Indianapolis 500 in 1911.



Why do the cars run in a counterclockwise direction?

Much of early day American automobile racing competition was conducted on oval horse tracks at state and county fairs. Although European horse racing events were generally held in a clockwise direction, the Americans had chosen to go counterclockwise. The automobile racers followed suit.

Where does the term “Brickyard” originate?

This was a nickname applied to the track in the fall of 1909 when the original surface of crushed rock and tar was covered over with 3,200,000 paving bricks shipped in from the western part of the state. Many of the bricks are still there to this day—the notable exceptions being wherever a tunnel has subsequently been installed—and those that remain are hidden beneath several layers of asphalt.

Why does the 500 starting field normally comprise 33 cars?

As the result of 40 cars starting in the 1911 500, the Contest Board of the American Automobile Association (AAA), which sanctioned major automobile racing events in the United States between 1902 and 1955, established a formula—with safety in mind—for 1912, mandating that racing cars spread equally around a track should be entitled to an average 400 feet each. Although this worked out to 33 cars for a 2½-mile track, Carl Fisher elected instead to go with a maximum 30-car field for 1912, '13 and '14, with his entry blanks not calling for 33 starters until 1915. The field was increased during the Depression years, the maximum for 1930, '31 and '32 being 40 cars with up to 42 cars allowed for 1933. The maximum has been 33 ever since 1934, except in the case of extenuating circumstances, which allowed 35 cars to start in both 1979 and 1997.

Why does the 500 winner usually drink milk?



Wilbur Shaw



A.J. Foyt - 1964



Al Unser Jr. - 1992



Helio Castroneves - 2002

Three-time 500 winner Louis Meyer regularly drank BUTTERMilk to refresh himself on a hot day and happened to drink some in Victory Lane as a matter of course after winning the 1936 race. An executive with what was then the Milk Foundation was so elated when he saw the moment captured in a photograph in the sports section of his newspaper the following morning that he vowed to make sure it would be repeated in coming years. There was a period between 1947 and 1955 when milk was apparently no longer offered, but the practice was revived in 1956 and has been a tradition ever since.

What is the purpose and meaning of the seven racing flags?

Although the combination of colored flags and their various meanings have changed since the beginning of motorsports, those in use for the Indianapolis 500 have remained virtually unchanged since 1937.

They are as follows:

Green: The race has started and/or the course is clear.

Yellow: Slow down because of a caution period and pack up in single file behind the pace car. (Although caution periods date back to the very early days, the pace car was not used for this purpose at Indianapolis until 1979.)

Red: Come safely to a complete halt when directed. The race has been stopped.

Black: Shown to an individual—and normally accompanied by display of the individual's car number on a board—requiring that the individual stop at his or her pit for consultation, either due to a rule infraction or because of a potential safety problem.

Blue with yellow or orange diagonal stripe: Known as either the “courtesy” or “move over” flag, this is normally shown to a participant who is about to be lapped and who is asked to conduct himself or herself accordingly. There is normally no penalty for failing to heed this flag.

White: One lap to go.

Checkered: The race is completed.

