Start Your Engines! Cars and Stars of the Indy 500

Twenty iconic Indy 500 race and pace cars will be on display—from the 1914 Duesenberg driven by Eddie Rickenbacker to the 2016 NAPA winner driven by Alexander Rossi. The exhibit captures all the excitement of the Indy 500, with photos and videos from the races, race equipment worn by the winners, memorabilia, and the sights and sounds of the race. Visitors even have the chance to sit in an Indy “Touch Car,” as well as enjoy a number of programs and events related to the exhibit.

The exhibit will be available from April 14- October 8, 2018 in the Auto Gallery.

The Cars

- 1911 STODDARD-DAYTON PACE CAR
  Driver: Carl Fisher

- 42 - 1913 DUESENBERG SPECIAL
  Driver: Eddie Rickenbacker

- 1 - 1915 DUESENBERG SPECIAL
  Driver: Wilbur D’Alene
  Courtesy of Joseph Freeman

- 8 - 1925 MILLER SPECIAL
  Driver: Ralph de Palma

- 1930 L-29 CORD PACE CAR
  Driver: Wade Morton

- 4 - 1932 HUPP COMET SPECIAL
  Driver: Russell Snowberger

- 43 - 1935 MILLER FORD
  Driver: Ted Horn

- 32 - 1940 STEVENS/SAMPSON SPECIAL
  Driver: Bob Swanson

- “FIRST IN LINE” 1951 CHEVROLET PANEL TRUCK

- 35 - 1952 FERRARI TYPE-375
  Driver: Johnny Mauro

- 20 - 1968 STP LOTUS WEDGE
  Driver: Art Pollard

- 9 - 1972 PARNELLI VPJ-1
  Driver: Mario Andretti

- 14 - 1977 COYOTE
  Driver: A.J. Foyt

- 1978 CHEVROLET CORVETTE PACE CAR
  Driver: Jim Rathmann

- 1 - 1980 PENNSKE PC9
  Driver: Rick Mears

- 4 - 1990 PORSCHE 90-P
  Driver: Teo Fabi

- 5 - 1993 LOLA/TEXACO HAVOLINE
  Driver: Nigel Mansell

- 5 - 1994 REYNARD
  Driver: Arie Luyendyk

- 16 - 2005 PANOZ
  Driver: Danica Patrick

- 98 - 2016 NAPA
  Driver: Alexander Rossi

- 2016 CHEVROLET CAMARO SS PACE CAR
  Driver: Roger Penske

Unless otherwise noted, all cars are courtesy of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Museum.

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1911 STODDARD-DAYTON PACE CAR: CARL FISHER
The Car: The Dayton Motor Car Company began making cars in 1905. One of their Stoddard-Dayton models won the first auto race held at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway just after it opened in 1909. Before going out of business prior to the 1914 Indy 500, the Dayton Motor Car Company provided Stoddard-Dayton models as pace cars for three of the first four races, including the inaugural Indianapolis 500 race in 1911.

The Driver: President of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, Carl Fisher was a licensed balloonist, owned one of the first auto dealerships in America, led the planning for the first transcontinental highway, developed resorts in Florida and New York, and founded a company that made the first viable auto headlights.

42 - 1913 DUESENBERG SPECIAL: EDDIE RICKENBACKER
The Car: Developed by Fred and Augie Duesenberg, this car’s four-cylinder engine was unique. Instead of common “L” or “T” head engines, this engine featured vertical rocker arms connected to horizontal valves. This allowed for a smaller, lighter engine that still produced over 100 horsepower.

The Driver: Following his career as a race car mechanic and driver, Eddie Rickenbacker went on to become a decorated fighter pilot during World War I, founded a car company, worked at General Motors, and owned the Speedway itself from 1927 to 1945. Later he purchased and operated Eastern Airlines.

1 - 1915 DUESENBERG SPECIAL: WILBUR D’ALENE
The Car: This car and the Duesenberg seen to the left are the two oldest surviving racing Duesenbergs. The company was founded in 1913, and was present at every Indianapolis 500 from 1914 to 1937 in either chassis or engine form, most often both. Duesenbergs won the race three times.

The Driver: Edwin Aleon of Evansville, Indiana raced under the name Wilbur “Wild Bill” D’Alene. At age 29 he left home and worked as a lumberjack in the northwest where he adopted his new name. In 1914, he became a race car driver for Marmon and Duesenberg. He retired from racing in 1923.

8 - 1925 MILLER SPECIAL: RALPH de PALMA
The Car: Between 1923 and 1929 sleek-looking, single-seaters like this car were possible due to a rule change - mechanics were not required to be in the car with the driver. In 1951, this car was discovered in Detroit in poor condition. Contact was made with Wilbur Shaw, the retired three-time “500” winner, who was then President and General Manager of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Shaw made arrangements for the car to be transported to Indianapolis for restoration.

The Driver: Ralph de Palma was unquestionably the most successful driver on American soil during the early era of the sport. Arriving with his immigrant family at age ten, the Italian-born de Palma would go on to be a consistent winner as auto racing began to take shape. He competed in ten Indy 500 races between 1911 to 1925 (including a win in 1915), and amassed an amazing 612 laps led, a record that stood until 1987.
1930 L-29 CORD PACE CAR: WADE MORTON
The Car: By the late 1920s, the Cord Corporation controlled Auburn and Duesenberg autos, Lycoming engines, Stinson aircraft, and Checker taxi cabs, but it didn’t have a namesake car. Cord rectified this in June 1929 with the introduction of the Cord L-29. It was the first front-wheel drive auto sold in America, and featured dramatically different styling for the time. Unfortunately, the stock market crash in October of that year followed by the Great Depression took its toll on sales, and production ended in 1931.

The Driver: Wade Morton competed in seventeen American championship races between 1922 and 1927, including seven Indy 500s. His relatively short career was marred somewhat by a few big crashes. Later he was a test driver for Auburn, an executive at Meteor Motors, and a sales manager for Cord.

4 - 1932 HUPP COMET SPECIAL: RUSSELL SNOWBERGER
The Car: This was the only car with a Hupmobile engine to compete in the Indianapolis 500. Russell Snowberger replaced his usual Studebaker engine for the Hupmobile motor, just for this year, and renamed the car the Hupp Comet Special. Years later this car was resurrected by Snowberger’s son John with the original Hupp engine.

The Driver: While Russell Snowberger isn’t a household name, he was an icon as a race car driver, chief mechanic, builder, designer, and owner for more than five decades. He started fifteen Indy 500 races, placing in the Top 5 twice with five straight Top 10 finishes.

43 - 1935 MILLER FORD: TED HORN
The Car: In 1935 acknowledged master race car builder Harry Miller entered into a deal with the Ford Motor Company to produce ten innovative racing cars for the Indianapolis 500. Miller created arguably the most beautiful and advanced racing car of the day, but victory wasn’t in the cards. Ford’s subsequent public humiliation at Indy kept the automaker out of racing for decades and nearly bankrupted Miller.

The Driver: As a teenager, Ted Horn was pulled over for speeding. The police officer suggested going to a racetrack to “get the speed out of his system.” Horn did get to the track, but never succeeded in getting rid for his need for speed. He started at Indy ten times between 1934 and 1948, including earning the pole in 1947. He died in a race car accident in 1948.

32 - 1940 STEVENS/SAMPSON SPECIAL: BOB SWANSON
The Car: The V-16 “twin Miller” engine for this car was originally in a car driven by Frank Lockhart in 1928 on Daytona Beach as he tried to set a new land speed record. The attempt resulted in Lockhart’s death. The engine was removed from the wrecked car and reused in 1939 in a chassis developed by Myron Stevens. The car was driven in four Indy 500 races; by Bob Swanson in 1939 and 1940, Deacon Litz in 1941, and Sam Hanks in 1946.

The Driver: Bob Swanson raced at Indy three times. In 1937 he led for 34 laps, but left after lap 52 when his car suffered mechanical failure. In 1939 he was back, but was involved in a crash that killed a fellow driver. In 1940 he placed sixth in the race, but was killed twelve days later in a crash in Ohio.

For more information, please contact Judith Goetz at jgoetz@heritagemuseums.org or Ryan Drumm at rdrumm@heritagemuseums.org.
“FIRST IN LINE” 1951 CHEVROLET PANEL TRUCK
Larry Bisceglia, an auto mechanic from California, attended the Indy 500 as a fan as far back as 1926. In 1948, he decided to be first in line to be admitted to the event by arriving several days before the race. He was surprised to find two cars already lined up at the gate. He came a little earlier in 1949, but was still beaten by one vehicle. By arriving on May 11, 1950 (19 days before the race), he finally achieved his goal. Larry became quite famous for being “First in Line,” sometimes arriving up to six weeks in advance. By 1955, he had acquired this 1951 Chevrolet panel truck, which he covered during the next few years with hundreds of racing decals. He also outfitted the back of the truck to serve as his “hotel room” with a cot and propane refrigerator. He used this truck to be first in line until 1967, when he acquired another vehicle in which to continue his streak, which lasted until 1985.

35 - 1952 FERRARI TYPE-375: JOHNNY MAURO
The Car: In 1952 there was much interest and excitement among racing enthusiasts over the entry of five Ferraris for the Indy 500, a first for Ferrari. Each car was a 1951 Grand Prix car which had been refurbished. However, luck was not on Ferrari’s side. One car crashed at another race, one driver wasn’t comfortable driving it, one driver had other cars he was entering, and Johnny Mauro driving this car wasn’t able to reach the speed needed to qualify.

The Driver: Johnny Mauro was from Denver where he and his family owned several auto dealerships. He was Denver’s only Ferrari importer for many years, and he raced for Ferrari in the 1940s and 1950s. He also raced in the 1948 Indy 500, starting in 27th place driving an Alfa Romeo, finishing eighth.

20 - 1968 STP LOTUS WEDGE: ART POLLARD
The Car: Lotus built four cars for the STP Corporation in 1968 which were radical in body design, mechanics, and engine type. The wedge-shaped autos featured the first four-wheeled cars ever raced at the Speedway. The turbine engines were built to race specifications, but other team owners complained that they were too powerful. In response, the race sanctioning body limited the air intake area to slow the turbines down and make them comparable with conventional engines.

The Driver: A native of Utah, Art Pollard competed in United States Auto Club races all over the country beginning in 1965. He started at Indy five times between 1967 and 1971. His best finish place was 8 in 1967. He was back for the 1973 race, but died in a crash on the first day of time trials.

9 - 1972 PARNELLI VPJ-1: MARIO ANDRETTI
The Car: One of the most radical cars to run at the Speedway, this car was designed by Maurice Phillipe (the same designer as the 1968 STP Lotus Wedge). Mounted on the engine cover behind the cockpit were racing’s first side-mounted dihedral wings. When the drivers of these cars complained during practice that they were difficult to drive, the dihedral wings were removed and a conventional rear wing was added for qualifying.

The Driver: Mario Andretti was one of the Indy 500’s most successful and talented drivers ever. He was equally adept at driving many different types of race cars, and won awards for them all. At the Indy 500 he drove in an amazing 29 races, with one win and two second place finishes. He set new one-lap qualifying records five times and new four-lap records on four occasions.
14 - 1977 COYOTE: A.J. FOYT
The Car: For 1977 A.J. Foyt returned to the Indy 500 in the 1975 Coyote-Foyt he had driven to third place in 1975 and second place in 1976. In practice he showed that the car was still competitive by completing unofficial laps at 196.979 mph, then 200.011 mph. This car is the backup vehicle for the winning car in 1977. Often two or three identical cars are prepared for the race in case one is damaged during qualifying or practice.

The Driver: Perhaps no driver is more closely associated with the Indianapolis 500 than A.J. Foyt. He started a record 35 consecutive Indianapolis 500s from 1958 to 1992. During this streak he won four times, one of only three drivers to have done so. In addition, he placed in the Top 10 an additional fifteen times.

1978 CHEVROLET CORVETTE PACE CAR: JIM RATHMANN
The Car: This year was the first time a Corvette was used as the pace car for the Indy 500. In addition, the race start procedure changed. Two “parade laps” were added, which often include previous winning race cars carrying special guests, followed by the pace lap, in which the cars increase their speeds to about 50 mph to allow the race cars to get warmed up. At the 1978 victory banquet winning driver Al Unser collected $290,364 in cash and prizes. Among the prizes was this pace car.

The Driver: The driver eventually known as Jim Rathmann was born Dick Rathmann. He exchanged drivers’ licenses with his older brother James to meet the age requirement for a California race. From that point, the original Dick Rathmann raced as Jim, and vice-versa. When Jim Rathmann made his debut at Indy in 1949, he was actually 20 years old, one year short of the age minimum. He went on to finish second three times, eventually winning in 1960.

1 - 1980 PENSKE PC9: RICK MEARS
The Car: In defense of his 1979 Indianapolis 500 victory, Rick Mears drove this turbocharged V8 Cosworth-powered Penske PC-9. New cars like this one with “ground effects” design had aerodynamic elements that created a downforce to hold the car on the track. This design was the wave of the future, bringing with it higher speeds and new track records.

The Driver: Rick Mears is one of three drivers have won the Indianapolis 500 four times. Working with Team Penske and equipped with state-of-the-art equipment, Mears flourished. His first year driving for Team Penske was in 1979 when he won his first 500 and then he went on to repeat performances in 1984, 1988, and 1991.

For more information, please contact
Judith Goetz at jgoetz@heritagemuseums.org or Ryan Drumm at rdrumm@heritagemuseums.org.
1 - 1984 MARCH/TEXACO STAR: TOM SNEVA
The Car: Beginning in the 1980s aerodynamic designs for Indy cars could be modeled and tested on a computer before the car was built. This car’s thin nose helped it slice through the air. The tunnels on the side of the car created a low pressure environment to pull the car down on the track surface, which allowed faster speeds. Indy cars still use this principle today. The rear wing helps hold the back of the car on the track.

The Driver: Tom Sneva’s path to becoming a race car driver was unconventional. After graduating from college, he was a middle school math teacher and principal who also sometimes drove a school bus. He eventually left this job to pursue his dreams of becoming a race car driver. He was the first to reach 200 mph in 1977, he won the pole three times, and came in second in the race three additional times, before winning in 1983.

4 - 1990 PORSCHE 90-P: TEO FABI
The Car: When Porsche unveiled this low-profile car (one of the lowest-sitting cars to ever at Indianapolis), it shocked the racing community. The original chassis was made entirely of carbon fiber, a revolutionary material which stood up to crash testing better than any of its predecessors. The idea of an all carbon-fiber car was considered a novelty and temporarily was ruled illegal. Chassis-maker March was forced to rebuild the car in a combination of carbon fiber and honeycomb aluminum.

The Driver: Italian Teo Fabi started his racing career as a downhill ski racer in his teens. In college, he studied mechanical engineering while racing motorcycles on the side. He got into car racing thanks to his younger brother when he was 21. In 1983 he won the pole at Indy and finished second in the Championship Auto Racing Teams series.

5 - 1993 LOLA/TEXACO HAVOLINE: NIGEL MANSELL
The Car: The 1992 racing season saw Ford Motor Company return to Indy for the first time in 21 years, partnering with Cosworth Racing to design and produce the Ford-Cosworth XB engine. Revolutionary in its time, the XB was a totally new V-8 engine. It was significantly smaller and lighter than its competitors, and still produced 750-800 horsepower at 14,000 rpm.

The Driver: A phenomenon known to the racing world as “Mansell Mania” descended upon Indy in 1993. Nigel Mansell had just won the 1992 Formula One world championship when he made a surprise move to Indy-car racing. Mansell made quick work of his rookie test requirements and set the fourth-quickest speed of the day at 222.855 mph, all in his first time racing on an oval track! His performance earned him Rookie of the Year at Indy.
5 - 1994 REYNARD: ARIE LUYENDYK
The Car: This needle-nosed 1994 Ford Cosworth-powered Reynard, with its distinctive downward-slanting front wings, holds the all-time qualifying record at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. In 1996, Arie Luyendyk recorded his four-lap qualifying run in this car at an average speed of 236.986 mph, with his fastest single lap being 237.498 mph.

The Driver: Among all the drivers who have raced at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway over more than a century, only Arie Luyendyk can boast of being the fastest of all with his 1996 qualifying times. On a hair-raising practice run Luyendyk also recorded the fastest unofficial lap ever clocked at the Speedway: 239.260 mph. He later remarked that he hoped he wouldn’t have to do that again anytime soon!

16 - 2005 PANOZ: DANICA PATRICK
The Car: Danica Patrick made her Indy 500 debut in 2005, becoming the fourth woman to ever compete in the race. She drove for the racing team co-owned by former Indy 500 winner Bobby Rahal and television talk show host David Letterman. The team used Panoz G Force chassis and powerful Honda V8 engines like the one seen near this car.

The Driver: Danica Patrick did not win the 2005 Indianapolis 500, but she did earn the admiration of millions of fans. She qualified for fourth position, the best-ever starting spot in the Indy 500 for a woman. She started seven consecutive 500s between 2005 and 2011, each time placing in the top ten except in 2008 due to a pit accident.

98 - 2016 NAPA - Alexander Rossi
The Car: For the historic 100th running of the Indianapolis 500, the team of Andretti Autosport and Bryan Herta Autosport entered a twin-turbocharged V-6 Honda powered Dallara. Just three weeks before the race the team had lost its sponsor. NAPA picked up the car at the last minute and was unexpectedly rewarded with a win!

The Driver: Alexander Rossi began his racing career at age ten with gokarts. By 14, he was the National and International Karting champion, and had moved on to car racing, becoming the youngest open wheel racing champion in US history. Rossi had never driven the Indy 500 before he won the race in 2016. He was named Rookie of the Year.

2016 CHEVROLET CAMARO SS PACE CAR: ROGER PENSKE
The Car: Four identical pace cars were prepared for 2016, each celebrating the “100th running of the Indianapolis 500” and included the iconic wing-and-wheel logo of the Indy 500. The first Camaro pace car was used in 1967 (the year after the model was released), and has been used nine times since then.

The Driver: Roger Penske transitioned from a race car driver to team owner in the 1960s, and never looked back. His racing team is by far the most successful entrant in the history of the Indianapolis 500 with 16 victories (the next highest team’s wins is five). Over the last 50 years, Team Penske has built a legacy of success that ranks among the best across all levels of achievement in sports.