



# THE ADDITIVE

## The Indianapolis 500 Runs Its 100th Race

May 2016

Since 1911 the Indianapolis 500 auto race has been held at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. The event is held on Sunday of Memorial Day weekend, with over 300,000 in attendance.



Billed as The Greatest Spectacle in Racing, the event is considered part of the Triple Crown of Motorsports, which comprises three of the most prestigious races and is considered the largest single-day sporting event in the world. The total purse exceeds \$13 million, with over \$2.5 million awarded to the winner, making it one of the richest cash prizes in sports.

In 2016, the 100th running will be held and Juan Pablo Montoya is the defending champion. Though the first race was in 1911, the races were suspended during WWII. The most successful drivers are A. J. Foyt, Al Unser, and Rick Mears, each of whom have won the race four times. Rick Mears holds the record for most career pole positions with six. The most successful car owner is Roger Penske, with 16 total wins and 17 poles.

The Indianapolis Motor Speedway is a 2.5 mile oval circuit. Drivers race 200 laps, counterclockwise around the circuit, for a distance of 500 miles. Practice and time trials are held in the two weeks leading up to the race. Traditionally, the field consists of 33 starters, aligned in a starting grid of eleven rows of three cars apiece. The event includes "Indy cars", a formula of professional-level, single-seat, open cockpit, open-wheel, purpose-built race cars.

The first "500" was held at the Speedway on Decoration Day, May 30, 1911. The race had a field of 40 starters and the cars had a maximum engine size of 600 cubic inches

(9,800 cc). Ray Harroun drove a Marmon Model 32-based Wasp racer, which was equipped with his new invention, the rear view mirror. When Harroun was declared the winner in front of 80,000 spectators, an annual tradition was born.

In 1912, the purse was raised to \$50,000 and the field was limited to 33 cars. Although the first race was won by an American driver at the wheel of an American car, European automakers such as the Italian Fiat or French Peugeot companies soon developed their own vehicles to try to win the event, which they did for many years.

As technology developed each year, more efficient engines achieved higher and higher speeds. Today, the specialized "Indy cars" reach speeds over 230 mph and the fastest lap speed was 236 mph set in 1996.

As of 2015, all entrants utilize 2.2 L V6, twin-turbocharged engines, tuned to produce a range of 550-700 horsepower. Chevrolet and Honda are the current engine manufacturers involved in the sport. Firestone, which has a deep history in the sport, dating back to the first 500, is the exclusive tire provider.

For several years, Bardahl sponsored cars in the race, including one of the first turbocharged "Indy cars" driven by Watson Offenhauser, and later Lloyd Ruby.



*Christian Fittipaldi finished 2nd place in the 1995 Indy 500 driving a Bardahl sponsored car*

So this Memorial Day, the race will be run for the 100th time and this great American tradition will be broadcast on ABC-TV beginning at 11:00 am EST. Enjoy the race!