

DAY 1 – FRIDAY, AUG. 3, 2001

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Welcome to the eighth annual Brickyard 400 and the fourth annual True Value International Race of Champions event at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. The Brickyard 400 is the 21st race of the 2001 NASCAR Winston Cup Series. This is the fourth and final round of the IROC series this year.

Notes, quotes, trivia, historical information and other items will appear on these pages through Sunday, Aug. 5. Our media center staff, headed by Indianapolis Motor Speedway Vice President of Corporate Communications and Public Relations Fred Nation and Media Center Manager Bill York, is here to assist you and answer your questions during this event. Timing and scoring monitors are located throughout the facility with up-to-the-minute times and speeds.

Brickyard 400 information is available on the World Wide Web this week on the official Indianapolis Motor Speedway site, <http://www.brickyard400.com> and the official NASCAR site, <http://www.nascar.com>. Included in the information will be practice summaries and performance histories, qualifying results, Daily Trackside Reports, driver quotes, race lineups and results.

IROC at Indy information is available on the World Wide Web this week on the official Indianapolis Motor Speedway site, <http://www.brickyard400.com/iroc> and the official True Value IROC site, <http://www.irocracing.com>.

The top four drivers in the True Value IROC point standings – Bobby Labonte, Kenny Brack, Eddie Cheever Jr. and Tony Stewart – met with the media this morning to talk about the IROC at Indy race Saturday.

Labonte leads with 44 points. Brack is second with 43, with Cheever and Stewart tied for third at 39.

TONY STEWART (About IROC victory in last round at Michigan International Speedway): “We had trouble in Daytona. This was an important win. We need a really, really good race to pull off Saturday.” (About competing in the heat, considering the death of Minnesota Vikings offensive lineman Korey Stringer this week): “I’ve trained with a football trainer before. My primary concern is hydration, but we don’t weigh 300 pounds, either. Concerned? Yes, with the humidity. But the problems are being solved without it becoming a big problem. The air conditioning is around the mouth. There’s the combo of fluids, and all that helps. It’s really not a huge concern.” (About lengthy Winston Cup schedule): “It’s probably harder on Bobby (Labonte) than me, and definitely harder on the teams than anyone else. I don’t have a wife and children. If I need to stay an extra day, I need to.”

BOBBY LABONTE (About drawing the pole driver yesterday): “At least I drew Jeff Burton. We had a fun win at Talladega. Leading by one point is better than being behind by one.” (About differences between IROC and Winston Cup cars): “You can about run these (IROC) cars wide open. It depends on the passing. The differences are in the engine, not as strong. The aerodynamics are more efficient.”

EDDIE CHEEVER JR. (About competing in the heat): “It doesn’t concern me. I don’t have a top (in Indy Racing).” (About his IROC career): “Cars with roofs were something I wasn’t used to. I wasn’t sure about these. It was totally different my first year. I just participated. My second year, I was a lot more ambitious. I got into a lot more trouble. My third year this year, I’m more confident. They have fenders; they drive differently. You can use parts of these cars that you can’t with the IRL, and I’ve tried.”

KENNY BRACK (About tomorrow’s IROC race): “With the reverse grid order, it will be tough to get to the front. There are a lot of laps to use the car. You can’t predict the race.”

A full transcript of this press conference will be available this afternoon.

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Preliminary press conference schedule, all in the Trackside Conference Room unless otherwise noted:

FRIDAY:

9:30 a.m. – IROC Top Four Drivers (Bobby Labonte, Kenny Brack, Eddie Cheever Jr., Tony Stewart)

10:30 a.m. – Joe Gibbs Racing-Action Performance-Coca-Cola Announcement

11 a.m. – Winston Welcome Luncheon, Plaza Chalet #3D

SATURDAY:

10:45 a.m. – NASCAR Winston Cup qualified drivers press conferences

1 p.m. – Pace Car driver Jay Leno

TBD – True Value IROC race winner, season champion

SUNDAY:

Following race – Second- and third-place finisher and highest-finishing rookie

Following race – Race winner

Chevrolet and comedian Jay Leno will team up once again to pace a race at the most prestigious racetrack in the world.

Leno, host of NBC's popular "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno," will be behind the wheel as the celebrity Pace Car driver of a specially modified 2001 Chevrolet Monte Carlo as he leads the field at the start of this year's Brickyard 400. He also drove the Pace Car at the 1999 Indianapolis 500.

General Motors' Special Vehicles department developed the striking "Smooth Yellow" Brickyard 400 Monte Carlo Pace Car from a 2001 model-year production car. The Pace Car is a stock Monte Carlo SS with a few modifications (e.g., increased engine cooling, air induction and horsepower, and a lowered suspension) that enable it to perform Pace Car duties in the harsh environment of professional racing.

Chevrolet has paced the Brickyard 400 every year since its inception in 1994. A Monte Carlo paced the field in 1994, followed by a C/K Pickup in 1995, a Camaro in 1996 and the Monte Carlo once again from 1997-2001.

NASCAR officials announced July 27 that modifications to the front air dam for the NASCAR Winston Cup Series 2001 Dodge Intrepid will go into effect starting at this race.

This modification will allow Intrepid teams to extend the front air dam 2 inches forward below the bumper from the current measurement. The front air dam is described as the area below the bumper. The bumper will remain in its standard position.

McDonald's has reached an agreement with PPI Motorsports to revise its current sponsorship package, as McDonald's will phase out its primary sponsorship of the PPI-owned No. 96 Ford Taurus and become an associate sponsor in 2002 of the PPI/Tide Ford.

PPI Motorsports will enter the McDonald's Ford, driven by Andy Houston, in seven remaining races in 2001 with the primary sponsorship ending after the Sept. 30 race at Kansas Speedway. One of those seven events will be the Brickyard 400 this weekend.

GEORGINA ROY (Manager of sports marketing, McDonald's): "McDonald's remains committed to supporting NASCAR. We decided to revise our sponsorship package after a thorough review of our current motorsports programs and discussions with PPI. McDonald's will continue to support motorsports as the Official Drive Thru of NASCAR and as an associate sponsor of the PPI/Tide Ford through 2002."

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Defending NASCAR Winston Cup Series champion Bobby Labonte leads the True Value IROC XXV standings with 44 points entering the last of four events in racing's all-star series. But 1999 Indianapolis 500 winner and current CART points leader Kenny Brack is second with 43. And 1998 Indianapolis 500 winner and Indy Racing Northern Light Series standout Eddie Cheever Jr. is tied with NASCAR Winston Cup star Tony Stewart for third at 39 points.

Brack and Cheever are trying to become the first open-wheel driver to win the series since Al Unser Jr. claimed the title in 1988. NASCAR stock-car drivers have dominated True Value IROC since then, logical since the drivers in the annual series compete in identically prepared stock cars.

This year's True Value IROC points race is a toss-up. With a maximum of 26 points awarded to the winner, eight of the 11 drivers in the field are eligible for the championship entering the finale. Just 12 points separate leader Bobby Labonte from seventh-place Scott Goodyear, another Indy Racing standout.

Ironically, Goodyear has a mathematical shot at winning the IROC XXV series championship even though he's not competing in the race. Goodyear will miss this round and missed round three on June 9 at Michigan Speedway after suffering a lower-back fracture in the Indianapolis 500 on May 27.

Al Unser Jr. replaced Goodyear at Michigan and finished second. Series rules dictated that Unser's points were awarded to Goodyear. Two-time Indianapolis 500 champion Unser again will drive in Goodyear's place at Indy, with all points going toward Goodyear's totals.

Indy Racing standout Al Unser Jr. could do more than deliver the title to fellow Indy Racing competitor Scott Goodyear at Indy. He also could make plenty of history.

A victory would make Unser the winningest driver in IROC history. Unser and the late Dale Earnhardt are tied with 11 career IROC victories.

Unser, Eddie Cheever Jr. and Kenny Brack also could become the first driver to win at Indy in a stock car and Indy-style car. Unser won the Indianapolis 500 in 1992 and 1994, Cheever in 1998 and Brack in 1999.

American film icon James Dean's image will be on Johnny Benson's No. 10 Valvoline Pontiac for the Brickyard 400.

The unique Dean graphic design on Benson's Valvoline NASCAR Winston Cup racer is the centerpiece of several Dean-related promotions, which includes a collectible die-cast model car from Action Performance and September's "James Dean Run" in Fairmount, Ind. Benson's Valvoline co-owned and sponsored Pontiac will appear at the Brickyard in striking red, silver and white colors, with classic Dean images on the hood and quarter-panels.

Dean, who was born in Marion, Ind., starred in 1950s classic movies "East of Eden," "Rebel Without a Cause" and "Giant." A fan of fast cars, Dean died at age 24 in September 1955 and was buried in Fairmount.

Tony Stewart this weekend will become the first driver to race in three different types of cars at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway in the facility's 92-year history.

Stewart finished sixth in the Indianapolis 500 in May in an Indy Racing car and will drive in the IROC at Indy race Saturday in an IROC stock car and in the Brickyard 400 on Sunday in a NASCAR Winston Cup Series car.

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Jeff Green is performing triple duty this weekend. He is scheduled to race in the True Value IROC at Indy on Saturday at Indianapolis Motor Speedway, the Kroger 200 NASCAR Busch Series race Saturday night at Indianapolis Raceway Park and the Brickyard 400 Sunday at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

Defending Brickyard 400 winner Bobby Labonte, 2000 NASCAR Winston Cup Champion and honorary chairman of the Cody Unser First Step Foundation, has sent some valuable racing memorabilia to be auctioned Aug. 6 at the Hyatt Tamaya Resort and Spa in the high desert north of Albuquerque, N.M.

Labonte sent an original uniform and a helmet, each autographed, from his championship season in the Winston Cup series to the Fiesta auction. Proceeds from the auction will benefit the First Step Foundation's programs to generate public awareness, medical cooperation and research for Transverse Myelitis, also know as TM.

Cody Unser, 14 and going into her freshman year of high school in Albuquerque, became paralyzed from the chest down in February 1999 when the rare condition TM attacked and disabled part of her spinal cord, leaving her in a wheelchair. Cody is the daughter of two-time Indianapolis 500 winner Al Unser Jr.

FIRST IROC PRACTICE:

At noon, the ambient temperature was 76 degrees with north winds at 8 mph and a relative humidity of 79 percent. Skies were partly sunny.

12:05 p.m. – **GREEN**.

1:45 p.m. – **YELLOW**. End of practice.

Ten of the 11 IROC competitors turned laps during the IROC at Indy practice session this afternoon: Kenny Brack, Jeff Burton, Eddie Cheever Jr., Mark Dismore, Jeff Green, Dale Jarrett, Bobby Labonte, Buddy Lazier, Ricky Rudd and Tony Stewart. The only driver not to turn a lap was Al Unser Jr.

FIRST IROC PRACTICE QUOTES:

JEFF BURTON: "This track is so unique to itself, there's no other racetrack like it. So it's hard to compare how the cars run because the tracks are so different. The cars are real loose in front of somebody else, so I think that's going to mean a lot of passing. The guy behind will make the guy in front pretty loose, so I think it'll make for an interesting race."

TONY STEWART: "The thing about this place is you've got to lift (off the throttle). At Michigan when I ran a perfect line, I could run wide open around there. And Talladega and Daytona, you can run it wide open. But this place you have to drive the car, so it makes it a little more fun here. It's just so hard to pass at this track with these cars because you've got to be on the bottom of the racetrack, and the corners aren't really long enough to work your way on the outside of a guy to get the position before you get off the corner. It makes it challenging here. By theory it makes it more fun, but it's frustrating at times because it's so hard to pass."

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FIRST IROC PRACTICE QUOTES (cont.):

DALE JARRETT: “They’re fun to race here. Right now they’re what I call extremely loose. Hopefully they’ll fix a little of that before tomorrow, but they’re fun to drive. When the car’s out front, even more than just when somebody’s behind you, the car gets the air to the front end and gets extremely loose. But they’ll work on them, they’ll make them good.”

EDDIE CHEEVER JR.: “I’m trying to get used to the track conditions. It changes a lot, and you have to chase it. You can’t modify the cars once you get them, so you have to try to modify your driving to suit it.” (About running in a pack of four cars during practice): “We’ll be spending all day in packs and groups tomorrow. It’s a lot friendlier than most IRL groups are.”

BUDDY LAZIER: “I didn’t get a lot of laps in, but that’s OK. I can do that later this afternoon. It’s always a wonderful thing to be here at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. For a guy who’s an open-wheel driver, driving stock cars is a bit of a stretch in that we’re not used to not seeing the wheels. But at the same time, we’re used to the racetrack. I think I’m the only open-wheel rookie left in IROC since Scott (Goodyear) was injured, so I have the biggest learning curve. This track is so fast flat and so critical in the corners, it’s going to be interesting. You’ve really got to drive a lot. Anybody can go real fast for a few laps. The key is to save your tires and be fast at the end without giving up too much track position. It’s all new to me, it’ll be a learning experience, and I’ll try to have a good time and maybe be successful.”

KENNY BRACK: “You depend more on the cornering abilities here because of the shape of the track. This is the most difficult track we run with these cars because of the 90-degree turns and flat surface. It’s kind of challenging. I feel pretty comfortable now, but we’ll see in the race how comfortable. You never know. Practice went OK. The track obviously changes by weather, it will be interesting to see what happens. The start will be tough, not an easy day starting from the back with the field inverted. These cars handle completely different, but I enjoy driving stock cars. I spent quite a few days testing, and I feel confident.”

MARK DISMORE: “I went from testing my IRL car yesterday to hopping in the IROC car today, and it’s a lot different. And I mean a lot different. I don’t think I could qualify for a stock-car race here, at least not yet. Driving these cars is totally unnatural for me. I’ve really had a hard time adjusting to the IROC car. I could probably get the hang of it if I had a given car and a given crew to work with each race. But to only drive these cars four or five times a year makes it very difficult to get a setup that really suits my style of driving. I’m used to the IRL car’s sensitivity, where you just barely turn the steering wheel, and the car dives into a turn. With the IROC car, you literally roll one hand over the top of the steering wheel and the car starts to nose toward the turn, but it has a tendency to slide a bit. But by the same token, you can save these cars if they start to get away from you. I’ve already had three ‘tanksappers’ that would have put my IRL car on the meat hook. I had good cars at Daytona and Talladega, but my car at Michigan wasn’t set up quite right, and I didn’t have a good race there. Hopefully, I’ll get a decent setup for tomorrow’s race.”

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FIRST IROC PRACTICE QUOTES (cont.):

DICK TRICKLE (Test driver): “Our job as drivers is to try a get the IROC cars into racing conditions. IROC is a fun series to drive because it doesn’t matter if we go 170 mph or 190 mph. We put on a good show because of the equality. We had perfect track conditions when we went out at noon. So we were trying to get the cars in what we felt would be a race setup for whatever conditions we encounter tomorrow. By 1:45 p.m. the car had loosened up a bit, and the conditions felt about like I think it will feel like tomorrow at race time. But these cars don’t loosen up as much due to the sun on the track and the heat so much as the air heats up and affects the cars. I think it must be the air getting denser and affecting the way it goes over the rear spoiler. It’s incredible, though, the way the IROC crews and drivers work to make sure that the cars have equality.”

FIRST BRICKYARD 400 PRACTICE:

Event-record lap: 49.704 seconds, 181.072 mph, Brett Bodine, Aug. 4, 2000

Fastest speed during July testing: 177.560, Jimmy Spencer, July 17

At 1:55 p.m., the ambient temperature was 84 degrees with northwest winds at 12 mph and a relative humidity of 70 percent. Skies were mostly cloudy.

1:59 p.m. – **GREEN**. #2 Rusty Wallace first on track, followed by #36 Ken Schrader and #40 Sterling Marlin.

2:20 p.m. -- #02 Ryan Newman fastest at 177.908.

2:25 p.m. – Track temperature is 115 degrees, according to Goodyear engineers.

2:59 p.m. – **RED**. End of practice. #02 Ryan Newman was fastest at 177.908 mph.

First practice quotes will be distributed on a separate sheet.

SECOND IROC PRACTICE:

At 3 p.m., the track temperature was 123 degrees, according to Goodyear engineers.

At 3:20 p.m., the ambient temperature was 83 degrees with north winds at 12 mph and a relative humidity of 72 percent. Skies were cloudy.

3:22 p.m. – **GREEN**.

4:10 p.m. – **YELLOW**. End of practice.

BRICKYARD 400 FASTEST OF THE DAY PRESS CONFERENCE QUOTE:

RYAN NEWMAN: “This was a reflection on how hard the guys worked since testing here. I know I am behind the wheel, but if you don’t have a good car and a good team, it doesn’t work. This track is four different corners. If you don’t hit it just right, it doesn’t work. You’ve got to do your homework here. I am looking forward to knocking off a good qualifying position. We are going out early, seventh, its better than Bobby (Labonte) and Jeff (Gordon) because they are going out last and second to last.”

SATURDAY’S SCHEDULE:

8 a.m. NASCAR Winston Cup practice

10:15 a.m. NASCAR Winston Cup qualifying (one lap, all positions)

2 p.m. IROC at Indy race (40 laps, 100 miles)

After IROC NASCAR Winston Cup final practice

END DAY 1 (FRIDAY) NOTES

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Qualifying for the Bud Pole for the NASCAR Winston Cup Series starts at 10:15 a.m. today. There is one-lap qualifying to determine positions 1-36.

#29 Kevin Harvick will be the first car to make a qualifying attempt for the Bud Pole today. #24 Jeff Gordon will be the last of the 54 drivers in the draw to make an attempt.

Other notable qualifying order spots:

#18 Bobby Labonte (defending event, Winston Cup champion): 53rd

#24 Jeff Gordon (two-time event champion, Winston Cup points leader): 54th

#88 Dale Jarrett (two-time event champion): 22nd

#28 Ricky Rudd (1997 event champion): 50th

Six provisional starting spots are available for positions 37-42. These positions are based on current 2001 NASCAR Winston Cup Series car owner points. The 43rd and final starting position is available to any eligible past NASCAR Winston Cup Series champion who fails to make the field through qualifying, starting with the most recent champion. If there are no eligible past champions, the 43rd spot will be filled through current 2001 NASCAR Winston Cup Series car owner points.

MORNING BRICKYARD 400 PRACTICE:

Event-record lap: 49.704 seconds, 181.072 mph, Brett Bodine, Aug. 4, 2000

Best lap, Friday: 50.588 seconds, 177.908 mph, Ryan Newman

Fastest speed during July testing: 177.560, Jimmy Spencer, July 17

At 7:55 a.m., the ambient temperature was 77 degrees with northeast winds at 9 mph and a relative humidity of 74 percent. Skies were clear. Track temperature was 84 degrees, according to Goodyear engineers.

7:58 a.m. – **GREEN**. #32 Ricky Craven first on track, followed by #40 Sterling Marlin and #2 Rusty Wallace.

8:11 a.m. – **YELLOW**. Debris on back straightaway.

8:14 a.m. – **GREEN**.

8:15 a.m. – Rookies occupy four of the top five spots, with Ryan Newman first, Casey Atwood second, Andy Houston third and Kevin Harvick fifth. Veteran Ricky Rudd was fourth.

8:20 a.m. – Every car has turned at least one lap except #71 Dave Marcis.

8:57 a.m. -- #57 David Keith lightly brushed the outside retaining wall with the right side of his car exiting Turn 4. Keith returns to pits.

8:59 a.m. – Track temperature was 94 degrees, according to Goodyear engineers.

9 a.m. – **RED**. End of practice. #9 Bill Elliott was fastest at 180.397 mph. #71 Dave Marcis was the only driver not to turn a lap.

NASCAR Winston Cup drivers Jeff Gordon and Kurt Busch celebrate their birthdays today. Gordon is 30; Busch 23.

JEFF GORDON: It's just another day, the way I look at. Things are going great in my life. I feel wonderful and happy, and that's what really matters most to me in my life, not how many days I've been alive." (People can't tease you anymore about being a young gun now): "I know it. No more kid stuff. I might actually become an adult now."

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Indy Racing League veteran Davey Hamilton was in the garage area this morning in a wheelchair, visiting with friends from the NASCAR Winston Cup Series and True Value IROC Series. Hamilton suffered severe foot and lower-leg injuries in a crash in the Casino Magic 500 Indy Racing Northern Light Series event in June at Texas Motor Speedway.

True Value IROC officials decided Friday night to withdraw the yellow Pontiac Firebird originally assigned to Jeff Burton and the gold Pontiac Firebird originally assigned to Buddy Lazier from today's IROC at Indy race.

Burton will drive the cream Firebird and Lazier the violet Firebird.

IROC test driver Andy Hillenburg scraped the outside retaining wall while driving Lazier's gold car during the final practice Friday afternoon. Burton's yellow Firebird developed mechanical problems during the final practice.

The True Value IROC team brings 17 cars to each event. Four are dedicated to preliminary testing and series' driver practice leaving 13 cars to be prepared as race cars. The four test/practice cars also can be used as race cars if necessary.

BUD POLE QUALIFYING NOTES:

- At 10:10 a.m., the ambient temperature was 77 degrees with northeast winds at 9 mph and a relative humidity of 73 percent. Skies were mostly sunny. Track temperature was 114 degrees, according to Goodyear engineers.

- #02 Ryan Newman hit the outside retaining wall with the right side of his car exiting Turn 4 on his qualifying lap. He continued to the start-finish line, posting the second-fastest lap at the time.

- #77 Robert Pressley hit the outside retaining wall with the right side of his car exiting Turn 4 on his warm-up lap and on his qualifying lap. He posted the fifth-fastest lap at the time.

- #96 Andy Houston hit the outside retaining wall with the right side of his car exiting Turn 4 on his qualifying lap. He continued to the start-finish line, posting the sixth-fastest lap at the time.

- #88 Dale Jarrett did not make a qualifying attempt in his designated qualifying spot due to changes required by NASCAR during technical inspection. He qualified five spots later.

- Jimmy Spencer earned his first career Brickyard 400 pole. His previous best starting spot was 20th in 1996.

- Casey Atwood was the highest-qualifying rookie, in third. It's the best qualifying effort by a rookie in Brickyard 400 history.

- Bill Elliott qualified second, his best effort ever at the Brickyard 400. Elliott's previous best was fourth in 1995.

- Qualifying spots of past Brickyard 400 winners: Ricky Rudd (1997), fourth; Dale Jarrett (1996, 1999), sixth; Bobby Labonte (2000), 15th; Jeff Gordon (1994, 1998), 27th.

- Jimmy Spencer edged Bill Elliott for the pole by .028 of a second, the closest margin in Brickyard 400 history. The previous closest was in 2000, when Ricky Rudd beat Darrell Waltrip by .040 of a second.

- Casey Atwood is the youngest driver to qualify for a Brickyard 400 field. He is 20. The previous youngest was Jeff Gordon at 23 in 1994.

- This is the first time in Brickyard 400 history that a one-lap record for NASCAR Winston Cup Series cars has not been set.

A Bud Pole Qualifying chronology will be provided on a separate sheet.

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BRICKYARD 400 FINAL PRACTICE:

Event-record lap: 49.704 seconds, 181.072 mph, Brett Bodine, Aug. 4, 2000

Pole lap: 50.093 seconds, 179.666 mph, Jimmy Spencer

At 3:25 p.m., the ambient temperature was 86 degrees with northeast winds at 9 mph and a relative humidity of 47 percent. Skies were mostly sunny. Track temperature was 132 degrees, according to Goodyear engineers.

3:27 p.m. – **GREEN**. #88 Ricky Rudd first on track, followed by #24 Jeff Gordon, #28 Ricky Rudd, #20 Tony Stewart and #40 Sterling Marlin.

3:45 p.m. -- #20 Stewart fastest at 170.471.

4:10 p.m. – The track temperature was 132 degrees, according to Goodyear engineers.

4:41 p.m. – **RED**. Debris.

4:48 p.m. – **GREEN**.

4:59 p.m. – **RED**. End of practice. #1 Steve Park fastest at 170.736.

BRICKYARD 400 HISTORICAL FIELD NOTES:

- The average age of the 43-driver starting field this year is 35.6 years.
- There are 22 former Brickyard 400 lap leaders in this year's field. They combined to lead 904 laps.
- The 36 Brickyard 400 veterans in this year's field have combined to make 177 previous Brickyard 400 starts.
- There are four former Brickyard 400 winners in this year's field: Jeff Gordon (1994, 1998), Dale Jarrett (1996, 1999), Ricky Rudd (1997) and Bobby Labonte (2000).
- Casey Atwood, 20, is the youngest driver in the field. Ken Schrader, 46, is the oldest driver in the field.

SUNDAY'S SCHEDULE:

1 p.m. NASCAR Winston Cup driver introductions

1:30 p.m. Start of the Brickyard 400 (160 laps/400 miles)

END DAY 2 (SATURDAY) NOTES

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ORDER OF THE DAY:

- 8 a.m. – Public gates open
- 10 a.m. – First car pushed on to track
- 11:30 a.m. – Drivers/crew chiefs meeting
- 11:40 a.m. – Rose Hulman Solar Phantom lap
- 11:50 a.m. – Parade of past Brickyard 400 Pace Cars
- Noon – Race cars in starting positions
- 12:05 p.m. – Indianapolis Police Department Motorcycle Drill Team Parade Lap
- 12:25 p.m. – Race cars move to the start-finish line along the inside wall of the racetrack
- 12:30 p.m. – Music by the Indiana State University band
- 12:35 p.m. – Remarks by Pace Car driver Jay Leno, host of NBC-TV's "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno"
- 12:50 p.m. – Driver introductions and ceremonial lap, NASCAR awards
- 1:13 p.m. – Indiana National Guard Color Guard on track
- 1:15 p.m. – "America the Beautiful," Indiana State University band
- 1:18 p.m. – Dale Earnhardt tribute
- 1:21 p.m. – Invocation by the Rev. Howard Brammer
- 1:23 p.m. – National Anthem by Straight No Chaser, fly-over by B-52 and F-16 jets
- 1:26 p.m. – Command to start engines by Mari Hulman George, Indianapolis Motor Speedway chairman of the board
- 1:27 p.m. – Parade lap
- 1:28 p.m. – Pace lap
- 1:30 p.m. – Green flag, start of the eighth annual Brickyard 400 (160 laps/400 miles)

RACE SPECIFICS:

- Buster Auton is driving the 2001 Chevrolet Monte Carlo Pace Car after the Pace Laps, on which comedian Jay Leno will drive.
- Three pace laps will precede the start of the race.
- Pit-road speed limit is 55 mph. The pit-road speed limit will be enforced from the white line before the start of the pit wall at the Turn 4 entrance of the pits to the end of the last pit box at the Turn 1 exit of the pits.
- The Pace Car speed will be 65 mph during caution periods.
- Cars must use the warm-up lane to return to the racetrack after pit stops, rejoining the racetrack in Turn 2. No passing is allowed in the warm-up lane after exiting the pits until cars rejoin the racetrack.

PRE-RACE NOTES:

- The average speed for the 36 cars that qualified based on speed is 177.092 mph.
- The best Brickyard 400 finish by a driver who also has competed in the Indianapolis 500 is fifth by Tony Stewart in 2000.
- No front-row starter ever has won the Brickyard 400. The last three winners have come from the second row, with Bobby Labonte winning from third last year, Dale Jarrett from fourth in 1999 and Jeff Gordon from third in 1998. Only two drivers who have started outside of the top 10 have won this race: 1995 winner Dale Earnhardt, who started 13th, and 1996 winner Dale Jarrett, who started 24th.

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Roger Penske, 11-time winner of the Indianapolis 500 as a car owner, will serve as the spotter for #02 Ryan Newman today. Penske owned the winning car driven by Helio Castroneves at this year's Indianapolis 500.

Former NASCAR Winston Cup Series standout Ernie Irvan is a guest today in the pit of the Thomas Beard/Nelson Bowers-owned No. 36 M&M's Pontiac driven by Ken Schrader.

RACE RUNNING:

Race distance: 160 laps.

1:33 p.m. – Command to start engines by Mari Hulman George, Indianapolis Motor Speedway chairman of the board

1:36 p.m. – The ambient temperature was 87 degrees, with east winds at 8 mph and a relative humidity of 37 percent. Skies were sunny. The track temperature was 140 degrees.

1:37 p.m. – All cars roll from starting grid.

First pace lap: #5 T. Labonte to pits for quick stop.

Lap 1: **GREEN**. Green flag waved by Chuck Conaway, chairman of the board and chief executive officer of Kmart. #26 Spencer leads into Turn 1, Elliott alongside in short chute between Turns 1 and 2, continue side by side on back straightaway. #26 Spencer leads by .204 of a second over #9 Elliott.

•The pole sitter has led the first lap of all eight Brickyard 400 races.

Lap 2: Multi-car accident exiting Turn 2. #96 Houston does half-spin exiting Turn 2, hits outside retaining wall with left side of car. #17 Kenseth does half-spin exiting Turn 2, other cars involved in contact. #77 Pressley, #17 Kenseth, #6 Martin to pits for repairs due to accident damage. #17 Kenseth to garage. Right-side tires for Martin. Martin first to exit pits.

Lap 3: **YELLOW**. #8 Earnhardt to pits, four tires. Checking brakes after Earnhardt reported soft brake pedal.

Lap 4: #6 Martin to pits for additional work on right front. #77 Pressley to pits, right tires, minor front damage.

Lap 5: #8 Earnhardt to pits for further brake inspection and chassis adjustments. Apparent brake problem on left front. #6 Martin returns to pits, repairing clearance problems with right front, left-side tire change.

Lap 6: #6 Martin, #77 Pressley, #8 Earnhardt to pits for further repairs. #6 Martin one lap down. #77 Pressley reporting that toe-in was altered during accident. Crew attempts to fix.

Medical update from Dr. Henry Bock, Speedway medical director: #96 Andy Houston was evaluated and released without injury from the Clarian Emergency Medical Center. #96 Houston out of race.

•This is the earliest caution period in Brickyard 400 history. The previous earliest caution came in 1994 and 1997, when the first caution occurred on Lap 4.

Lap 8: **GREEN**. #26 Spencer leads by .296 of a second over #9 Elliott.

Lap 9: #26 Spencer leads by .424 of a second over #9 Elliott.

Lap 10: Leaders – #26 Spencer, #9 Elliott, #19 Atwood, #28 Rudd, #02 Newman, #40 Marlin, #20 Stewart, #88 Jarrett, #32 Craven, #66 T. Bodine.

Lap 11: #31 R. Gordon has climbed to 28th after starting 42nd. #43 Andretti has climbed to 18th after starting 30th.

Lap 12: #26 Spencer leads #9 Elliott by .387 of a second.

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RACE RUNNING (cont.):

Lap 14: #26 Spencer leads #9 Elliott by .300 of a second.

Lap 17: #9 Elliott passes #26 Spencer for lead. #9 Elliott leads #26 Spencer by .235 of a second.

•#9 Bill Elliott is the first Dodge driver to lead in Brickyard 400 history.

Lap 18: #19 Atwood moves under #26 Spencer for second on back straightaway. #17 Kenseth out of race due to rear-end and front-end damage.

MATT KENSETH: “I don’t know what started the accident. It started in front of me. The 77 checked up in front of me, and I hit him a little bit. At the same time I checked up, then I got hit pretty hard, and it spun me out into the 77, and I just got wrecked. It wrecked pretty bad. It’s pretty disappointing. This is the first new car we’ve built in a long time. It was a real good car for us, probably the best car we’ve had for a while. I thought we had a real good shot of running good today.”

Lap 20: #9 Elliott leads #19 Atwood by 1.137 seconds.

Lap 21: #28 Rudd off the pace, smoke trailing from car.

ANDY HOUSTON: “I was actually trying to get inside of the 29 car, Harvick. I have to give credit to the guys on the PPI team. They did a great job with the car. It wasn’t good in happy hour, but it was strong out there (in the race). I can’t really explain it (the accident). I felt the ripple strips. The car lost traction. It felt like I could have had some help. The car was sticking too good to just jump out like that.”

Lap 22: **YELLOW**. All 41 cars in race to pits. #8 Earnhardt hit outside pit wall trying to avoid #43 Andretti on pit road. #36 Schrader smoking from left front after exit from pit stop. #36 Schrader, #55 Hamilton collided exiting pits. Left-front quarter panel damaged, rubbing against tire for #36 Schrader. Crew installing new fan belt on #28 Rudd.

#02 Newman takes lead after pit stops, followed by #29 Harvick, #40 Marlin. Right-side tires only for #02 Newman on pit stop.

Pit stop report: Four tires and gas: #9 Elliott, #26 Spencer, #20 Stewart, #88 Jarrett, #22 W. Burton, #19 Atwood, #8 Earnhardt, #24 Gordon, #18 Labonte, #50 Bickle, #10 Benson.

Pit specifics: #10 Benson left pits early due to problems with right rear, damage to nose, requiring second stop. #30 Green removed spring-rubber from right rear of car. #92 Compton took one round of wedge into the right rear.

Lap 23: #8 Earnhardt, #36 Schrader, #55 Hamilton to pits. Earnhardt in pits for one minute, 42 seconds.

Lap 24: #28 Rudd returns to race after lengthy repairs.

Lap 25: #28 Rudd penalized due to too many men over the wall on pit stop.

Lap 26: **GREEN**. #02 Newman leads on restart. #29 Harvick passes #02 Newman for lead, ahead by .099 of a second at start-finish line.

Lap 28: #28 Rudd to garage for further repairs.

Lap 31: #29 Harvick leads #40 Marlin by .0996 of a second.

•Two first-time Brickyard 400 starters -- #02 Ryan Newman and #29 Kevin Harvick – have led this race for the first time since the inaugural event in 1994.

Lap 32: #02 Newman to pits after hitting outside retaining wall in short chute between Turns 3 and 4. Damage to right rear of car. Team having trouble removing right-side tires.

Lap 33: **YELLOW**. #02 Newman returns to pits for more repairs.

Total pit time for #02 Newman on Laps 32-33: Two minutes, 25 seconds.

Pit report: Fuel only: #33 Nemechek. Right-side tires and gas: #18 Labonte, #50 Bickle, #6 Martin. Four tires and gas: #24 Gordon, #8 Earnhardt.

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RACE RUNNING (cont.):

Pit specifics: #93 Blaney changed battery due to continuing electrical problems.

Lap 36: **GREEN.** #93 Blaney showing heavy front-end damage, trailing flames on front straightaway on restart. Contact with rear of car of #21 Sadler on restart. #93 Blaney drives to garage. #88 Jarrett, #21 Sadler showing damage to rear of car.

Lap 37: **YELLOW.** #02 Newman returns to pits for more service.

Lap 38: #19 Atwood to pits for repair of minor front-end damage.

Lap 39: #19 Atwood returns to pits for continued repair of front-end damage. Car then pulls to garage to correct overheating problem caused when Atwood hit rear of #02 Newman when Newman hit outside retaining wall between Turns 3 and 4. Team reports radiator problem in garage.

Lap 41: **GREEN.** Restart order -- #29 Harvick, #40 Marlin, #20 Stewart, #26 Spencer, #9 Elliott. #29 Harvick leads #40 Marlin by .509 of a second at end of lap.

DAVE BLANEY: “They just all stacked up. I don’t know. It was a stupid move on my part. I don’t know. The battery is going dead. I’ve got us set back. I don’t know, it all backed up on the restart. We took off, everybody stopped. We were handling fine. We were coming forward a little bit. The battery was just going dead the whole time. We had the same thing yesterday. It was doing the same thing today. I don’t know, I couldn’t find it. It was handling good; it just slowly quit running.”

RICKY RUDD: “I’m not really sure. It threw a fan belt off for some reason. It’s kind of a crazy thing to have happen. The first thing that I knew was that I lost my power steering, and then I happened to look down at the water-temperature gauge, and it was off the scale at the same time. So I’m not sure what happened first; if the water pump locked up first or we lost the belt. The guys did a great job trying to get us back in there, but evidently we had damaged the cylinder heads, and they’re changing the cylinder heads right now. Probably one of the hardest hits you can take is coming to Indy and probably being one of the first cars out of the race, but hopefully they can patch it up and get us back in there to get a few points, but certainly our day is over.”

CASEY ATWOOD: “We had a great car. It looked like the 02 got into the wall. The 88 car checked up, and we got in the back of him. We thought it was just a radiator. It’s probably the most disappointed I’ve ever been. We saw our teammate get in the lead, but we didn’t get a chance to show anything.”

Lap 45: #40 Marlin tries to pass #29 Harvick for lead in Turn 1 with #20 Stewart attempt to go three-wide in Turn 1. #29 Harvick encounters loose handling between Turns 1 and 2. #40 Marlin passes #29 Harvick for lead in Turn 4.

Lap 46: #20 Stewart passes #29 Harvick for second with low pass in Turn 1.

Lap 48: #40 Marlin leads #20 Stewart by .217 of a second. Debris reported on track, no caution.

Lap 50: Leaders – #40 Marlin, #20 Stewart, #22 Burton, #29 Harvick, #26 Spencer, #9 Elliott, #88 Jarrett, #1 Park, #43 Andretti, #12 Mayfield.

Lap 52: #40 Marlin leads #20 Stewart by .332 of a second. #22 W. Burton third, 2.211 seconds behind leader.

Lap 55: #40 Marlin leads #20 Stewart by .161 of a second. #22 W. Burton third, 2.641 seconds behind leader.

Lap 56: #8 Earnhardt up to 16th after multiple pit stops early for repairs.

Lap 57: #97 Busch up to 11th after starting 34th.

Lap 58: #9 Elliott passes #29 Harvick for fourth in Turn 1.

Lap 59: #31 R. Gordon to pits, four tires and gas. Crew removed one round of wedge.

Lap 60: #29 Harvick to pits, four tires and gas, 17.12 seconds.

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RACE RUNNING (cont.):

Lap 61: #9 Elliott, #88 Jarrett, #12 Mayfield to pits. Four tires and fuel: #12 Mayfield, #88 Jarrett.

Lap 62: #2 Wallace, #22 W. Burton, #20 Stewart, #43 Andretti, #9 Elliott to pits. Four tires and fuel: #2 Wallace, #43 Andretti, #20 Stewart. Fastest stop: #9 Elliott, #20 Stewart, 16 seconds each.

Lap 63: #40 Marlin, #26 Spencer, #32 Craven to pits. #1 Park inherits lead, #97 Busch second. Four tires and gas: #40 Marlin, #26 Spencer

Lap 64: #1 Park to pits, four tires and gas. #97 Busch inherits lead, becomes third first-time Brickyard 400 starter to lead today.

Lap 65: #97 Busch to pits, four tires and fuel, 18 seconds. #8 Earnhardt inherits lead. This is the first time that Earnhardt has led the Brickyard 400 during his career.

Lap 72: #8 Earnhardt, #10 Benson to pits, #18 B. Labonte inherits lead. Four tires and gas for #8 Earnhardt, 16 seconds.

Lap 73: #18 B. Labonte, #24 Gordon to pits, #99 J. Burton inherits lead. This is the third Brickyard 400 that he has led. Labonte beats Gordon out of pits. Four tires and gas for both.

Lap 76: **YELLOW**. Debris. #99 J. Burton, #40 Marlin, #29 Harvick, #88 Jarrett, #50 Bickle, #22 W. Burton, #9 Elliott, #26 Spencer, #02 Newman, #2 Wallace, #11 B. Bodine, #12 Mayfield, #10 Benson, #30 Green, #32 Craven, #21 Sadler, #43 Andretti, #5 T. Labonte, #6 Martin to pits. Twenty-six cars on lead lap. Thirty-eight cars running.

Pit report: Four tires and gas: #9 Elliott, #26 Spencer, #40 Marlin, #99 J. Burton, #22 W. Burton, #12 Mayfield, #50 Bickle, #8 Earnhardt. Sixteen-second stops for #9 Elliott, #26 Spencer, #40 Marlin, #8 Earnhardt, #12 Mayfield. Nineteen-second stop for #22 W. Burton.

#20 Stewart takes lead. He did not stop. #1 Park second, #8 Earnhardt third.

Lap 78: #43 Andretti to pits, gas and adjustment

Lap 79: #93 Blaney returns to race after lengthy repairs.

Lap 80 (Halfway): **GREEN**. Restart order -- #20 Stewart, #1 Park, #8 Earnhardt, #01 Leffler, #24 Gordon. #1 Park passes #20 Stewart, behind #15 Waltrip, for lead between Turns 3 and 4. #28 Rudd returns to race after lengthy repairs.

Running order at halfway: #1 Park, #20 Stewart, #8 Earnhardt, #24 Gordon, #29 Harvick, #18 B. Labonte, #01 Leffler, #99 J. Burton, #88 Jarrett, #30 Green.

Lap 81: #8 Earnhardt passes #20 Stewart for second.

Lap 82: #1 Park leads #8 Earnhardt by .597 of a second.

Lap 83: #1 Park leads #8 Earnhardt by 1.242 seconds.

Lap 86: #1 Park leads #8 Earnhardt by .836 of a second.

Lap 87: #1 Park leads #8 Earnhardt by 1.764 seconds, as Earnhardt behind lapped car of #92 Compton.

Lap 88: Flames reported from bottom of #44 Jones. Team reports engine running rich.

Lap 89: #29 Harvick passes #24 Gordon for fourth. #1 Park leads #8 Earnhardt by 1.839 seconds.

Lap 92: #20 Stewart passes #8 Earnhardt for second in Turn 1, but Earnhardt rallies to regain second in Turn 2. #24 Gordon, #29 Harvick touch sides in battle for fourth on back straightaway.

Lap 93: #88 Jarrett passes #29 Harvick for fourth in Turn 1.

Lap 94: #31 R. Gordon touches wall with outside of car exiting Turn 2. #20 Stewart passes #8 Earnhardt on front straightaway for second. #1 Park leads #20 Stewart by 4.227 seconds.

Lap 95: #8 Earnhardt passes #20 Stewart for second with outside move on front straightaway as Stewart moved low to try to break Earnhardt's draft.

Lap 96: #1 Park leads #8 Earnhardt by 4.543 seconds.

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RACE RUNNING (cont.):

Lap 98: #1 Park leads #8 Earnhardt by 4.414 seconds. Twenty-seven cars on lead lap. Forty cars running.

Lap 99: #1 Park leads #8 Earnhardt by 4.636 seconds.

Lap 100: Leaders -- #1 Park, #8 Earnhardt, #20 Stewart, #24 Gordon, #88 Jarrett, #29 Harvick, #18 B. Labonte, #40 Marlin, #97 Busch, #22 W. Burton.

•At Lap 100, there were 11 different leaders today. Six of those 11 drivers have led the Brickyard 400 for the first time in their careers: #29 Harvick, #8 Earnhardt, #02 Newman, #20 Stewart, #1 Park, #97 Busch.

Lap 104: #1 Park leads #8 Earnhardt by 4.991 seconds.

Lap 105: #1 Park, #20 Stewart to pits. #8 Earnhardt inherits lead. Four tires and gas for #1 Park, #20 Stewart. Park's stop: 17 seconds. Stewart's stop: 18 seconds. Track-bar adjustment for #1 Park.

Lap 106: #8 Earnhardt leads #24 Gordon by 2.339 seconds. #88 Jarrett third, 2.804 seconds behind leader.

Lap 107: #01 Leffler to pits, slow entry to pits as car ran out of gas exiting Turn 4.

Lap 108: #02 Newman to pits.

Lap 109: #8 Earnhardt to pits, four tires and gas, 22 seconds. #24 Gordon inherits lead.

•#24 Jeff Gordon has led a record seven Brickyard 400 events. The only year in which he didn't lead at least one lap was 2000. He led a record 277 laps combined in the first seven Brickyard 400 events.

Lap 110: #29 Harvick, #15 Waltrip to pits. Four tires, gas for #29 Harvick, 14.41 seconds.

Lap 111: #24 Gordon leads #88 Jarrett by .408 of a second.

Lap 112: #88 Jarrett to pits, four tires and gas, 15.78 seconds. #9 Elliott to pits, four tires and gas, 17 seconds. #26 Spencer to pits, four tires and gas, 16 seconds. #24 Gordon leads second-place #18 Labonte by 4.169 seconds.

Lap 113: #24 Gordon, #22 W. Burton to pits. #18 B. Labonte inherits lead. #18 B. Labonte leads #40 Marlin by 1.054 seconds. #97 Busch third. Four tires and gas for #22 W. Burton, 17 seconds. Four tires and gas for #24 Gordon, 16 seconds.

Lap 115: #18 B. Labonte leads #40 Marlin by .444 of a second. #43 Andretti up to fifth.

Lap 116: #18 B. Labonte leads .080 of a second.

Lap 117: #40 Marlin passes #18 B. Labonte for lead with outside move entering Turn 1, as shadows cover Turn 1. #43 Andretti, #12 Mayfield to pits, four tires and gas. #18 B. Labonte to pits, weaving car upon entrance to pits, apparently out of gas. Four tires, gas, 24 seconds as team must spray liquid into engine to help keep engine fired.

Lap 118: #97 Busch, #40 Marlin, #2 Wallace, #99 J. Burton to pits. #1 Park inherits lead. Air-pressure adjustment for #2 Wallace. Four tires and gas for #40 Marlin, 15.94 seconds. Four tires and gas for #99 J. Burton, 17 seconds.

Lap 122: #1 Park leads #20 Stewart by 4.851 seconds.

Lap 125: #1 Park leads #20 Stewart by 4.870 seconds. #8 Earnhardt third, 6.702 seconds behind leader.

Lap 126: #1 Park leads #20 Stewart by 4.707 seconds. Twenty-two cars on lead lap.

Lap 127: #1 Park leads #20 Stewart by 4.222 seconds.

Lap 128: #1 Park leads #20 Stewart by 3.726 seconds.

Lap 132: **YELLOW**. Debris.

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RACE RUNNING (cont.):

Lap 132: #1 Park, #88 Jarrett, #2 Wallace, #97 Busch, #8 Earnhardt, #20 Stewart, #22 W. Burton, #29 Harvick, #24 Gordon, #9 Elliott, #26 Spencer, #32 Craven, #18 B. Labonte, #99 J. Burton to pits. #40 Marlin stayed on track, inherits lead.

Pit stop report: Right-side tires, gas and one round of wedge to the right rear only for #24 Gordon, who exited pits first after 11-second stop. Four tires and gas: #20 Stewart (15 seconds), #1 Park (15 seconds), #88 Jarrett (15.17 seconds), #26 Spencer (16 seconds), #22 W. Burton (17 seconds), #9 Elliott (17 seconds), #8 Earnhardt (16 seconds).

#25 Nadeau assessed a one-lap penalty by NASCAR for making pit stop outside of his pit box.

Lap 136: **GREEN**. Restart order – #40 Marlin, #24 Gordon, #32 Craven, #10 Benson, #2 Wallace, #97 Busch, #20 Stewart, #1 Park, #88 Jarrett, #8 Earnhardt. #24 Gordon passes #40 Marlin for lead in Turn 1.

Lap 137: #20 Stewart brushes outside wall with right side of car exiting Turn 2 battling #88 Jarrett for seventh.

Lap 138: #25 Nadeau hit outside retaining wall in Turn 3. Car did quarter-spin, hitting wall with rear of car. #25 Nadeau climbs from car without assistance. #24 Gordon leads #40 Marlin by .359 of a second. #32 Craven third, .623 of a second behind leader.

Lap 139: **YELLOW**.

Lap 140: Leaders – #24 Gordon, #40 Marlin, #32 Craven, #10 Benson, #2 Wallace, #97 Busch, #88 Jarrett, #1 Park, #8 Earnhardt, #22 W. Burton.

Lap 143: **GREEN**. Restart order -- #24 Gordon, #40 Marlin, #32 Craven, #10 Benson, #2 Wallace, #97 Busch, #88 Jarrett, #1 Park, #8 Earnhardt, #22 W. Burton. Lapped car of #66 T. Bodine slots in between #24 Gordon and #40 Marlin. #24 Gordon leads #40 Marlin by .769 of a second at end of lap.

Medical update from Dr. Henry Bock, Speedway medical director: #25 Jerry Nadeau has been evaluated and released without injury from the Clarian Emergency Medical Center.

Lap 145: #24 Gordon leads #40 Marlin by .822 of a second. #40 Marlin passes lapped car of #66 T. Bodine.

Lap 146: #24 Gordon leads #40 Marlin by .731 of a second.

Lap 147: #24 Gordon leads #40 Marlin by .714 of a second.

Lap 148: #24 Gordon leads #40 Marlin by .669 of a second. #32 Craven third, 1.247 seconds behind leader.

Lap 149: #24 Gordon leads #40 Marlin by .786 of a second.

Lap 150: #24 Gordon leads #40 Marlin by .679 of a second. Leaders -- #24 Gordon, #40 Marlin, #32 Craven, #10 Benson, #2 Wallace, #97 Busch, #22 W. Burton, #1 Park, #8 Earnhardt, #9 Elliott.

Lap 151: #24 Gordon leads #40 Marlin by .775 of a second.

Lap 152: #24 Gordon leads #40 Marlin by .713 of a second.

Lap 153: #24 Gordon leads #40 Marlin by .701 of a second.

Lap 154: #24 Gordon leads #40 Marlin by .697 of a second.

Lap 155: #24 Gordon leads #40 Marlin by .735 of a second.

Lap 157: #24 Gordon leads #40 Marlin by .748 of a second.

Lap 158: #24 Gordon leads #40 Marlin by 1.028 seconds.

Lap 159: #24 Gordon leads #40 Marlin by .995 of a second.

Lap 160: **CHECKERED**. #24 Jeff Gordon wins the 2001 Brickyard 400 by .943 of a second over #40 Sterling Marlin. It is his third career Brickyard 400 victory, a record.

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DAY 3 – SUNDAY, AUG. 5, 2001 (RACE DAY)

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VICTORY LANE/PIT ROAD QUOTES:

ROBBIE LOOMIS (Crew chief, #24 Gordon): “Yeah, it’s really special. We started so bad today. The guys just worked, worked, worked. You get in a situation starting a race as bad as we did today, it’s really great to be here. I want to thank the good Lord because I was praying a lot down here today. This team is the greatest race team, and so is that driver.”

JEFF GORDON (Winner): “I think I got a few new gray hairs after today. Wow, what an incredible day. I never dreamed it. At the beginning, we were way off. I think it was more being in traffic rather than being way off. We had one caution fall our way early, and whether we took two or gas-and-go at the end, and we took two, and it was perfect.” (Who made that call on the last pit stop?): “Robbie makes all the calls. He talks with me. He talks with the guys. We make it together. We were between no tires and two tires. I thought we needed two. We needed it. I just want to thank God. This has been such an amazing week for me. This is a great way to celebrate my birthday. It’s just been a phenomenal day. This has been amazing. It feels unbelievable. To have all of these people still here cheering us on, I got choked up. I love Indianapolis, I love the state of Indiana. They have been so good to me. I want to say hi to all of those folks in Pittsboro (Ind., Gordon’s former home in Indiana).” (About significance of winning three Brickyard 400s): “You’re right, I don’t race for statistics. I race to win. If we win, the statistics will come after that. Three Brickyard 400’s. Whoa!” (About race): “It was our day. At the beginning, we didn’t have a very good car. I know I was worrying the heck out of my crew chief because I was complaining an awful lot. On the final pit stop, we took just two tires. The car was just on rails after that. These are the greatest fans in the world. I love racing here at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. I hope you guys enjoyed this show. It was great from where I was sitting.” (About final restart): “My car was really good on restarts. I made a few moves earlier in the day. I knocked the grill in because I was right on him (Marlin, on final restart). He blocked me on the inside, and I wasn’t sure if I was going to make it, but I said hey, these are the moves you have to make to win the Brickyard 400.”

STERLING MARLIN (Second place, about last restart): “I don’t know. The last restart I missed a gear. He (Gordon) just took off. Our cars have had trouble loading up on restart. We’re working hard. We’ll just have to work hard to get it fixed.”

JOHNNY BENSON (Third place): “It was a handful all day. We made changes I didn’t think was possible during stops.”

KURT BUSCH (Fifth place, highest-finishing rookie): “It’s a wonderful treat. Just to have the whole day go well. It is a treat to drive here at Indy. This is wonderful.”

BRICKYARD 400 QUICK NOTES:

- Jeff Gordon started 27th, the lowest starting position of any Brickyard 400 winner. The previous record was 24th by Dale Jarrett in 1996.

- Jeff Gordon became the first three-time Brickyard 400 winner in the eighth running of the race. Louis Meyer became the first three-time winner of the Indianapolis in 1936, the 24th running of the Indianapolis 500.

- Kurt Busch was the highest-finishing rookie, in fifth. Both Busch and winner Jeff Gordon celebrated birthdays Saturday. Gordon turned 30; Busch 23.

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BRICKYARD 400 HISTORICAL NOTES:

- Jeff Gordon became the first three-time Brickyard 400 winner in just the eighth running of the race. Louis Meyer became the first three-time winner of the Indianapolis 500 in 1936, the 24th running of The Greatest Spectacle in Racing.

- Jeff Gordon became the first three-time Brickyard 400 winner in just his eighth start in the race. Louis Meyer earned his third Indianapolis 500 victory in 1936 in his 10th race at Indy – nine as a starter and one as a relief driver in 1927. A.J. Foyt earned his third Indianapolis 500 victory in 1967, also in his 10th Indianapolis event, all as a starter.

- Jeff Gordon led 29 laps today to extend his Brickyard 400 record for laps led to 306. Gordon also is the only driver to lead in seven Brickyard 400s. Five drivers are tied for second on that list by leading in four Brickyard 400s.

- Jeff Gordon won his third Brickyard 400 title at age 30. The next youngest winner is 2000 champion Bobby Labonte, who scored his only triumph at age 36. The oldest winner was Dale Earnhardt, who prevailed in 1995 at age 44.

- Bobby Labonte and Bill Elliott now are tied for the most career laps at the Brickyard 400, completing 1,279 out of a possible 1,280 laps since 1994. Ken Schrader is third on that list at 1,278 laps, as he finished one lap behind Labonte and Elliott today.

- There were seven caution flags today, the second-highest total in Brickyard 400 history. The record is nine in 1998. There were 28 caution-period laps today, the second-highest total in Brickyard 400 history. The record is 34 in 1998.

- There were 12 different lap leaders in today's race, one short of the Brickyard 400 record set in 1994 and 1996.

- Jeff Gordon's average winning speed of 130.790 mph was the second slowest in Brickyard 400 history. The slowest was 126.770 in 1998, won by Gordon.

- Tony Stewart became the only driver to lead the Indianapolis 500 and the Brickyard 400 in the same year. Stewart led three laps today the No. 20 Home Depot Pontiac, and he led 13 laps in May before finishing sixth in the Indianapolis 500.

- Ryan Newman led three laps today in the No. 02 ALLTEL Ford owned by Roger Penske, who also owns the car driven to victory by Helio Castroneves in the 2001 Indianapolis 500. It is the second time that Penske-owned cars have the Indianapolis 500 and Brickyard 400 in the same year. In 1994, Al Unser Jr. won the Indianapolis 500 in a Penske-owned car, and Rusty Wallace led four laps before finishing second in a Penske-owned car.

- Team owner Chip Ganassi also had his cars lead in both the Indianapolis 500 and the Brickyard 400 this year. Tony Stewart led for 13 laps in a Ganassi-owned car in the Indianapolis 500, and Sterling Marlin led for 25 laps in the Ganassi-owned No. 40 Coors Light Dodge today.

END DAY 3 (SUNDAY) NOTES

BRICKYARD 400 CHAMPION PRESS CONFERENCE
JEFF GORDON, ROBBIE LOOMIS, RICK HENDRICK
Aug. 5, 2001

RON GREEN: As we wait for Jeff, we'll go ahead and get some opening comments from Robbie and Rick. Rick, let's start with you Jeff's third Brickyard 400 win. Give us some comments, please.

RICK HENDRICK: You know, it's just as special as the first one, I mean, you know, every time I walk in this place. I told the guys outside today, I've seen people kiss those bricks all my life, you know, and never dreamed I'd get to come to the race, let alone have a car in the race and then ever win a race here. So it's real special. I missed the one in '99. I was sick, and it was neat to be here today and watch the team work like they did and things unveil like they did because we sure weren't looking like we were going to have too good a day there early on.

GREEN: Robbie, after qualifying yesterday, a lot of people didn't pick you guys as the favorite. But you came back and you did it. Just your comments.

ROBBIE LOOMIS: Just total effort. You know, Brian Whitesell, he's been through a lot of things, you know, with this team. And, you know, he deserves a lot, a lot of the credit because he's been through the championships. He's won three with this team. He's really the rock or the stable one. You know, we qualified bad, and I was like, 'Oh, man, I can't believe this.' And then we came in. You know, we put our heads together. We had a practice, and about the last half hour of practice, Jeff said, 'We're starting to get this thing.' He said, 'We're starting to come around.' And then this morning, Brian Whitesell and I came in, and when we sat down and talked about the car, we were 100 percent on the same page with the stuff that we thought the car needed so we'd have a lot of adjustment built into it. After about 10 laps in that race, we were looking for razor blades because it didn't look too good. But I tell you, you know, we just kept working on it all day long, and Jeff's feedback, you know, Jeff is better than a computer with telling you what the car needs and how you need it. So if you can take it in and respond to it, then he'll keep pointing you in the right direction, and he got it back in Victory Lane then.

GREEN: The last yellow, what were your comments or words to Jeff before you went green, either of you?

HENDRICK: I talked early on in the race when we were struggling and the car was -- you know, it was kind of loose and it was tight and, you know, Rudd had had a problem. And I told Jeff, you know, a lot of guys in front of him were tore up, and we were going to have a good day. And, you know, I knew -- well, I didn't -- two tires at Indianapolis, I'd bet the farm on it, but I just was hoping the thing wasn't going to break. That was what was going through my mind at the end.

GREEN: Well, joining us now in the WorldComplex press conference room is the winner of the 2001 Brickyard 400, Jeff Gordon. Jeff, we already have comments from Robbie and Rick. Your initial comments on winning your third Brickyard 400.

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JEFF GORDON: It's still sinking in. I'm still in shock. You know, we started the race with a lot of doubt in my mind. That's for sure. It was amazing back there, you know, where we were at, just how much air was moving around, and the car was buffeting, and I couldn't get the thing to do anything I wanted it to do. And I thought we were in serious trouble at that point. We made some adjustments, made the car better, but still was not a threat, I didn't even think for a top 10 at the time. But, you know, we kept our chins up. We worked hard on it, and there was one time that I said to Robbie, I said, "You know, we keep making these adjustments, but I think we need to just get out there in clean air." And then about that time, the caution, you know, fell just after we came in the pit. And that's when the race really changed for us. That's when we became a Top Five car and really what put us into a position to make that two-tire stop which was a great, great call, and, you know, win the race.

GREEN: We'll start questions with Bruce.

QUESTION: Jeff, when you won here in '94, I asked you if you knew who Ray Harroun was. Now that you're a three-time winner, how much do you know about Louis Meyer?

GORDON: Well, you knew I knew Ray Harroun, but Mr. Meyer I'm not familiar with. But I would imagine he won three races here. That's great. I tell you it's -- it's just a great feeling to win here at Indianapolis. I love this place. It's a dream come true for me to compete here, and I thought it would be in an open-wheel car, but there's nothing sweeter to me than doing it in a stock car.

QUESTION: Hey, Jeff, what was that sorry excuse for a burnout you tried there?

GORDON: That was sad, wasn't it? Oh, I'm embarrassed. Them young guys like Kevin Harvick can do this. Us old guys, we just can't do that anymore. So I don't know what happened. That thing wouldn't even spin the tires, but I got a little bit of rubber down on those bricks. I figured that was probably the first time anybody had ever done that, but that it was a pretty sad excuse for a burnout.

QUESTION: Jeff, going into a race of this consequence, do you sort of plot a route, a plan, or do you just get in and race the other guys?

GORDON: I wish you could make plans and do those types of things. I mean yeah, we try to, you know, sit down and talk about, you know, planning of what kind of adjustments we can make to the car and if cautions fall at certain times if we can, you know, maybe do two-tire stops or whatever. But once they drop the green flag, that's all out the window. You really have no idea what's going to happen, especially when they dropped the green today and we were going backward instead of forward, that certainly had our attention. And we knew right then the track position wasn't quite as important at that time. We need to first get the car handling a little bit better. Then once we got the car a little bit better, then we started, you know, thinking about track position. And there was times when Robbie was needing to calm me down because I was getting fired up. And then there was times when I was trying to, you know -- I knew the way I was coming across on the radio that, you know, he was thinking major, major adjustments, you know. And it finally got to the point where I was like, you know, I think that the car's not as bad as we think. Let's not waste too much time on a pit stop trying to make it better. Let's now start to try to get some track position. And once we got in clean air, that car actually drove pretty good.

QUESTION: It's generally agreed this place is hard to pass. Yet, there were point 19 lead changes. Did something happen?

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GORDON: Well, I think it is very difficult to pass here, but if you are the lead car, you're getting all that air on your nose of the car. And if the car can get up behind you, it can really get you loose here. And so I can see how there can be lead changes that can happen, but you didn't see much passing going on back behind there, I bet.

QUESTION: Jeff, on a late restart there when Marlin was in first place and you were in second there, you guys took off, and you went to the outside, and he blocked you, and you went to the inside, and he blocked you. What was going through your mind at that point?

GORDON: Well, it was pretty interesting because we had been pretty good on restarts. So, you know, I thought I'd give it a try there. You know, we had the right gear and good horsepower for those restarts, and the motor was running real clean on the restarts. But I knew that with the two tires that I had and he was pretty good earlier in clean air, that I needed to either get by him on the first lap or the first couple of corners. And I thought, well, I'll try something here, you know, on this restart. And he was kind of playing with me, and I was kind of playing with him. And I hung back, and he slowed way down. And when I got up on him, typically what happens is you kind of come up on him before you ever take the green and gun the gas. They'll kind of slow down and wait for you to tap them. As soon as they feel you tap them, they take off. Well, as soon as I tapped him, I laid on the gas, and I picked his rear wheels up off the ground and busted my grill in. But I knew I couldn't lift because I knew he was going to take off. And so I was really pushing him when we first got going there, and he got away from me. And when I went into third gear, it was like, man, my car just went into a different time zone. It just took off. It looked like his third gear maybe wasn't matched up as good as mine. His momentum slowed down, and I saw him crowding me to the inside. So I tried to fake outside and bring him back up the racetrack so that I could shoot through his mirror and maybe get inside of him. And I got there, I got just to his corner. And he kept pushing me down. There was a lot of debris and Speedy-Dry and all that stuff down there, and I didn't want to go through that, but I knew, you know, I had the momentum and I had to try to make it work.

QUESTION: Jeff, A, could you describe the last restart when you just broke clean away from him when you were in the lead? He said his car just wouldn't go on restarts, and if you could describe what happened there; and B, do you think the sort of uniform tire with people slipping and sliding around had more to do with a little more scrambling this year than there was last year?

GORDON: My car was real good, like I said, on restarts. So once I got out in front of them, I thought we were going to be pretty good. And Todd Bodine helped me out a little bit there, too. That Yates power and that thing kind of helped him get a good start. So my biggest concern on that restart was just getting by Todd. I wasn't sure if he had fresh tires or what the deal was, but I just wanted to get by him. And, you know, I got a real good start. It looked like Sterling really didn't get a very good start, and you know, I got around Todd and just kind of watched my mirror to see if he was going to affect, you know, my car at all. We started pulling away, and then Sterling got by him and actually closed in a little bit. And that's when I started getting a little concerned. My car was real good. I knew if he got close to me, he'd start pushing. But I started getting a little bit loose there those last few laps. So I was just trying to be real, real smooth. What was the second part?

QUESTION: Whether the tires had anything to do with more scrambling this year than last year.

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GORDON: Oh, yeah, I tell you the tires, I mean you could put new tires on, and they'd last about a half a lap. You know, you really -- the car went away in a big way right away with these tires. But I don't know. To me, I think that, you know, that having a tire like that brings handling more into play, and I think that it will make it a little bit better race out of it. You know, I think if you've got a lot of grip in the tires, you're just going to have a bigger aero push. So I can't imagine the aero push being any worse than it was today. It was pretty bad, but that's just the characteristics of this racetrack as flat and fast as it is.

GREEN: David?

QUESTION: Considering everything that's happened to you between the ages of 20 and 30 --

GORDON: Including Lifelines and Phone-a-Friends?

QUESTION: Yeah, yeah, yeah, that's funny stuff, Jeff. (Laughter).

GORDON: You're never going to live it down.

QUESTION: I know. I'm a dead man. Can you think far enough ahead to think about if you have done as much as you have between 20 and 30, what is it going to be like to be sitting there and be 40 years old with all the stuff that you're likely to do between now and then?

GORDON: You know, I try not to think too far ahead. I think I've always been like that where I kind of live in the moment. You know, I try to be smart about the way I live and the things that I do and, you know, try to enjoy as much of the life that I've been given, the opportunities, the wonderful things that have happened to me in my life, try to enjoy them, you know, every chance I get because we don't get a lot of time in this deal. But, you know, it's been such a flash. I mean it's gone by so fast. I have to really stop myself and go, wow, you know, they -- I have done some things that have been absolutely incredible that I just -- you know, I'm just sitting here going, you know, I never dreamed, never imagined that I'd be in this type of position. So, you know, I give a lot of thanks to God for that, and I give a lot of thanks to people like Rick and Robbie and this team because I can't do it on my own. But over the next 10 years, you know, I'm just trying to get through age 30 right now, and I think people after yesterday were thinking that 30 was wearing on me. But I think after today, I'm hoping that 30 means that I'm coming into my prime. But, you know, if the next 10 are as good as these last 10 have been, I'm not going to know what to think, you know. But also in our business, just getting to 40 means something, too, you know. That's why I think sometimes you've got to live in the moment. You've got to enjoy life to its fullest. And I have no regrets. I've been very blessed and have enjoyed it very, very much. So no matter what happens, I'll always say that I've had a wonderful life.

GREEN: Right here with Bob.

QUESTION: Jeff, two things: What do you remember about your very first exposure to this place as a kid, whether it was in person or on television; and secondly, do you get a different feeling coming back here hearing all the cheers that you may not hear in other places? Does this feel like home when you race here?

GORDON: It certainly did after the race was over today. There was about however many, a hundred thousand people that were standing up cheering. And it's not too often you can hear the cheers over the engine when you're idling around this place. I got a chance to take my helmet off there on that last pace lap, and I could hear the cheers and that's -- that gets to you. That will get the emotions going. My first, I mean, obviously, I saw on TV races here, and I mean everybody in the type of racing I was doing, quarter midget racing, you know, it was always like Indy 500, Indy 500, you know. And so I just got embedded into my head some day I want to race in the Indy 500, you know. And so that was just something -- we've got footage of me being 8 years old doing a little interview and me saying, 'Yeah, I want to race in the Indy 500 some day.' So, you know, it was just something, you know, that meant a lot to me. It's special, and we came here I think in 1980 or '81 and got -- we didn't go to the 500 the first year, but came through the museum and took the bus tour, and it was the day after the 500, and, you know, I just, you know, thought it was the greatest thing ever to see where the cars actually ran that I watched on TV and where A.J. Foyt was pitting and Rick Mears and Al Unser and all that stuff. So that was -- you know, that was my first experience.

QUESTION: Jeff, were you near any of the incidents on the track today, that first one perhaps?

GORDON: Uh-huh.

QUESTION: And what did you get for your birthday?

GORDON: All too close, unfortunately. Fortunately, I made it through though. I saw -- I had Jeff Burton on the outside of me, and he and I were kind of battling for position right there at the beginning. And I was trying to not to hit him because I was sliding up into him a little bit. I had a car right on my bumper, and then I saw smoke up ahead of me, and I saw Robert Pressley go sideways. And in those kind of situations, especially that early -- and I was in a wreck here last year in the first couple of laps, and I didn't want to see my day ended that early -- I was afraid more of getting slowed down and having somebody run in the back of me. So I went through the grass a little bit coming off of turn two. And fortunately, nobody came across, and I was able to make it through there, you know, pretty good. And I was right behind Mark Martin. I think he got into it. So that was a real shame. For my birthday, I've gotten -- I tell you, I've been celebrating my birthday for a week and a half. My wonderful wife back there, she really knows how to make me feel special. And it comes through quality of time. It comes through gifts. It comes through a lot of things. But as far as material things, she got -- I'm a huge video-game nut. And we've got an arcade at our house, and she got me this game that is just -- it is the absolute coolest, baddest game that they make in the world. And it's actually a Ferrari game, and you're driving a Ferrari 355. So until Chevrolet comes out with a video game, I've got to go with the Ferrari. But it's so cool. And I was on that thing for about six hours the first day. And my team got me a new RC car. They know how I'm kind of into that these days. So I don't have many toys. Those are kind of my toys, and they hit it right on the nail, Brooke with that video game and the guys with that -- but it's been a great week. We were up in New York taping the Millionaire show. We out to dinner and went to a play, and then, you know, got here, and the guys had cake for me and gifts from Rick and everybody, and it's -- No, and I was not too disappointed. I was a little disappointed, but I wasn't too disappointed I qualified 27th yesterday because I was having a great birthday, no matter what.

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QUESTION: Robbie, when you came over to work with Jeff, you said one of the big reasons was you felt like a basketball coach getting to coach Michael Jordan. And then things didn't exactly go the way you planned last year until toward the midpoint of the year. How much redemption do you feel -- and if Jeff could answer the same question -- now that you're having the season you're having and you win this race?

LOOMIS: Just, you know, like I've said in the past, I'm just very, very thankful for this opportunity to be with this team, and the tools that Mr. Hendrick gives us is unbelievable. I mean you walk through our engine shop, you walk through our R & D department, if you come up with an idea you want to test, they'll go test it somewhere. And I mean we have so much information to draw from. It's just a matter of getting the right stuff in the car, you know, and that's what was so aggravating come Saturday was we knew we had the stuff it took, but it wasn't in the car. And so, you know, that -- I try to be thankful every day for the opportunity that I have. And like you've said, up to this point, you know, I've had a great life. I enjoyed all my years of the past with the Pettys, you know, all my years up here in the past. And today is really, really special to win here with Jeff.

QUESTION: And if Jeff can answer the same question.

GORDON: Well, the neat thing about Robbie is it goes beyond just winning races. You know, he's somebody that thinks a lot of the people that he works with, and, you know, it was a big decision for him to step away from a great organization and surrounded by great people at Petty. And, you know, I worked him over pretty hard. I've become a pretty good salesman, Rick will tell you, over the last couple of years. But I worked him pretty hard to get him there, you know, and I just, I felt something, saw something in Robbie that felt like it was just a great quality in his personality as much as his talents, and I wanted him to be a part of this team and could be a leader with our team to show that to the other guys on this team of what it takes to work together. But this is great redemption as far as I'm concerned because I said a lot of things to him to get him there, and then we had such a bad year last year, in my mind. Michael was off last year, and, you know, to be able to come back and be strong like this, it makes me feel really happy to be able to give back to a guy like that that made such a big commitment and decision to come over.

GREEN: We have two more questions on this side, and then we'll head back to the other side of the room.

QUESTION: For Rick, I talked with you at Daytona about Jeff was being written off in a lot of surveys and national preseason magazines, if you will, and it seemed to stoke your fire a little bit. Could you reflect back on Daytona and how Jeff rolled into the season with not a lot of people thinking that he could get back at the top?

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HENDRICK: Well, you know, last year, I don't think Jeff takes near the credit he deserves. I mean to finish finished in the top 10 and win three or four races, that's a -- that would be a great year for a lot of these guys out here. And we went through a tough time, and I remember the first race, that Robbie had people coming up to him saying, 'You're going to ruin -- you're ruining Jeff Gordon's career.' And I put my arm around him at that race, and I said, 'Look, you know, I get most of that hate mail. So, you know, don't feel bad about it. We've just got to keep digging.' But through all the down times, Jeff stepped up, and he became the leader, and he would -- you know, when we'd break and I'd walk up to him and say, 'Hey, I'm sorry, Buddy,' and you know, he'd say: 'What are you sorry for? You didn't break it.' And I think he assumed a role and tried to comfort everybody on the team, and we all made a statement in Charlotte: "We're going to win together or lose together, but we're going to be together. And we went to Daytona. We worked hard the offseason. But you could see the team coming together the second half of the year. I mean we had great momentum. But just everybody was having fun, and, you know, again, everybody knows that's seen Jeff Gordon drive a race car that writing him off was a mistake. Now, maybe he made a mistake by staying with me, but it wasn't anything to do with his talent. So he really redeemed Robbie and I both. And, you know, the team's having fun. I mean they're really enjoying it. And, you know, they don't -- they know they can win any day, and we just have to give them the good stuff and work hard. And, you know, I just -- I'm real proud for Robbie because not a lot of guys were brave enough to step into those shoes and know that it's kind of hard to be any more successful than that team was before we got there. To match it would have been awesome. To be better would have been, you know, almost undoable. So, you know, he takes a lot of credit. I mean they just -- they're an awesome package in Brian. I mean the three of them just -- and the whole -- everybody in the team has input, and I think sometimes you're not as bad as people think you are, and sometimes you're not as good as they think you are. And I think I could see the fire in Jeff's eyes the second half, and he never said anything, but I think he was going to let his talking happen on the track, and he did a pretty good job of it.

GORDON: I tell you, that is something there too. Nobody wanted this job. I mean you would think, you know, to go work for Hendrick Motorsports and be a crew chief of a team that's had as much success, it's like if you look at the positive side of it, there's a lot of positive things, but then you look at the negative side, and there's probably more -- were more negatives from a crew chief's standpoint looking into it saying, 'Well, I can't stack up to that. I can't win that many races. We can't win that many championships.' You know, there's a lot of things that can -- the media and the fans could just tear you apart if you didn't live up to that. And that's what makes me so proud of Robbie is that he saw through that, and, you know, he saw the resources. He saw that this is an opportunity for him to not only shine, but to be a part of something special. And that goes a long way. I mean this guy, one thing he's taught me is about loyalty. And I think that this guy is a very loyal person. He was at Petty, and that was a very tough decision for him to make but -- you know, and he went through a lot of abuse last year from a lot of different angles, and that's what makes me so proud to be able to see him go to Victory Lane at Indianapolis, things that he came here for. This is the moment that he was looking for, and, you know, it's a great feeling to be a part of that.

QUESTION: Jeff, can you talk a little bit about your impressions of the Dodges today in terms of how they ran collectively in different situations you were in with them this week versus previous weeks?

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GORDON: I saw a difference. I definitely did. When I was back there in that traffic, there was -- I had -- the 01 car drove by me on the outside twice off of Turn 2, and I was like, man, you know, that just doesn't happen. And so I saw a difference. You know, I still believe, though, that you've got to be in the right position. You've got to have the right pit stops. You've got to have the whole package. You know, just pushing the front end out 2 inches, that's not just going to all of a sudden make them all just lap the field. You know, it's giving the edge that they need. I think they're going to start winning. I really do. They're going to start figuring it out, and it's going to make a difference. But, you know, just like Sterling there at the end, I mean he had about 14, 15 laps more on his tires, and had that thing had to go too many more laps, I mean he -- I was getting loose, and he was hanging right with me, and he would close every once in awhile. So I saw a difference. I think they were definitely an improvement.

QUESTION: The last three years, the winner of this race has gone on to win the championship, and you extended your lead today. Feeling pretty good?

GORDON: Well, yesterday I was saying that's just a coincidence. Today I'm saying, yeah, absolutely, you know. It still is a coincidence. We've got a lot of racing left to go. I think that what this did to us and for us, not only within our team, but in the sport, I think it just said, you know, hey, these guys are not going to give up until that checkered flag is flying. They're going to rise to the occasion when the opportunity comes to them. And, you know, we're fighters, and we're going to fight till the end, and we're having a good year too. I think it shows that we're having things go our way. We certainly did today. We've got a very strong team, and it's funny how, you know, last week we led so many laps but we didn't lead the right ones, and this weekend, we didn't lead hardly any laps, but we led the ones that counted most. And you know, I think those are just true signs of a great team. And I think it takes a great team to win here at Indianapolis, and that maybe is an indication of why some guys in the past few years have gone on to win the championship.

QUESTION: Rick, I asked Jeff about him being 30 years old, and, you know, Kevin Harvick said last week that he doesn't get tired. And I asked him how old he was, and he said 25. And I said wait 15 years, but...

GORDON: They're been trying to wear him out.

QUESTION: Can you talk about the progression you've seen in him since you saw him about wreck that car in Atlanta that day and from there and how far he's come and how much left there is to go there? I mean what's the upside for Jeff Gordon after he's won so much so soon?

HENDRICK: Well, I think I've said this a million times. He amazes me every time I see him in the car. And I think -- I said this the other day, thank the good Lord I don't have to race against him. And when he started, he had this raw unbelievable talent and brain beyond, you know, anything I've seen. A lot of the style like Tim Richmond, but Jeff matured so quick, I mean, and started coming along, and I think he and Brooke, it's really an amazing story off the track to see the level of commitment they have to each other and to charities and not afraid to talk about their faith. And all the time, I think he didn't have to be a leader of the team. Ray kind of led the team, and he was always telling Jeff, you know, do this, come here. Last year, Jeff stepped up and became involved in the chassis and talking to them on the radio what he thought the car would need, and I saw him mature to another level, I mean way beyond last year, a 30-year-old. I mean like I've got -- I've seen some 50-year-olds out here that are not as mature as he's been. But just the sense of being able to dedicate the time to the team, to the sponsors, just -- and I said this the other day. He's got the whole package, and you'd think it would flatten out and level off, and it hasn't. It just keeps getting better. I mean he just keeps stepping it up every time I think -- and some of you folks probably think I'm wetting your leg a little bit, but that's the way it is. And you know what he can do with a car. You've seen him do it. You saw it, I mean, at Michigan on the outside, out of control or, you know, loose at 200 miles an hour, and that guy that just won't give it up when the chips are down. But, you know, it's just hard to have that the leadership ability, the personality with the sponsors, the do good for the community and all that. And I just see his skills at being a smart racer. And, you know, experience, if you do it and you've been there and you've done it and you've done it and you've done it, I think Dale Earnhardt had everything in the world. Jeff told me one of the funniest stories I've heard about Earnhardt down in Daytona when they was down there driving, you know, like an IROC car, and he and Schrader were beside each other, and Earnhardt was behind him, and he looked over, and they were racing each other hard, and Dale come up on the inside, looked over at him grinning with his hand on the roll bar. You know, it's just you've got to have done that a long time to feel comfortable in doing some of the moves and, you know, your gut tells you take two tires and so forth. And I mean the good news for our team is just going to the tracks more and more every day, he and Robbie and Brian work together more and more, and he gets more experience in the car, and he's still got all that talent. You know, I look -- you know, we just -- we just need to stay on our plan and keep our group together, and, you know, I think -- I don't know how high "up" would be, but I think the Michael Jordan is a good analogy. And, you know, I'm looking forward to a lot more years.

GREEN: We've got a request for four more questions. I'm going to take Chris and then end up over here with the three over here.

QUESTION: Robbie, the fact that the second-place car which could not catch him was a Ray Evernham car make the victory any sweeter?

GORDON: It wasn't a Ray Evernham.

QUESTION: Well, the Dodge, and he was overseeing the Dodge operations?

LOOMIS: No, not really. You know, every week I say when we go out there and run on the racetrack, the biggest thing I look at is who's number one and how fast they ran and what it's going to take us to get there. All that other stuff in between is not really important to us. It's a matter of taking the stuff that we've got in the truck and seeing what it takes to be number one. So it didn't matter who was second to me.

QUESTION: Not at all.

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GREEN: Over here with Rich?

QUESTION: Jeff, could you talk about the prestige of being a multiwinner here? I mean nobody talks about three-time winners at Michigan and Pocono. And then Rick, after that, could you talk about, you know, you having three wins, and are you kind of the Penske of the stock-car world?

GORDON: Yeah, you're right. You know, it tells you how prestigious an event is when they start really highlighting a two-time or three-time winner of something, you know, just like the Daytona 500. I think Richard Petty what, won there seven times or -- you know, so the big events, the Daytona 500, you know, the Southern 500s, and the Brickyard are obviously very important races, and I think especially with this race being young to our community and to the NASCAR fans, it's something that is extremely prestigious just to be a part of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway and to, you know, come here and race here. So, you know, I never thought I'd win once, one Winston Cup race, let alone, I don't know, '55 or '6 now and never dreamed I'd win one Brickyard race. So it's pretty, you know, overwhelming to me, really.

GREEN: Our final two questions.

QUESTION: Robbie, other than the track position which you obviously would have gained, was there any other factor that gave you the confidence to make the call that you made on the pit stop?

LOOMIS: One big factor: Jeff Gordon. I mean, you know, he gives you so much confidence, and really we talked about, I wanted to gas only after, you know, last week I made the four-tire call there and we got way behind, and like he said, probably should have won that race, but, you know, we come back and finished eighth. This week I knew we were trapped, and I was like we've got to do gas only, and he was wanting four tires. So we split it in the middle. We put two on. (Laughter)

GREEN: I apologize. Rich had a follow-up for Rick.

HENDRICK: OK. You know, it's been really neat to win this race. I mean like I said, I said it earlier, you know, never dreamed I'd get to come here as a spectator and then to win a race and win it three times, the inaugural race. We've got that car in a museum. And to walk out here, every time I walk out through that valley of people, I get chill bumps. So have been very fortunate. We got 101 win this year. And, you know, that's an awesome feeling in this sport to within 100 times. And I used to be, when the young guys on pit road -- I guess that means now I'm one of the oldest guys on pit road. But we've got a great organization, been together a long time with Randy Dorton and Eddie and Kent House. We've raced since the GTP cars and, you know, Penske is -- you know, I probably owe as much as Roger's worth. So I mean, you know, I don't really put myself in his category. But he does a classy job in the CART series and the Cup series, and, you know, it's just I feel very fortunate to have been in something that I love and been able to enjoy the fruits of everybody working hard, you know.

GREEN: The last question.

QUESTION: This is for Robbie and Jeff. Two things, was this your most challenging victory that you had to go through during the day in your time together; and second of all, how has your relationship developed between the two to where you were able to overcome such obstacles as today?

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LOOMIS: You know, probably when you lay down tonight and think about it, it was the most challenging today. But, you know, when I laid down after Las Vegas, that was just like this race today. I mean we were way off the car. We qualified bad. We had to work on it and work on it, and it worked out, played a little different. We put two tires on earlier in the race and got us up there. But, you know, really the first race I remember kind of being a real team effort. You know, I was listening to the tire guys' input anything. Anybody on the team that had something to say, we were listening to them, making adjustments on the car. It was probably the Richmond night race last year, and I think that race right there showed us if we keep working together, we keep communicating, like I said earlier, you know, before Jeff got in here, I would rather take him than a Pi system computer to help set the car up because his feedback is going to get you in the right direction.

GREEN: Jeff, your comments?

GORDON: I tell you, I was feeling some pretty frustrated moments out there, you know, very helpless I guess more than anything when you're out there and they drop the green and you know you don't have what it takes, you know, at that moment. And that's when you have to just calm yourself, you know, and that was tougher than anything to do and just say, you know what, this is a long race. I saw some other guys having trouble brushing the wall or, you know, motor trouble, whatever. And I said it's going to be a long day. A lot is going to happen. I told myself that a couple times in the car: A lot of things are going to go on before this thing's over. So don't get too frustrated. The first half I think was very challenging, and, you know, there was a lot of maybe doubt or whatever. But we never lost sight of how hard we were going to have to work to get it better, and even if that meant that we got a 15th-place finish, it's just, hey, get the best finish you can possibly get. And like I said, you know, there are times when you've got to lean on one another. He's got to say some things to me to calm me down, you know, and I've got to say some things to comfort him in the way the car maybe doesn't look as good out there as it actually could be. But that second half of the race was totally different. It's like it was like there was two different races out there for us. The second half of the race, once we started getting some track position, actually, the car was driving good. You know, I was pretty comfortable with it. We were, you know, able to keep some cars that had led earlier behind us. And I said, 'All right, man. Now we've got something here. You know, we've got a shot at this thing.' Now, it's so funny how you are. You go from, man, 'd love to just get in the top 15 to hey, man, we've got a top-five car here, maybe even a chance to win this thing if the cautions fall right or the pit stops work out right. And that's the way it is.

GREEN: Rick, Robbie, Jeff, congratulations.

GORDON: Thank you, appreciate it.

END TRANSCRIPT

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**** A complete transcript of the post-race press conferences (first, second, third and highest rookie) will be available later today. Also, driver quotes will be provided by each of the four manufacturer reps after the race.**

JEFF GORDON (Winner, #24 DuPont Automotive Chevrolet): “I think I got a few new gray hairs after today. Wow, what an incredible day. I never dreamed it. At the beginning, we were way off. I think it was more being in traffic rather than being way off. We had one caution fall our way early, and whether we took two or gas-and-go at the end, and we took two, and it was perfect.” (Who made that call on the last pit stop?): “Robbie makes all the calls. He talks with me. He talks with the guys. We make it together. We were between no tires and two tires. I thought we needed two. We needed it. I just want to thank God. This has been such an amazing week for me. This is a great way to celebrate my birthday. It’s just been a phenomenal day. This has been amazing. It feels unbelievable. To have all of these people still here cheering us on, I got choked up. I love Indianapolis, I love the state of Indiana. They have been so good to me. I want to say hi to all of those folks in Pittsboro (Ind., Gordon’s former home in Indiana).” (About significance of winning three Brickyard 400s): “You’re right, I don’t race for statistics. I race to win. If we win, the statistics will come after that. Three Brickyard 400’s. Whoa! It’s just amazing being a one-time winner of this event. I dreamed as a kid to be like A.J Foyt, Rick Mears, Bobby Unser and Al Unser. To be able to come here and compete is a thrill. I never dreamed it would be in a stock car, and I certainly never thought I would win the main event three times.” (About race): “It was our day. At the beginning, we didn’t have a very good car. I know I was worrying the heck out of my crew chief because I was complaining an awful lot. On the final pit stop, we took just two tires. The car was just on rails after that. These are the greatest fans in the world. I love racing here at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. I hope you guys enjoyed this show. It was great from where I was sitting.” (About final restart): “My car was really good on restarts. I made a few moves earlier in the day. I knocked the grill in because I was right on him (Marlin, on final restart). He blocked me on the inside, and I wasn’t sure if I was going to make it, but I said hey, these are the moves you have to make to win the Brickyard 400. That was pretty key. I wanted to get by him quick. As good as he was all the way to the finish, I don’t know if I could have passed him if I had stayed behind him. I got an amazing restart, and we had great power with the Hendrick engine, got up underneath him, and from there on we were set. I got a little loose the last few laps, and Sterling just hung right there. If I’d have made a mistake, he would have had me.”

JOHNNY BENSON (Third place, #10 Valvoline Pontiac): “It was a long day. I didn’t think we would ever make it back to the front. We went from one extreme to the next. We made some major changes to the car that made it awesome at the end. This shows how dedicated our team is.” (About James Dean on his car): “It was pretty cool being that James Dean was from Fairmont, Ind. The James Dean movie is awesome, and you can see it on TNT. Valvoline set this deal up, and it has been really neat representing an Indiana hero.”

RUSTY WALLACE (Fourth place, #2 Miller Lite Ford): “I knew we could get up to the front from where we qualified, I just didn’t know if it would actually happen. This was a great run for us. I had the car dialed in and at one point got past the 10 and 18. Then the caution flag flew, and we fell back just a bit. I don’t know if anyone else passed as many cars as I did. I’m not quite sure where everyone else finished, but I should have gained a lot of points. To come through the field the way I did kind of makes me feel like I won the race.”

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STERLING MARLIN (Second place, #40 Coors Light Dodge): “We’ve been close all year. That last yellow, we took a gamble by not pitting, and it worked out for us. Our car was pretty good. It was real good in clean air, but it had a push in traffic, and it wasn’t very good on new tires. We’ve had a good car all year. We just gambled at the end, and it paid off for us.” (About the last restart): “I don’t know. The last restart I missed a gear. He (Gordon) just took off. Our cars have had trouble loading up on restart. We’re working hard. We’ll just have to work hard to get it fixed.”

RYAN NEWMAN (#02 ALLTEL Ford): “We had a great weekend all together, great practice, great qualifying. I think we had a really great race car at the start of the race. I had a slight bit of help from Jimmy (Spencer). I can’t blame it all on him. We slightly touched and it sent me up to the wall. I just told the guys this is probably going to happen again next year, so let’s stay in, get some laps, get some experience.”

RICKY CRAVEN (#32 Tide Ford): “At the end, we gambled on two tires. I used up everything I had and bounced up the wall. I could’ve laid back and gotten a top five, but I really wanted to win this for Tide. We battled back and got a top 10. I feel good about that.”

JIMMY SPENCER (#26 Kmart Ford): “My tires just pulled away from me. The car pushed all day. The longer we ran, the more our tires would slide. I was pretty happy to be on the pole, but we would rather have a win.”

JOHN ANDRETTI (#43 Honey Nut Cheerios Dodge): “We had to pit with several other guys and lost track position. And track position matters. We got back where we started. It’s hard to pass anywhere. It’s hard to pass at Indy. The competition is just so tough. At Daytona or Talladega, you can go two-wide, but even there it’s tough to pass. We’ve made improvements, which is important. It was banging on all eight (cylinders) and had all the fenders on it at the end.”

WARD BURTON (#22 Caterpillar Dodge): “We’re real excited about the run. The last four weeks the Caterpillar guys have worked real hard. We just haven’t had any luck. Now we have something to show for it.”

BOBBY LABONTE (#18 Interstate Batteries Pontiac): “The car was pushing and loose all day. I just couldn’t get a hold of the racetrack. Track position was everything. It just meant so much, like it always does.”

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STEVE PARK (#1 Pennzoil Chevrolet): “Just a little disappointed. The Pennzoil Chevrolet ran great all day long today. Seems like when I would have such a big lead there is always a debris cautions, and for some reason the leader of the race never sees it. It is just disappointing. Track position is everything. My hat is off to Jeff Gordon and his team. They made the right call. They came into the pits. I think they took two tires and installed them and got him out first. Track position was key all day today. So the last pit stop got us a little behind, and like I said with only 20 laps to go and a bunch of cautions there was just not enough time to work our way back up front.” (About two vs. four tires): “No, we don’t second-guess after the race. It is easy to stand here now and look and say this is what we should have done. But, you know, we win races as a team, and we lose races as a team. We led a bunch of laps, and I feel like we are back in the top 10. We did what we need to do. It’s gut-wrenching. What can I say? To be able to dominate the race and be able to do as well as we did in the last 30 laps is hard. You work all day to try to win and give it away at the end. Fortunately, I’m young, and I’ll be able to race more of these races in the years to come.”

BILL ELLIOTT (#9 Dodge Dealers/UAW Dodge): “We had a pretty good car today. The problem is that some of those guys got out of sync on their pit stops and got track position on me. We got shuffled back and had to fight our way back up through that mess. I wasn’t great today. I wasn’t bad. We had a decent car. There wasn’t a huge difference with the rules change. It wasn’t that much easier to pass. We’ve come a long way in the past few weeks, and that’s what we’ve got to keep working on.”

END POST-RACE QUOTES