

1981 Championship Results

Indianapolis, IN 500 Mile Race - May 24, 1981

Track Type: Paved Oval
Race Distance: 500 miles
Promoter: Indianapolis Motor Speedway

Lap Distance:
Margin of Victory: 5.220 sec

Ave Qual Speed: 191.340 mph Total Purse: \$1,594,917

FP	#	SP	Driver	Car Name	Chassis	Eng	Laps	Time/Speed	Pts
1	3	1	Bobby Unser	Norton Spirit	PC-9B/81	CoswTC	200	3:35:41.78	139.084
2	40	32	Mario Andretti	STP Oil Treatment	Wildcat	CoswTC	200	3:35:47	139.028
3	33	18	Vern Schuppan	Red Roof Inns	McLaren	CoswTC	199	Flagged	
4	32	12	Kevin Cogan	O'Connell Racing	Phoenix	CoswTC	197	Flagged	
5	50	15	Geoff Brabham	Psachie/Garza	PC-9/80	CoswTC	197	Flagged	
6	81	23	Sheldon Kinsler	Sergio Valente Longhorn	LR-1	CoswTC	195	Flagged	
7	16	16	Tony, Jr Bettenhausen	Provimi Veal	McLaren	CoswTC	195	Flagged	
8	53	17	Steve Krisloff	Psachie/Garza	PC-7/79	CoswTC	194	Flagged	
9	20	17	Gordon Johncock	STP Oil Treatment	Wildcat	CoswTC	194	Engine	
10	4	28	Dennis Firestone	Rhodes Aircraft Sales	Wildcat	CoswTC	193	Engine	
11	7	7	Bill Alsup	AB Dick	PC-9/80	CoswTC	193	Flagged	
12	74	25	Michael Chandler	Hodgdon	PC-7/79	CoswTC	192	Flagged	
13	14	3	A.J. Foyt	Valvoline-Gilmore	Coyote	CoswTC	191	Flagged	
14	84	33	Tim Richmond	UNO/WTTV	Parnelli	CoswTC	191	Flagged	
15	38	31	Jerry Karl	Tonco Trailer	McL/Karl74	Chevy	189	Engine	
16	37	29	Scott Brayton	Forsythe Industries	PC-6/78	CoswTC	173	Flagged	
17	88	9	Al Unser	Valvoline Longhorn	LR-2	CoswTC	166	Flagged	
18	31	19	Larry Dickson	Machinist Union	PC-7/79	CoswTC	165	Piston	
19	35	13	Bob Lazier	Montgomery Ward	PC-7/79	CoswTC	154	Engine	
20	56	14	Tom Bigelow	Genesee Beer	PC-7/79	Chevy	152	Engine	
21	90	27	Bill Whittington	Kraco Car Stereo	March	CoswTC	146	Stalled	
22	60	8	Gordon Smiley	Intermedics	Wildcat	CoswTC	141	Wrecked NW	
23	55	6	Josele Garza	Psachie/Garza/Esso	PC-9/80	CoswTC	138	Wrecked NE	
24	79	24	Pete Halsmer	Hubler/KISS99	PC-7/79	CoswTC	123	Wrecked NE	
25	12	20	Tom Sneva	Blue Poly	March	CoswTC	96	Clutch	
26	8	11	Gary Bettenhausen	Hopkins	Lightning	CoswTC	69	Brkn connecting rod	
27	25	21	Danny Ongais	Interscope Racing	Interscope	CoswTC	64	Wrecked NE	
28	5	10	Pancho Carter	Goodyear/Alex Foods	PC-7/79	CoswTC	63	Lost compression	
29	51	30	Tom Klausler	IDS Ideas	Schkee	ChevTC	60	Gearbox	
30	6	22	Rick Mears	Gould Charge	PC-9B/81	CoswTC	58	Pit fire	
31	91	26	Don Whittington	Whittington Bros.	March	CoswTC	32	Wrecked	
32	1	5	Johnny Rutherford	Pennzoil	Chaparral	CoswTC	25	Broken fuel pump	
33	48	2	Mike Mosley	Pepsi Challenger	Eagle 81	Chevy	16	Radiator	

Lap Leaders

Bobby Unser	89	1-21,26-32,59,92-95,113-118,141,149-178,182-200
Johnny Rutherford	3	22-24
Tom Sneva	25	25,33-56
Rick Mears	1	57
Gordon Smiley	1	58
Danny Ongais	4	60-63
Gordon Johncock	52	64-91,96,105-112,119-122,133-140,179-181
Mario Andretti	12	97-98,123-125,142-148
Josele Garza	13	99-104,126-132

Non-Qualifiers

40	Wally Dallenbach	STP Oil Treatment	Wildcat	CoswTC	Qual for Andretti
84	George Snider	Valvoline-Gilmore	Parnelli	CoswTC	Car sold to Richmond
17	Jerry Sneva	Escort Radar Detector	Vollstedt	OffyTC	Disqualified
28	Herm Johnson	Menard Cashway Lumber	Lightning	Chevy	DNQ, too slow
29	Bill Engelhart	Beaudoin Racing	McLaren	CoswTC	DNQ, too slow
70	Dennis Firestone	Rhodes Racing	PC-6/78	CoswTC	DNQ, too slow
64	Steve Chassey	Jet Engineering	Eagle 81	Chevy	DNQ, too slow
99	Larry Cannon	Kraco Car Stereo	PC-7/79	CoswTC	DNQ, too slow
43	Tom Bagley	Armstrong Mold	Lola	CoswTC	DNQ, too slow
21	Tim Richmond	UNO	PC-7/79	CoswTC	DNQ, too slow
94	Bill Whittington	Road Atlanta	March	CoswTC	DNQ, too slow
2	Tom Sneva	Bignotti-Cotter	Phonx-Mrch	CoswTC	Did not qualify
15	Bill Tempero	Xamboni Electronic	McLaren	Chevy	Wrecked qualifying
15	Bill Tempero	Zamboni Electric	McLaren	Chevy	Did not qualify
17	Patrick Bedard	Escort Radar Detector	Vollstedt	OffyTC	Did not qualify
18	Johnny Parsons	Hopkins Racing	Lightning	ChevTC	Did not qualify
22	Dick Simon	Vermont-American	Watson	OffyTC	Did not qualify
23	Jim McElreath	McElreath Racing	PC-6/78	CoswTC	Sold car
23	Spike Gehlhausen	McElreath Racing	PC-6/78	CoswTC	Did not qualify
24	Joe Saldana	Leader Card	Watson	OffyTC	Did not qualify
26	Jim McElreath	McElreath Racing	Eagle	OffyTC	Did not qualify
33	Vern Schuppan	Red Roof Inns	McLaren	CoswTC	Did not qualify
34	Spike Gehlhausen	Wysard Motors	Eagle	CoswTC	Wrecked practice
42	Billy Vukovich	Rattlesnake Racing	Watson	OffyTC	Did not qualify
44	Greg Leffler	Armstrong Mold	Lola 79	CoswTC	Did not qualify
45	Harry McDonald	Armstrong Mold	Lola	CoswTC	Did not qualify
46	Rich Vogler	Armstrong Mold	Wildcat	DGS	Did not qualify
47	Phil Caliva	CHC/Intersec	McLaren	Chevy	Wrecked practice
49	Chip Mead	Ohio Racing Associates	Eagle	CoswTC	Did not qualify
52	Larry Rice	Rassey Engines	McLaren	Rassey	Did not qualify
57	John Martin	Metro Building	McLaren	OffyTC	Did not qualify

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58	Bobby Jones	Medlin	Eagle		Did not qualify
63	Ken Hamilton	The Idaho	Riley	Chevy	Did not qualify
65	Jerry Miller	Luxury Racers	King	Chevy	Did not qualify
66	Roger Rager	Seymour Enterprises	Wildcat	Chevy	Did not qualify
67	Phil Threshie	Mergard's 20th Century	McLaren	CoswTC	Did not qualify
69	Joe Saldana	Great American/Michael	Lightning	CoswTC	Did not qualify
71	Bob Frey	Spirit of Colorado	Eagle 73	OffyTC	Did not qualify
71	Bob Harkey	Roman Wheels	Antares		Did not qualify
74	Jerry Sneva	Team California	McLaren	CoswTC	Did not qualify
78	Steve Kinsler	Stanton Racing	PC-6/78	CoswTC	Wrecked practice
86	Jim Buick	Buick Racing Team	Eagle 74	Chevy	Did not qualify
89	Phil Krueger	Joe Hunt Magneto	Eagle	Chevy	Wrecked practice
92	John Mahler	Duke Racing	PC-6/78	OffyTC	Did not qualify
93	Frank Weiss	PWS Racing	Eagle	OffyTC	Did not qualify
93	John Mahler	Duke Racing	Eagle 74	OffyTC	Did not qualify
95	Dick Ferguson	Kraco Car Stereo	Wildcat	DGS	Did not qualify
96	Bob Harkey	Kraco Car Stereo	Wildcat	DGS	Did not qualify
98	Roger Mears	Agajanian	PC-7/79	CoswTC	Did not qualify
99	Larry Cannon	Kraco Car Stereo	PC-7/79	CoswTC	Did not qualify

Pole Position: Bobby Unser

Pole Speed: 200.546 mph

Data Source: Carl Hungness Indpls Yearbook

Race Notes

- 1) Fastest race lap: Lap 159, Johncock, 198.937.
- 2) Official results listed Mario Andretti as winner; Bobby Unser was penalized 1 lap for improper blending after making a pitstop under yellow. Appeal panel, by a 2-1 vote, returned victory to Unser.
- 3) Yellow flags: 26, Rutherford tow-in; 33, Don Whittington hit backstretch wall; 58, Mears car on fire during pitstop; 64, Ongais wrecked NE turn; 123, Halsmer wrecked NE turn; 138, Garza wrecked NE turn; 141, Smiley wrecked NW turn. Yellow flags totalled 1 hr, 42 min, 8 sec