

THE DAY AT INDY **Saturday**

ROOKIES—Geoff Brabham (Newport Beach) and Josela Garza (Mexico) passed rookie tests.

FASTEST—Pancho Carter (Brownsburg, Ind.), Lightning-Cosworth, 181.125 m.p.h.; Garza, Penske-Cosworth, 180.9; Brabham, Penske-Cosworth, 179.9.

1981 Indy 500: Sat 5-2-81 Top Practice
Speeds

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THE DAY AT INDY

Sunday

FASTEST—Al Unser (Albuquerque, N.M.), Longhorn-Cosworth, 190.395; Bill Alsup (Woodstock, Vt.), Penske-Cosworth; Bob Lazier (Colorado Springs), 185.912; Geoff Brabham (Newport Beach), Penske-Cosworth, 183.973; Joseie Garza (Mexico), Penske-Cosworth, 182.371.

ROOKES—Lazier passed driver's test and is eligible for qualifying Saturday.

1981 Indy 500: Sun 5-3-81 Top Practice
Speeds

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Speedway's Top 10

Pos.	Car No.	Driver	Speed
1	No. 3	Bobby Unser	197.715
2	No. 6	Rick Mears	195.993
3	No. 88	Al Unser	192.967
4	No. 1	Johnny Rutherford	192.431
5	No. 7	Bill Alsup	191.163
6	No. 20	Gordon Johncock	189.953
7	No. 5	Pancho Carter	187.897
8	No. 35	Bob Lazier	187.110
9	No. 2	Tom Sneva	185.912
10	No. 91	Don Whittington	185.758

1981 Indy 500: Mon 5-4-81 Top Practice
Speeds

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Apr 26, 2026

Speedway's Top 10

Pos.	Car No.	Driver	Speed
1	No. 3	Bobby Unser	197.715
2	No. 6	Rick Mears	195.993
3	No. 88	Al Unser	192.967
4	No. 1	Johnny Rutherford	192.431
5	No. 7	Bill Alsup	191.163
6	No. 20	Gordon Johncock	189.953
7	No. 5	Pancho Carter	187.897
8	No. 35	Bob Lazier	187.110
9	No. 2	Tom Sneva	185.912
10	No. 91	Don Whittington	185.758

1981 Indy 500: Tue 5-5-81 Top Practice
Speeds

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Auto Racing

THE DAY AT INDY Wednesday

FASTEST—Mario Andretti (Nazareth, Pa.), Wildcat-Cosworth, 194.3 m.p.h.; Bobby Unser (Albuquerque, N.M.), Penske-Cosworth, 193.715; Gordon Johncock (Hastings, Mich.), Wildcat-Cosworth, 193.423; Rick Mears (Bakersfield), Penske-Cosworth, 192.266; Johnny Rutherford (Fort Worth), Chaparral-Cosworth, 191.652; Al Unser (Albuquerque, N.M.), Longhorn-Cosworth, 189.633; Danny Ongais (Costa Mesa), Interscope-Cosworth, 188.560; A.J. Foyt (Houston), Coyote-Cosworth, 184.237.

ROOKIES—Tom Klausler completed first half of driver's test. Steve Kinser (Bloomington, Ind.) became the 28th rookie to be assigned a car.

Speedway Top 10

1 — Bobby Unser	197.715
Norton Spirit PC-9B/Cosworth No. 3	
2 — Rick Mears	195.993
Gould Charge PC-9B/Cosworth No. 6	
3 — Mario Andretti	194.300
STP Oil Treatment Wildcat VIII/Cosworth No. 40	
4 — Gordon Johncock	193.423
STP Oil Treatment Wildcat VIII/Cosworth No. 20	
5 — Al Unser	192.967
Longhorn/Cosworth No. 88	
6 — Johnny Rutherford	192.431
Pennzoil Chaparral/Cosworth No. 1	
7 — Bill Alsup	191.163
ABDick PC-9B/Cosworth No. 7	
8 — Gordon Smiley	188.521
STP Oil Treatment Wildcat VIII/Cosworth No. 60	
9 — Danny Ongais	188.506
Interscope Interscope/Cosworth No. 25	
10 — Pancho Carter	187.897
Alex Foods PC-7/Cosworth No. 5	
Includes electric-eye timed laps only.	

1981 Indy 500: Wed 5-6-81 Top Practice
Speeds Combined

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Apr 26, 2026

DAY AT INDY

Thursday

FASTEST—Mario Andretti (Nazareth, Pa.), Wildcat-Cosworth, 195.143 m.p.h.; Gordon Johncock (Coldwater, Mich.), Wildcat-Cosworth, 194.847; Bobby Unser (Albuquerque, N.M.), Penske-Cosworth, 194.300; Johnny Rutherford (Fort Worth), Chaparral-Cosworth, 193.590; Danny Ongais (Costa Mesa), Interscope-Cosworth, 193.298; A. J. Foyt (Houston), Coyote-Cosworth, 192.278; Gordon Smiley (Grapevine, Tex.), Wildcat-Cosworth, 192.626; Don Whittington (Fort Lauderdale, Fla.), March-Cosworth, 190.799.

CRASH—Billy Engelhart (Madison, Wis.) escaped injury when he spun exiting turn 1, slid more than 500 feet and hit wall twice in his McLaren.

ROOKIES—Tom Klausler (Northfield, Mich.), Phil Krueger (Fullerton) and Patrick Bedard (New York) passed driver's test and are among 12 rookies eligible to attempt to qualify Saturday.

1981 Indy 500: Thu 5-7-81 Top Practice
Speeds

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Speedway Top 10

1. Bobby Unser	197.715
Norton Spirit Penske PC-9B/Cosworth No. 3	
2. Rick Mears	195.993
Gould Charge Penske PC-9B/Cosworth No. 6	
3. Mario Andretti	195.143
STP Oil Treatment Wildcat VIII/Cosworth No. 40	
4. Gordon Johncock	194.847
STP Oil Treatment Wildcat VIII/Cosworth No. 20	
5. Johnny Rutherford	193.590
Pennzoil Chaparral/Cosworth No. 1	
6. Danny Ongais	193.298
Interscope Interscope/Cosworth No. 25	
7. Al Unser	192.967
Longhorn Longhorn/Cosworth No. 88	
8. Gordon Smiley	192.636
Intermedics Wildcat VIII/Cosworth No. 60	
9. A.J. Foyt	192.267
Gilmore-Valvoline Coyote/Cosworth No. 14	
10. Bill Alsup	191.163
ABDick Penske PC-9B/Cosworth No. 7	

NOTE: Only electric eye-time laps are included.

1981 Indy 500: Thu 5-7-81 Top Practice
Speeds Combined

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THE DAY AT INDY

Friday

FASTEST—Bobby Unser (Albuquerque, N.M.), Penske-Cosworth, 199.510; Rick Mears (Bakersfield), Penske-Cosworth, 199.500; Mario Andretti (Nazareth, Pa.), Wildcat-Cosworth, 198.719; Danny Ongais (Costa Mesa), Interscope-Cosworth, 197.109; Gordon Johncock (Colwater, Mich.), Wildcat-Cosworth, 197.585; A.J. Foyt (Houston), Coyote-Cosworth, 196.463; Mike Mosley (Fallbrook), Eagle-Chevy, 196.249; Gordon Smiley (Grapevine, Tex.), Wildcat-Cosworth, 195.865; Johnny Rutherford (Fort Worth), 194.342 and 191.570 in backup car; Bill Alsup (Woodstock, Vt.), Penske-Cosworth, 193.590; Josele Garza (Mexico), Penske-Cosworth, 192.061.

1981 Indy 500: Fri 5-8-81 Top Practice
Speeds

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Speedway Top Ten

1. Bobby Unser	199.510
Norton Spirit Penske PC-9B/Cosworth No. 3	
2. Rick Mears	199.500
Gould Charge Penske PC-9B/Cosworth No. 6	
3. Mario Andretti	198.719
STP Oil Treatment Wildcat VIII/Cosworth No. 40	
4. Gordon Johncock	197.585
STP Oil Treatment Wildcat VIII/Cosworth No. 20	
5. Danny Ongais	197.109
Interscope Interscope/Cosworth No. 25	
6. Mike Mosley	196.249
Pepsi Challenger Eagle/Chevrolet No. 48	
7. Gordon Smiley	195.865
Intermedics Wildcat VIII/Cosworth No. 60	
8. Johnny Rutherford	195.737
Pennzoil Chaparral/Cosworth No. 1	
9. Bill Alsup	193.590
ABDick Penske PC-9B/Cosworth No. 7	
10. Al Unser	192.967
Longhorn Longhorn/Cosworth No. 88	

1981 Indy 500: Fri 5-8-81 Top Practice
Speeds Combined

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Qualifying order

Pos.	Car	Driver	29. 17	Patrick Bedard
1.	2	Tom Sneva	30. 72	Mike Chandler
2.	25	Danny Ongais	31. 50	Geoff Brabham
3.	14	A.J. Foyt	32. 8	Gary Bettenhausen
4.	96	Larry Cannon	33. 46	Rich Vogler
5.	45	Harry MacDonald	34. 3	Bobby Unser
6.	69	Joe Saldana	35. 44	Paul Leffler
7.	56	Tom Bigelow	36. 40	Mario Andretti
8.	1	Johnny Rutherford	37. 89	Phil Krueger
9.	15	Bill Tempero	38. 57	John Martin
10.	38	Jerry Karl	39. 99	Larry Cannon
11.	88	Al Unser	40. 31	Larry Dickson
12.	22	Dick Simon	41. 94	Bill Whittington
13.	65	Jerry Miller	42. 42	Bill Vukovich
14.	75	Pancho Carter	43. 66	Roger Rager
15.	21	Tim Richmond	44. 18	Gary Bettenhausen
16.	37	Scott Brayton	45. 33	Vern Schuppan
17.	81	Sheldon Kinser	46. 86	Jim Buick
18.	49	Skip Mead	47. 98	Roger Mears
19.	7	Bill Alsup	48. 32	Kevin Cogan
20.	51	Tom Klausler	49. 16	Tony Bettenhausen
21.	60	Gordon Smiley	50. 61	Johnny Rutherford
22.	5	Pancho Carter	51. 20	Gordon Johncock
23.	92	John Mahler	52. 53	Steve Krisiloff
24.	28	Herm Johnson	53. 70	Dennis Firestone
25.	91	Don Whittington	54. 48	Mike Mosley
26.	23	Jim McElreath	55. 6	Rick Mears
27.	64	Steve Chassey	56. 29	Bill Engelhart
28.	55	Josele Garza	57. 35	Bob Lazier

1981 Indy 500: Sat 5-9-81 Qualifying Order

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Apr 26, 2026

1981 500-Mile Race Qualification Scorecard

CAR NO.	DRIVER AND CAR	1ST LAP	2D LAP	3D LAP	4TH LAP	LAP AVG.	CAR NO.	DRIVER AND CAR	1ST LAP	2D LAP	3D LAP	4TH LAP	LAP AVG.
1	JOHNNY RUTHERFORD Chaparral/Cosworth						52	LARRY RICE McLaren/Ransay					
2	TOM SNEYA Phoenix/March/Cosworth						53	GEOFF BRABHAM McLaren/Cosworth					
3	BOBBY UNSER Penske PC-9B/Cosworth						54	JOSELE GARZA Penske PC-7/Cosworth					
4	NO DRIVER Wildcat/Cosworth						55	STEVE KRISLOFF Penske PC-9/Cosworth					
5	PANCHO CARTER Penske PC-7/Cosworth						56	TOM BIGELOW Penske PC-7/Chevrolet					
6	RICK MEARS Penske PC-9B/Cosworth						57	NO DRIVER McLaren/Offy					
7	BILL ALSUP Penske PC-9B/Cosworth						58	BUBBY JONES Eagle/Chevy					
8	GARY BETTENHAUSEN Lightning/Cosworth						59	DICK FERGUSON Penske PC-6/Cosworth					
10	DANNY ONGAIS Interscope/Cosworth						60	GORDON SMILEY Wildcat/Cosworth					
12	NO DRIVER March/Cosworth						61	JOHNNY RUTHERFORD Chaparral/Cosworth					
14	A.J. FOYT Coyote/Cosworth						62	NO DRIVER Eagle/Volker					
15	BILL TEMPERO McLaren/Chevrolet						63	KEN HAMILTON Riley/Chevrolet					
16	TONY BETTENHAUSEN McLaren/Cosworth						64	STEVE CHASSEY Eagle/Chevrolet					
17	PATRICK BEDARD Volstedt/Offy						65	JERRY MILLER Kingfish/Chevrolet					
18	GARY BETTENHAUSEN Lightning/Turbo Chevy						66	ROGER RAGER Wildcat/Chevrolet					
19	NO DRIVER Eagle/Offy						67	NO DRIVER McLaren/Chevrolet					
20	GORDON JOHNCOCK Penske PC-7/Cosworth						68	NO DRIVER Penske PC-9/Cosworth					
21	TIM RICHMOND Penske PC-7/Cosworth						69	JOE SALDANA Lightning/Cosworth					
22	DICK SIMON Watson/Cosworth						70	DENNIS FIRESTONE Penske PC-6/Cosworth					
23	JIM McELREATH Penske PC-6/Cosworth						71	BOB FREY Eagle/Offy					
24	BOBBY OLIVERO Watson/Offy						72	MIKE CHANDLER McLaren PC-7/Cosworth					
25	DANNY ONGAIS Interscope/Cosworth						73	BOB LAZIER Penske PC-7/Cosworth					
26	JIM McELREATH Eagle/Offy						74	NO DRIVER Penske PC-7/Cosworth					
27	BILL PUTERBAUGH Volstedt/Offy						75	PANCHO CARTER Lightning/Cosworth					
28	HERM JOHNSON Lightning/Chevrolet						77	SALT WALTHER McLaren/Cosworth					
29	BILLY ENGELHART McLaren/Cosworth						78	STEVE KINSEY Penske PC-6/Cosworth					
30	LARRY DICKSON IAM/Cosworth						79	PETE HALSMER Penske PC-7/Cosworth					
31	LARRY DICKSON Penske PC-7/Cosworth						80	AL UNSER Longhorn/Cosworth					
32	KEVIN COGAN Phoenix/Cosworth						81	SHELDON KINSEY Longhorn/Cosworth					
33	VERN SCHUPPAN McLaren/Cosworth						82	NO DRIVER Coyote/Cosworth					
34	SPIKE GEHLHAUSEN Eagle/Cosworth						83	NO DRIVER Eagle/Offy					
35	BOB LAZIER Penske PC-7/Cosworth						84	NO DRIVER Coyote/Cosworth					
36	MIKE MOSLEY Eagle/Chevrolet						85	NO DRIVER Coyote/Chevrolet					
37	SCOTT BRAYTON Penske PC-6/Cosworth						86	JIM BUICK Eagle/Chevrolet					
38	JERRY KARL McLaren-Karl/Chevrolet						87	BOB HARKEY Antares/Offy					
39	JERRY KARL McLaren-Karl/Chevrolet						88	AL UNSER Longhorn/Cosworth					
40	MARIO ANDRETTI Wildcat/Cosworth						89	PHIL KRUEGER Eagle/Chevrolet					
41	NO DRIVER Parnelli/Cosworth						90	DON WHITTINGTON March/Cosworth					
42	BILL VUKOVICH Watson/Offy						91	DALE WHITTINGTON March/Cosworth					
43	NO DRIVER Armstrong/Cosworth						92	JOHN MAHLER Penske PC-6/Offy					
44	GREG LEFFLER Lola/Turbo Chevy						93	FRANK WEISS Eagle/Offy					
45	HARRY MacDONALD Lola/Cosworth						94	BILL WHITTINGTON March/Cosworth					
46	RICH VOGLER Wildcat/DGS						95	LARRY CANNON Wildcat/DGS					
47	PHIL CALIVA McLaren/Chevrolet						96	LARRY CANNON Wildcat/DGS					
48	MIKE MOSLEY Eagle/Chevrolet						97	NO DRIVER Lightning/Chevrolet					
49	CHIP MEAD Eagle/Cosworth						98	ROGER MEARS King/Chevrolet					
50	GEOFF BRABHAM Penske PC-9/Cosworth						99	LARRY CANNON Penske PC-7/Cosworth					
51	TOM KLAUSLER Schkee/Turbo Chevy												

1981 Indy 500: Sat 5-9-81 Qualification Scorecard

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500 Qualifiers

FIRST ROW

A.J. FOYT
14 — Valvoline-Gilmore
COYOTE/COSWORTH



:45.37 198.369
:45.65 197.152
:46.01 195.610
:46.57 193.257
Totals
3:03.60 196.078

JOHNNY RUTHERFORD
1 — Pennzoil
CHAPARRAL/COSWORTH



:46.08 195.313
:46.05 195.440
:46.04 195.482
:46.08 195.313
Totals
3:04.25 195.387

BILL ALSUP
7 — A.B. Dick Pacemaker
PENSKE PC-9B/COSWORTH



:46.32 194.301
:46.33 194.259
:46.81 192.267
:46.92 191.816
Totals
3:06.38 193.154

SECOND ROW

GORDON SMILEY
60 — Intermedics
WILDCAT/COSWORTH



:46.53 193.424
:46.58 193.216
:46.69 192.761
:46.74 192.555
Totals
3:06.54 192.988

AL UNSER
88 — Longhorn
LONGHORN/COSWORTH



:46.47 193.673
:46.65 192.926
:46.72 192.637
:46.96 191.652
Totals
3:06.80 192.719

PANCHO CARTER
5 — Alex Foods
PENSKE/COSWORTH



:47.03 191.367
:47.15 190.880
:47.07 191.205
:47.21 190.638
Totals
3:08.46 191.022

THIRD ROW

TOM BIGELOW
56 — Genesee Beer Wagon
PENSKE PC-7/CHEVY



:47.87 188.009
:47.76 188.442
:47.69 188.719
:47.87 188.009
Totals
3:11.19 188.294

HERM JOHNSON
28 — Menard LBR
LIGHTNING/CHEVY-V8



:47.97 187.617
:47.94 187.735
:48.63 185.071
:49.14 183.150
Totals
3:13.68 185.874

TIM RICHMOND
21 — UNO-Guarantee Auto-
WTTV
PENSKE PC-7/COSWORTH



:48.39 185.989
:48.50 185.567
:48.70 184.805
:48.68 184.881
Totals
3:14.27 185.309

Qualifying order

Pos.	Car	Driver	28.	6	Rick Mears
1.	91	Don Whittington	29.	29	Billy Engelhart
2.	23	Jim McElreath	30.	35	Bob Lazier
3.	64	Steve Chassey	END OF FIRST DRAW		
4.	55	Josele Garza	31.	87	Bob Harkey
5.	17	Patrick Bedard	32.	79	Pete Halsmer
6.	50	Geoff Brabham	33.	34	Spike Gehlhausen
7.	8	Gary Bettenhausen	34.	12	Jerry Sneva
9.	46	Rich Volger	35.	74	Michael Chandler
10.	3	Bobby Unser	BREAK IN LINE		
11.	44	Greg Leffler	36.	96	Larry Cannon
12.	40	Mario Andretti	37.	2	Tom Sneva
13.	89	Phil Krueger	38.	45	Gary MacDonald
14.	57	John Martin	39.	69	Joe Saldana
15.	99	Larry Cannon	40.	25	Danny Ongias
16.	31	Larry Dickson	41.	75	No driver
17.	94	Bill Whittington	42.	15	Billy Tempero
18.	42	Bill Vukovich	43.	47	Phil Caliva
19.	18	Gary Bettenhausen	44.	38	Jerry Karl
20.	33	Vern Schuppan	45.	22	Dick Simon
21.	86	Jim Buick	46.	65	Jerry Miller
22.	32	Kevin Cogan	47.	37	Scott Brayton
23.	16	Tony Bettenhausen	48.	81	Sheldon Kinser
24.	20	Gordon Johncock	49.	51	Tom Klausler
25.	53	Steve Krisiloff	50.	49	Chip Mead
26.	70	Dennis Firestone	51.	72	Michael Chandler
27.	48	Mike Mosley			

1981 Indy 500: Sun 5-10-81 Qualifying Order

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Apr 26, 2026

1981 500-Mile Race Qualification Scorecard

CAR NO.	DRIVER AND CAR	1ST LAP	2D LAP	3D LAP	4TH LAP	LAP AVG.	CAR NO.	DRIVER AND CAR	1ST LAP	2D LAP	3D LAP	4TH LAP	LAP AVG.
1	JOHNNY RUTHERFORD Chaparral/Cosworth	195.313	195.440	195.482	195.313	195.387	52	LARRY RICE McLaren/Bassey					
2	TOM SNEVA Phoenix/March/Cosworth						53	STEVE KRISLOFF Penske PC-7/Cosworth					
3	BOBBY UNSER Penske PC-9B/Cosworth						54	JOSELE GARZA Penske PC-7/Cosworth					
4	NO DRIVER Wildcat/Cosworth						55	GEOFF BRABHAM Penske PC-9/Cosworth					
5	PANCHO CARTER Penske PC-7/Cosworth	191.367	190.880	191.205	190.638	191.022	56	TOM BIGELOW Penske PC-7/Chevrolet	188.009	188.442	188.719	188.009	188.294
6	RICK MEARS Penske PC-9B/Cosworth						57	JOHN MARTIN McLaren/Offy					
7	BILL ALSUP Penske PC-9B/Cosworth	194.301	194.259	192.267	191.816	193.154	58	BUBBY JONES Eagle/Chevy					
8	GARY BETTENHAUSEN Lightning/Cosworth						59	DICK FERGUSON Penske PC-6/Cosworth					
10	DANNY ONGAIS Interscope/Cosworth						60	GORDON SMILEY Wildcat/Cosworth	193.424	193.216	192.761	192.555	192.988
12	NO DRIVER March/Cosworth						61	JOHNNY RUTHERFORD Chaparral/Cosworth					
14	A.J. FOYT Coyote/Cosworth	198.369	197.152	195.610	193.257	196.078	62	NO DRIVER Eagle/Volker					
15	BILL TEMPERO McLaren/Chevrolet						63	KEN HAMILTON Riley/Chevrolet					
16	TONY BETTENHAUSEN McLaren/Cosworth						64	STEVE CHASSEY Eagle/Chevrolet					
17	PATRICK BEDARD Vollstedt/Offy						65	JERRY MILLER Kingfish/Chevrolet					
18	GARY BETTENHAUSEN Lightning/Turbo Chevy						66	ROGER RAGER Wildcat/Chevrolet					
19	NO DRIVER Eagle/Offy						67	NO DRIVER McLaren/Chevrolet					
20	GORDON JOHNCOCK Penske PC-7/Cosworth						68	NO DRIVER Penske PC-9/Cosworth					
21	TIM RICHMOND Penske PC-7/Cosworth	185.989	185.567	184.805	184.881	185.309	69	JOE SALDANA Lightning/Cosworth					
22	DICK SIMON Watson/Cosworth						70	DENNIS FIRESTONE Penske PC-6/Cosworth					
23	JIM McELREATH Penske PC-6/Cosworth						71	BOB FREY Eagle/Offy					
24	BOBBY OLIVERO Watson/Offy						72	MIKE CHANDLER McLaren PC-7/Cosworth					
25	DANNY ONGAIS Interscope/Cosworth						73	BOB LAZIER Penske PC-7/Cosworth					
26	JIM McELREATH Eagle/Offy						74	NO DRIVER Penske PC-7/Cosworth					
27	BILL PUTERBAUGH Vollstedt/Offy						75	PANCHO CARTER Lightning/Cosworth					
28	HERM JOHNSON Lightning/Chevrolet	187.617	187.735	185.071	183.150	185.874	77	SALT WALTHER McLaren/Cosworth					
29	BILLY ENGELHART McLaren/Cosworth						78	STEVE KINSER Penske PC-6/Cosworth					
30	LARRY DICKSON IAM/Cosworth						79	PETE HALSMER Penske PC-7/Cosworth					
31	LARRY DICKSON Penske PC-7/Cosworth						80	AL UNSER Longhorn/Cosworth					
32	KEVIN COGAN Phoenix/Cosworth						81	SHELDON KINSER Longhorn/Cosworth					
33	VERN SCHUPPAN McLaren/Cosworth						82	NO DRIVER Coyote/Cosworth					
34	SPIKE GEHLHAUSEN Eagle/Cosworth						83	NO DRIVER Eagle/Offy					
35	BOB LAZIER Penske PC-7/Cosworth						84	NO DRIVER Coyote/Cosworth					
36	MIKE MOSLEY Eagle/Chevrolet						85	NO DRIVER Coyote/Chevrolet					
37	SCOTT BRAYTON Penske PC-4/Cosworth						86	JIM BUICK Eagle/Chevrolet					
38	JERRY KARL McLaren-Karl/Chevrolet						87	BOB HARKEY Antares/Offy					
39	JERRY KARL McLaren-Karl/Chevrolet						88	AL UNSER Longhorn/Cosworth	193.673	192.926	192.637	191.652	192.719
40	MARIO ANDRETTI Wildcat/Cosworth						89	PHIL KRUEGER Eagle/Chevrolet					
41	NO DRIVER Parnelli/Cosworth						90	DON WHITTINGTON March/Cosworth					
42	BILL VUKOVICH Watson/Offy						91	DALE WHITTINGTON March/Cosworth					
43	NO DRIVER Armstrong/Cosworth						92	JOHN MAHLER Penske PC-6/Offy					
44	GREG LEFFLER Lola/Turbo Chevy						93	FRANK WEISS Eagle/Offy					
45	HARRY MacDONALD Lola/Cosworth						94	BILL WHITTINGTON March/Cosworth					
46	RICH VOGLER Wildcat/DGS						95	LARRY CANNON Wildcat/DGS					
47	PHIL CALIVA McLaren/Chevrolet						96	LARRY CANNON Wildcat/DGS					
48	MIKE MOSLEY Eagle/Chevrolet						97	NO DRIVER Lightning/Chevrolet					
49	CHIP MEAD Eagle/Cosworth						98	ROGER MEARS King/Chevrolet					
50	GEOFF BRABHAM Penske PC-9/Cosworth						99	LARRY CANNON Penske PC-7/Cosworth					
51	TOM KLAUSLER Schnee/Turbo Chevy												

1981 Indy 500: Sun 5-10-81 Qualification Scorecard

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THE DAY AT INDY

Tuesday

FASTEST—Danny Ongais (Santa Ana), Interscope-Cosworth, 200.000 m.p.h.; Mario Andretti (Nazareth, Pa.), Wildcat-Cosworth, 199.600; Bobby Unser (Albuquerque, N.M.), Penske-Cosworth, 199.159; Bill Whittington (Fort Lauderdale, Fla.), March-Cosworth, 197.411; Don Whittington (Fort Lauderdale, Fla.), March-Cosworth, 195.016; Gordon Johncock (Coldwater, Mich.), Wildcat-Cosworth, 193.673; Mike Mosley (Fallbrook), Eagle-Chevy, 193.133; Gordon Smiley (Grapevine, Tex.), Wildcat-Cosworth, 191.799.

CRASHES—Rookie Phil Caliva (Hermosa Beach) had to be pried from his car but escaped with only a deep bruise on his thigh after hitting wall in turn No. 1 in his McLaren-Chevy; rookie Phil Krueger (Fullerton) escaped injury when his Eagle-Chevy slid on grass and hit inside wall at turn No. 2.

1981 Indy 500: Tue 5-12-81 Top Practice
Speeds

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THE DAY AT INDY

Friday

FASTEST—Bobby Unser (Albuquerque, N.M.), Penske-Cosworth, 201.387 m.p.h.; Tom Sneva (Spokane, Wash.), March-Cosworth, 199.690; Danny Ongais (Santa Ana), Interscope-Cosworth, 197.932; Mike Mosley (Fallbrook), Eagle-Chevy, 195.694; Gordon Johncock (Colwater, Mich.), Wildcat-Cosworth, 191.898 (backup car); Bob Lazier (Vail, Colo.), Penske-Cosworth, 191.611. Note: A total of 63 cars were on the track, making it busiest day ever at Indy.

ROOKIES—Steve Kinser (Bloomington, Ind.) passed his driver's test but a half-hour later he did a half spin in turn No. 1 and slid 600 feet into wall; he escaped injury.

Order of qualifying

Pos. Car Driver

1. 23 Spike Gehlhausen
2. 64 Steve Chassey
3. 55 Josele Garza
4. 17 Patrick Bedard
5. 50 Geoff Brabham
6. 8 Gary Bettenhausen
7. 46 Rich Vogler
8. 3 Bobby Unser
9. 44 Greg Leffler
10. 40 Wally Dallenbach
11. 89 Phil Krueger
12. 57 John Martin
13. 99 Larry Cannon
14. 31 Larry Dickson
15. 42 Bill Vukovich
16. 18 Johnny Parsons
17. 33 Vern Schuppan
18. 86 Jim Buick
19. 32 Kevin Cogan
20. 16 Tony Bettenhausen
21. 20 Gordon Johncock
22. 53 Steve Krisiloff
23. 70 Dennis Firestone
24. 48 Mike Mosley
25. 6 Rick Mears
26. 29 Bill Engelhart
27. 35 Bob Lazier

End of Pole Eligibles

28. 87 No Driver
29. 79 Pete Halsmer
30. 2T Tom Sneva
31. 74 Mike Chandler

End of Guaranteed Attempts

32. 96 No Driver
33. 2 Tom Sneva
34. 91 Don Whittington
35. 45 Harry MacDonald
36. 25 Danny Ongais
37. 75 No Driver
38. 15 Bill Tempero
39. 38 Jerry Karl
40. 22 Dick Simon
41. 65 Jerry Miller
42. 37 Scott Brayton
43. 81 Sheldon Kinser
44. 51 Tom Klausler
45. 49 Chip Mead
46. 72 No Driver
47. 92 John Mahler
48. 94 Bill Whittington
49. 95 Dick Ferguson
50. 66 Roger Rager
51. 71 Bob Frey
52. 4 No Driver
53. 93 John Mahler
54. 68 No Driver
55. 98 Roger Mears
56. 63 Ken Hamilton
57. 84 No Driver
58. 24 Joe Saldana
59. 90 No Driver

1981 500-Mile Race Qualification Scorecard

CAR NO.	DRIVER AND CAR	1ST LAP	2D LAP	3D LAP	4TH LAP	LAP AVG.	CAR NO.	DRIVER AND CAR	1ST LAP	2D LAP	3D LAP	4TH LAP	LAP AVG.
1	JOHNNY RUTHERFORD Chaparral/Cosworth	195.313	195.440	195.482	195.313	195.387	52	LARRY RICE McLaren/Rassey					
2	TOM SNEVA Phoenix-March/Cosworth						53	STEVE KRISLOFF Penske PC-7/Cosworth					
3	BOBBY UNSER Penske PC-9B/Cosworth						54	JOSELE GARZA Penske PC-7/Cosworth					
4	NO DRIVER Wildcat/Cosworth						55	GEOFF BRABHAM Penske PC-9/Cosworth					
5	PANCHO CARTER Penske PC-7/Cosworth	191.367	190.880	191.205	190.638	191.022	56	TOM BIGELOW Penske PC-7/Chevrolet	188.009	188.442	188.719	188.009	188.294
6	RICK MEARS Penske PC-9B/Cosworth						57	JOHN MARTIN McLaren/Offy					
7	BILL ALSUP Penske PC-9B/Cosworth	194.301	194.259	192.267	191.816	193.154	58	BOBBY HARKEY Eagle/Chevy					
8	GARY BETTENHAUSEN Lightning/Cosworth						59	DICK FERGUSON Penske PC-9/Cosworth					
10	DANNY ONGAIS InterScope/Cosworth						60	GORDON SMILEY Wildcat/Cosworth	193.424	193.216	192.761	192.555	192.988
12	NO DRIVER March/Cosworth						61	JOHNNY RUTHERFORD Chaparral/Cosworth					
14	A.J. FOYT Coyote/Cosworth	198.369	197.152	195.610	193.257	196.078	62	NO DRIVER Eagle/Vulker					
15	BILL TEMPERO McLaren/Chevrolet						63	KEN HAMILTON Riley/Chevrolet					
16	TONY BETTENHAUSEN McLaren/Cosworth						64	STEVE CHASSEY Eagle/Chevrolet					
17	PATRICK BEDARD Volstead/Offy						65	JERRY MILLER Kingfish/Chevrolet					
18	JOHNNY PARSONS Lightning Turbo Chevy						66	ROGER RAGER Wildcat/Chevrolet					
19	NO DRIVER Eagle/Offy						67	PHIL TRESHIE McLaren/Chevrolet					
20	GORDON JOHNSON Penske PC-7/Cosworth						68	NO DRIVER Penske PC-9/Cosworth					
21	TIM RICHMOND Penske PC-7/Cosworth	185.989	185.567	184.805	184.881	185.309	69	JOE SALDANA Lightning/Cosworth					
22	DICK SIMON Watson/Cosworth						70	DENNIS FIRESTONE Penske PC-6/Cosworth					
23	SPIKE GEHLHAUSEN Penske PC-6/Cosworth						71	BOB FREY Eagle/Offy					
24	JOE SALDANA Watson/Offy						72	MICHAEL CHANDLER McLaren PC-7/Cosworth					
25	DANNY ONGAIS InterScope/Cosworth						73	BOB LAZIER Penske PC-7/Cosworth					
26	JIM McELREATH Eagle/Offy						74	MICHAEL CHANDLER Penske PC-7/Cosworth					
27	BILL PUTERBAUGH Volstead/Offy						75	NO DRIVER Lightning/Cosworth					
28	HERM JOHNSON Lightning/Chevrolet	187.617	187.735	185.071	183.150	185.874	78	STEVE KINSER Penske PC-6/Cosworth					
29	BILLY ENGELHART McLaren/Cosworth						79	PETE HALSMER Penske PC-7/Cosworth					
30	LARRY DICKSON IAM/Cosworth						80	AL UNSER Longhorn/Cosworth					
31	LARRY DICKSON Penske PC-7/Cosworth						81	SHELDON KINSER Longhorn/Cosworth					
32	KEVIN COGAN Phoenix/Cosworth						82	NO DRIVER Coyote/Cosworth					
33	VERN SCHUPPAN McLaren/Cosworth						83	NO DRIVER Eagle/Offy					
35	BOB LAZIER Penske PC-7/Cosworth						85	NO DRIVER Coyote/Chevrolet					
36	MIKE MOSLEY Eagle/Chevrolet						86	JIM BUICK Eagle/Chevrolet					
37	SCOTT BRAYTON Penske PC-6/Cosworth						87	BOB HARKEY Antares/Offy					
38	JERRY KARL McLaren-Karl/Chevrolet						88	AL UNSER Longhorn/Cosworth	193.673	192.926	192.637	191.652	192.719
39	JERRY KARL McLaren-Karl/Chevrolet						89	PHIL KRUEGER Eagle/Chevrolet					
40	WALLY DALLENBACH Wildcat/Cosworth						90	DON WHITTINGTON March/Cosworth					
41	NO DRIVER Parnelli/Cosworth						91	DON WHITTINGTON March/Cosworth					
42	BILL VUKOVICH Watson/Offy						92	JOHN MAHLER Penske PC-6/Offy					
43	NO DRIVER Armstrong/Cosworth						93	FRANK WEISS Eagle/Offy					
44	GREG LEFFLER Lola/Turbo Chevy						94	BILL WHITTINGTON March/Cosworth					
45	HARRY MacDONALD Lola/Cosworth						95	DICK FERGUSON Wildcat/DGS					
46	RICH VOGLER Wildcat/DGS						96	LARRY CANNON Wildcat/DGS					
48	MIKE MOSLEY Eagle/Chevrolet						97	NO DRIVER Lightning/Chevrolet					
49	CHIP MEAD Eagle/Cosworth						98	ROGER MEARS King/Chevrolet					
50	GEOFF BRABHAM Penske PC-9/Cosworth						99	LARRY CANNON Penske PC-7/Cosworth					

1981 Indy 500: Sat 5-16-81 Qualification Scorecard

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Apr 26, 2026

500 Qualifiers		
FIRST ROW		
BOBBY UNSER 3 - Norton Spirit PENNE PC/COSWORTH	MIKE MOSLEY 48 - Pepsi Challenge MILLEN/CHEVY	A.J. FOYT 14 - Valvoline-Gilmore CONROY/COSWORTH
44.61 290.714 44.70 291.342 44.82 290.726 43.18 298.306 Totals 2:05.51 290.546	45.54 287.628 45.53 287.365 45.87 287.966 45.83 298.292 Totals 2:02.41 287.141	45.37 288.363 45.43 287.132 46.41 285.619 46.37 283.257 Totals 2:03.60 286.078
SECOND ROW		
GORDON JOHNCOCK 28 - STP Oil Treatment Spl. MILLEN/CHEVY	JOHNNY RUTHERFORD 1 - Pennoil CONROY/COSWORTH	JOSELE GARZA (R) 35 - Pacoche/Garza/Eso PENNE PC/COSWORTH
45.63 287.239 46.34 284.217 46.24 284.627 46.90 285.632 Totals 3:04.21 285.429	46.68 285.313 46.95 285.440 46.94 285.482 46.98 285.313 Totals 3:04.25 285.387	46.95 285.440 46.98 285.313 45.99 285.685 46.40 285.960 Totals 3:04.52 285.101
THIRD ROW		
BILL ALSUP 7 - A.R. Dick Pacemaker PENNE PC/COSWORTH	WALLY DALLENBACH 49 - STP Oil Treatment MILLEN/CHEVY	GORDON SMELEY 60 - Intermedic MILLEN/CHEVY
46.32 284.301 46.33 284.299 46.81 282.287 46.92 281.814 Totals 3:06.38 283.154	46.52 283.465 46.48 283.632 46.62 283.688 46.87 282.029 Totals 3:06.49 283.040	46.33 283.424 46.38 283.216 46.69 282.761 46.74 282.535 Totals 3:06.54 282.908
FOURTH ROW		
AL UNSER 48 - Longhorn MILLEN/COSWORTH	PANCHO CARTER 3 - Alex Foods PENNE PC/COSWORTH	GARY BETTENHAUSEN 8 - Hopkins Racing LIGHTNING/CHEVY
46.47 283.673 46.45 282.826 46.72 282.427 46.96 281.652 Totals 3:06.80 282.719	47.03 281.367 47.15 280.880 47.07 281.265 47.21 280.628 Totals 3:06.46 281.022	46.35 281.633 46.94 281.734 47.21 280.638 47.51 280.434 Totals 3:08.61 280.870
FIFTH ROW		
KEVIN COGAN (R) 32 - O'Connell Racing PENNE PC/COSWORTH	BOB LAZIER 35 - Montgomery Ward Auto Club PENNE PC/COSWORTH	TOM BIGELOW 36 - Geneee Beer Wagon PENNE PC/COSWORTH
47.21 280.628 47.38 280.954 47.34 280.114 48.10 287.110 Totals 3:10.03 280.444	47.44 280.713 47.45 280.673 47.54 280.314 47.62 280.866 Totals 3:10.05 280.424	47.87 280.009 47.76 280.442 47.69 280.719 47.87 280.009 Totals 3:11.19 280.294
SIXTH ROW		
GEOFF BRABHAM (R) 38 - Pacoche/Garza/Eso PENNE PC/COSWORTH	TONY BETTENHAUSEN (R) 18 - Provit Vaul MILLEN/CHEVY	STEVE KRISLOFF 53 - Pacoche/Garza/Eso PENNE PC/COSWORTH
47.72 280.800 47.80 280.774 47.94 287.735 47.91 287.852 Totals 3:11.38 287.360	48.09 287.149 48.17 286.838 48.04 287.344 48.20 286.722 Totals 3:12.56 287.013	48.11 287.071 48.06 286.877 48.28 286.213 48.35 286.528 Totals 3:12.80 286.722
SEVENTH ROW		
VERN SCHUPPAN 37 - Red Bull Iron MILLEN/COSWORTH	LARRY DICKSON 31 - Mathison Union PENNE PC/COSWORTH	HERM JOHNSON 26 - Menard LBR LIGHTNING/CHEVY
48.75 284.815 48.58 286.184 47.92 287.813 47.85 287.686 Totals 3:12.58 285.548	48.13 286.994 48.24 286.567 48.35 286.143 48.54 285.414 Totals 3:13.28 286.278	47.97 287.617 47.94 287.735 48.43 285.071 48.14 283.150 Totals 3:13.68 285.874
EIGHTH ROW		
BILLY ENGLHART 29 - Reynolds Racing MILLEN/COSWORTH	DENNIS FURSTONE 70 - Rhodes Racing PENNE PC/COSWORTH	TIM RICHMOND 21 - UNO-Gearhart Auto WTV PENNE PC/COSWORTH
48.42 285.874 48.55 285.258 48.45 285.719 48.38 286.027 Totals 3:13.80 285.759	48.10 287.119 48.58 285.261 48.44 285.797 48.74 284.653 Totals 3:13.88 285.701	48.30 285.989 48.50 285.567 48.70 284.865 48.68 284.881 Totals 3:14.27 285.309
NINTH ROW		
TOM SNEVA 17 - Rigdon/Catlett MARCH/COSWORTH	DANNY ONGAIS 23 - Interscope Racing INTERSCOPE/COSWORTH	RICK MEARS 6 - Gould Champ PENNE PC/COSWORTH
44.46 282.429 44.73 281.287 45.00 280.000 45.19 280.159 Totals 2:58.38 280.691	44.81 280.401 45.32 280.568 45.88 286.164 45.89 285.695 Totals 3:02.10 287.684	46.27 284.570 46.34 284.217 46.37 283.257 46.27 284.091 Totals 3:05.55 284.618
TENTH ROW		
SHELDON KINSER 11 - Single Valve Iron LONGHORN/COSWORTH	PETE HALSNER (R) 79 - Huber/Osland/Eso-88 PENNE PC/COSWORTH	MIKE CHANDLER (R) 74 - Team California PENNE PC/COSWORTH
47.38 280.854 47.53 280.154 47.58 280.155 47.73 280.561 Totals 3:10.82 280.454	47.72 280.600 47.97 287.617 47.87 288.069 48.23 286.866 Totals 3:11.79 287.705	48.31 285.291 47.86 287.530 47.77 288.403 47.36 288.948 Totals 3:11.93 287.360
ELEVENTH ROW		
DON WHITTINGTON 11 - Road Atlanta MARCH/COSWORTH	LARRY CANNON 99 - Kroen Car Service Spl. PENNE PC/COSWORTH	BILL WHITTINGTON 84 - Road Atlanta MARCH/COSWORTH
47.89 281.123 47.81 280.245 48.23 286.606 48.14 283.150 Totals 3:12.27 287.237	48.11 284.664 48.43 283.653 48.45 285.759 48.27 286.451 Totals 3:13.94 285.624	48.36 285.328 48.33 285.432 48.74 284.633 48.94 282.899 Totals 3:14.77 284.633

1981 Indy 500: Sat 5-16-81 Qualifying Results

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Order of qualifying

POS.	CAR	DRIVER			
1.	15	Bill Tempero	15.	96	Larry Cannon
2.	38	Jerry Karl	16.	44	No Driver
3.	89	Phil Krueger	17.	95	Larry Cannon
4.	22	Dick Simon	18.	63	Roy Hamilton
5.	34	Spike Gehlhausen	19.	43	Greg Leffler
6.	37	Scott Brayton	20.	17	Jerry Sneva
7.	4	No Driver	21.	64	Steve Chassey
8.	24	Joe Saldana	22.	18	Johnny Parsons
9.	90	Bill Whittington	23.	42	Bill Vuckovich
10.	51	Tom Klausler	24.	65	Jerry Miller
11.	46	No Driver	25.	87	Phil Caliva
12.	92	John Mahler	26.	71	Bob Frey
13.	93	John Mahler	27.	45	Harry MacDonald
14.	98	Roger Mears	28.	66	Roger Rager

1981 Indy 500: Sun 5-17-81 Qualifying
Order

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Apr 26, 2026

1981 500-Mile Race Qualification Scorecard

CAR NO.	DRIVER AND CAR	1ST LAP	2D LAP	3D LAP	4TH LAP	LAP AVG.
1	JOHNNY RUTHERFORD Chaparral/Cosworth	195.313	195.440	195.482	195.313	195.387
2	JOHNNY PARSONS Phoenix-March/Cosworth	182.778	184.615	183.187	184.653	183.805
3	BOBBY UNSER Penske PC-9B/Cosworth	200.714	201.342	200.758	199.380	200.546
4	NO DRIVER Wildcat/Cosworth					
5	PANCHO CARTER Penske PC-7/Cosworth	191.367	190.880	191.205	190.638	191.022
6	RICK MEARS Penske PC-9B/Cosworth	194.570	194.217	193.257	194.091	194.018
7	BILL ALSUP Penske PC-9B/Cosworth	194.301	194.259	192.267	191.816	193.154
8	GARY BETTENHAUSEN Lightning/Cosworth	191.693	191.734	190.638	189.434	190.870
10	DANNY ONGAIS InterScope/Cosworth					
12	TOM SNEVA March/Cosworth	202.429	201.207	200.000	199.159	200.691
14	A.J. FOYT Coyote/Cosworth	198.369	197.152	195.610	193.257	196.078
15	BILL TEMPERO McLaren/Chevrolet					
16	TONY BETTENHAUSEN McLaren/Cosworth	187.149	186.838	187.344	186.722	187.013
17	PATRICK BEDARD Volstedt/Offy					
18	JOHNNY PARSONS Lightning/Turbo Chevy					
19	NO DRIVER Eagle/Offy					
20	GORDON JOHNSON Penske PC-7/Cosworth	197.239	194.217	194.637	195.652	195.429
21	TIM RICHMOND Penske PC-7/Cosworth	185.989	185.567	184.805	184.881	185.309
22	DICK SIMON Watson/Cosworth					
23	SPIKE GEHLHAUSEN Penske PC-6/Cosworth					
24	JOE SALDANA Watson/Offy					
25	DANNY ONGAIS InterScope/Cosworth	200.401	198.588	196.164	195.695	197.694
26	JIM McELREATH Eagle/Offy					
27	BILL PUTERBAUGH Volstedt/Offy					
28	HERM JOHNSON Lightning/Chevrolet	187.617	187.735	185.071	183.150	185.874
29	BILLY ENGELHART McLaren/Cosworth	185.874	185.376	185.759	186.027	185.759
30	LARRY DICKSON IAM/Cosworth					
31	LARRY DICKSON Penske PC-7/Cosworth	186.994	186.567	186.143	185.414	186.278
32	KEVIN COGAN Phoenix/Cosworth	190.638	189.954	190.114	187.110	189.444
33	VERN SCHUPPAN McLaren/Cosworth	184.615	186.104	187.813	187.696	186.548
35	BOB LAZIER Penske PC-7/Cosworth	189.713	189.673	189.314	188.996	189.424
36	MIKE MOSLEY Eagle/Chevrolet					
37	SCOTT BRAYTON Penske PC-6/Cosworth					
38	JERRY KARL McLaren-Karl/Chevrolet					
39	JERRY KARL McLaren-Karl/Chevrolet					
40	WALLY DALLENBACH Wildcat/Cosworth	193.465	193.632	193.050	192.020	193.040
41	NO DRIVER Farnell/Cosworth					
42	BILL VUKOVICH Watson/Offy					
43	NO DRIVER Armstrong/Cosworth					
44	GREG LEFFLER Lola/Turbo Chevy					
45	HARRY MacDONALD Lola/Cosworth					
46	RICH VOGLER Wildcat/DGS					
48	MIKE MOSLEY Eagle/Chevrolet	197.628	197.585	197.066	196.292	197.141
49	CHIP MEAD Eagle/Cosworth					
50	GEOFF BRABHAM Penske PC-9/Cosworth	188.600	187.774	187.735	187.852	187.990
52	LARRY RICE McLaren/Racey					
53	STEVE KRISLOFF Penske PC-7/Cosworth	187.071	186.877	186.413	186.528	186.722
54	NO DRIVER Penske PC-7/Cosworth					
55	JOSELE GARZA Penske PC-9/Cosworth	195.440	195.313	195.695	193.966	195.101
56	TOM BIGELOW Penske PC-9/Chevrolet	188.009	188.442	188.719	188.009	188.294
57	JOHN MARTIN McLaren/Offy	178.536	178.820	177.130	176.160	177.655
58	BOBBY HARKEY Eagle/Chevy					
59	DICK FERGUSON Penske PC-6/Cosworth					
60	GORDON SMILEY Wildcat/Cosworth	193.424	193.216	192.761	192.555	192.988
61	JOHNNY RUTHERFORD Chaparral/Cosworth					
62	NO DRIVER Eagle/Volker					
63	KEN HAMILTON Riley/Chevrolet					
64	STEVE CHASSEY Eagle/Chevrolet					
65	JERRY MILLER Kingfish/Chevrolet					
66	ROGER RAGER Wildcat/Chevrolet					
67	PHIL TRESHIE McLaren/Chevrolet					
68	NO DRIVER Penske PC-9/Cosworth					
69	JOE SALDANA Lightning/Cosworth					
70	DENNIS FIRESTONE Penske PC-6/Cosworth	187.110	185.261	185.797	184.653	185.701
71	BOB FREY Eagle/Offy					
72	MICHAEL CHANDLER McLaren PC-7/Cosworth					
73	BOB LAZIER Penske PC-7/Cosworth					
74	MICHAEL CHANDLER Penske PC-7/Cosworth	186.291	187.539	188.403	188.048	187.568
75	NO DRIVER Lightning/Cosworth					
78	STEVE KINSER Penske PC-6/Cosworth					
79	PETE HALSNER Penske PC-7/Cosworth	188.600	187.617	188.009	186.606	187.705
80	AL UNSER Longhorn/Cosworth					
81	SHELDON KINSER Longhorn/Cosworth	189.954	190.154	189.155	188.561	189.454
82	NO DRIVER Coyote/Cosworth					
83	NO DRIVER Eagle/Offy					
85	NO DRIVER Coyote/Chevrolet					
86	JIM BUICK Eagle/Chevrolet	175.473	175.063	175.678	174.351	175.140
87	BOB HARKEY Antares/Offy					
88	AL UNSER Longhorn/Cosworth	193.673	192.926	192.637	191.652	192.719
89	PHIL KRUEGER Eagle/Chevrolet					
90	DON WHITTINGTON March/Cosworth					
91	DON WHITTINGTON March/Cosworth	191.123	188.245	186.606	183.510	187.237
92	JOHN MAHLER Penske PC-6/Offy					
93	FRANK WEISS Eagle/Offy					
94	BILL WHITTINGTON March/Cosworth	185.338	185.452	184.653	183.899	184.833
95	DICK FERGUSON Wildcat/DGS					
96	LARRY CANNON Wildcat/DGS					
97	NO DRIVER Lightning/Chevrolet					
98	ROGER MEARS King/Chevrolet					
99	LARRY CANNON Penske PC-7/Cosworth	184.464	185.835	185.759	186.451	185.624

Car No. 57, driven by John Martin.
Car No. 88, driven by Jim Buick, bumped
from field. Car No. 4, driven by Johnny
Parsons, qualified but too slow to make
field.

1981 Indy 500: Sun 5-17-81 Qualification Scorecard

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Apr 26, 2026

500 Qualifiers

FIRST ROW		
BOBBY UNSER 2 - Norton Super PENNSAUCONORTH	MIKE MOSLEY 48 - Topki Challenge KALE/CHEVY	A.J. FOYT 14 - Valvoline-Gilmer COV/GEORGIA
44.81 200.714 44.79 201.262 44.83 200.759 45.14 199.386 Totals 3.59.51 200.546	45.54 197.828 45.59 197.566 45.47 197.066 45.45 196.292 Totals 3.02.41 197.141	45.27 198.369 45.63 197.132 46.01 195.619 46.57 193.257 Totals 3.03.40 196.078
SECOND ROW		
GORDON JOHNCOCK 38 - STP Oil Treatment Spcl. WILDCAT/GEORGIA	JOHNNY RUTHERFORD 1 - Pennoil CHAPARRAL/COSWORTH	JOSELE GARZA (R) 55 - Pacifi/Garza/Esso PENNSAUCONORTH
45.63 197.239 46.34 194.217 46.51 194.627 46.60 195.622 Totals 3.04.21 195.429	46.08 195.323 46.05 195.440 46.04 195.482 46.08 195.213 Totals 3.04.25 195.387	46.02 195.440 46.08 195.213 45.99 195.695 46.40 193.966 Totals 3.04.52 195.101
THIRD ROW		
BILL ALSUP 7 - A.B. Dick Pavemaker PENNSAUCONORTH	WALLY DALLENBACH 48 - STP Oil Treatment WILDCAT/GEORGIA	GORDON SMELEY 68 - Intermedics WILDCAT/GEORGIA
46.32 194.301 46.33 194.229 46.81 192.267 46.92 191.816 Totals 3.06.38 193.154	46.12 193.465 46.48 193.632 46.62 193.660 46.87 192.620 Totals 3.06.49 193.040	46.53 193.424 46.58 193.216 46.49 192.791 46.74 192.562 Totals 3.06.54 192.988
FOURTH ROW		
AL UNSER 88 - Langhans LOWLANDER/COSWORTH	PANCHO CARTER 5 - Alex Foods LOWLANDER/COSWORTH	GARY BETTENHAUSEN 8 - Hopkins Racing LOWLANDER/COSWORTH
46.47 193.673 46.65 192.926 46.72 192.827 46.96 191.632 Totals 3.06.80 192.719	47.03 191.367 47.15 190.800 47.07 191.265 47.21 190.638 Totals 3.08.46 191.022	46.95 191.693 46.94 191.734 47.21 190.628 47.51 189.434 Totals 3.08.61 190.670
FIFTH ROW		
KEVIN COGAN (R) 32 - O'Connell Racing PENNSAUCONORTH	BOB LAZIER 55 - Montgomery Ward Auto Club PENNSAUCONORTH	TOM BIGELOW 36 - Geneva Beer Wagon PENNSAUCONORTH
47.21 196.628 47.59 195.924 47.34 196.114 48.19 187.110 Totals 3.10.03 189.844	47.44 189.713 47.45 189.673 47.54 189.214 47.62 188.996 Totals 3.10.05 189.424	47.87 188.009 47.76 188.442 47.69 188.719 47.87 188.009 Totals 3.11.19 188.294
SIXTH ROW		
GEOFF BRABHAM (R) 39 - Pacifi/Garza/Esso PENNSAUCONORTH	TONY BETTENHAUSEN (R) 18 - Fronti Vial MILANER/COSWORTH	STEVE KRISLOFF 32 - Pacifi/Garza/Esso PENNSAUCONORTH
47.72 188.690 47.83 187.774 47.94 187.725 47.91 187.852 Totals 3.11.50 187.990	48.09 187.149 48.17 186.628 48.04 187.344 48.20 186.722 Totals 3.12.50 187.813	48.11 187.071 48.16 186.877 48.28 186.213 48.25 186.528 Totals 3.12.80 186.722
SEVENTH ROW		
VERV SCHUPPAN 33 - Red Hood Inns MILANER/COSWORTH	LARRY DICKSON 31 - Machinist Union PENNSAUCONORTH	TOM SNEVA 12 - Bigazzi-Cutter MARCH/COSWORTH
48.75 184.613 48.36 186.104 47.92 187.813 47.95 187.496 Totals 3.12.98 186.548	48.13 186.994 48.24 186.567 48.35 186.143 48.54 184.414 Totals 3.13.26 186.278	44.46 202.423 44.73 201.297 45.00 200.000 45.19 199.138 Totals 2.59.38 200.691
EIGHTH ROW		
DANNY ONGAIS 25 - Interscope Racing INTERSCOPE/COSWORTH	HICK MEARS 6 - Gould Charge PENNSAUCONORTH	SHELDON KENSER 81 - Sergio Valente Jeans LOWLANDER/COSWORTH
44.91 200.401 45.32 198.568 45.68 196.194 45.99 195.965 Totals 3.02.19 197.694	46.27 194.579 46.34 194.217 46.57 193.257 46.37 194.091 Totals 3.05.55 194.018	47.26 189.564 47.23 190.154 47.58 189.155 47.72 188.561 Totals 3.10.02 189.454
NINTH ROW		
PETE HALSNER (R) 79 - Hobler/Colonia/Ris-99 PENNSAUCONORTH	MIKE CHANDLER (R) 74 - Team California PENNSAUCONORTH	DON WHITTINGTON 81 - Road Atlanta MARCH/COSWORTH
47.72 188.600 47.97 187.617 47.87 188.689 48.23 186.606 Totals 3.11.79 187.705	48.31 186.291 47.99 187.539 47.77 188.662 47.86 188.040 Totals 3.11.93 187.568	47.09 191.123 47.81 188.245 48.23 186.666 48.14 183.150 Totals 3.12.27 187.237
TENTH ROW		
BILL WHITTINGTON 89 - Road Atlanta MARCH/COSWORTH	GEORGE SNIDER 84 - Gilmer-Valentine PANEL/COSWORTH	DENNIS FIRESTONE 4 - Rhodes Racing MARCH/COSWORTH
45.43 198.197 45.34 198.590 45.78 196.549 46.09 195.270 Totals 3.02.65 197.698	47.51 189.434 47.48 189.323 47.55 189.274 47.68 188.758 Totals 3.10.22 189.255	47.78 188.383 47.79 188.324 47.86 187.654 48.18 186.800 Totals 3.11.71 187.794
ELEVENTH ROW		
JERRY SNEVA 17 - Knott Radio Detector WILLY/GEORGIA	SCOTT BRAYTON (R) 17 - Knott Radio Detector PENNSAUCONORTH	TOM KLAUSLER (R) 51 - DDE Idea SCHWAB/TOUPO CHEVY
47.95 187.696 47.75 188.462 47.81 188.285 48.21 186.983 Totals 3.11.71 187.794	48.15 186.916 47.99 187.539 47.95 187.696 47.83 188.957 Totals 3.11.12 187.774	48.29 186.274 48.22 186.645 48.06 187.266 48.22 186.645 Totals 3.12.79 186.732

Some very fast times were run under near-racing conditions. Pole-sitter Bobby Unser, who qualified with a four-lap speed of 200.546 miles per hour, was clocked at 197.413 mph, and defending champion Johnny Rutherford reached 193.924 mph, under his qualifying rate of 195.387, and Tom Sneva had a speed of 195.397.

Gordon Smiley turned in a lap at 195.143 mph, Mario Andretti was clocked at 193.175 mph, Bill Whittington was 194.594 and his brother Don came in with a 190.638 lap. Rick Mears posted 190.516 and A.J. Foyt 187.421.

1981 Indy 500: Thu 5-21-81 Top Practice
Speeds

Clipped By:
doctorindy500
Apr 26, 2026

Unofficial 500 Finish

FIN-ST	Driver	Laps	Reason Out
1	1 Bobby Unser	200	running
2	32 Mario Andretti	200	running
3	18 Vern Schuppan	199	running
4	12 Kevin Cogan	197	running
5	15 Geoff Brabham	197	running
6	23 Sheldon Kinser	195	running
7	16 Tony Bettenhausen	195	running
8	17 Steve Krisiloff	194	running
9	4 Gordon Johncock	194	engine failure
10	28 Dennis Firestone	193	engine failure
11	7 Bill Alsop	193	running
12	25 Mike Chandler	192	running
13	3 A.J. Foyt	191	running
14	33 Tim Richmond	191	running
15	31 Jerry Karl	189	running
16	29 Scott Brayton	174	accident
17	9 Al Unser	166	running
18	19 Larry Dickson	165	burned piston
19	13 Bob Lazier	154	blown engine
20	14 Tom Bigelow	152	blown engine
21	27 Bill Whittington	146	stall
22	8 Gordon Smiley	141	accident
23	6 Josele Garza	138	accident
24	24 Pete Halsmer	123	accident
25	20 Tom Sneva	96	clutch
26	11 Gary Bettenhausen	69	broken rod

FIN-ST	Driver	Laps	Reason Out
27	21 Danny Ongais	64	accident
28	10 Pancho Carter	62	compression
29	30 Tom Klausler	60	gear box
30	22 Rick Mears	58	pit fire
31	26 Don Whittington	32	accident
32	5 Johnny Rutherford	25	fuel pump
33	22 Mike Mosley	16	radiator

TIME OF RACE: 3:35:41.78.

AVERAGE SPEED: 139.084.

LAP LEADERS: 1-21, Bobby Unser; 22-25, Rutherford; 26-32, B.Unser; 33-56, Sneva; 57, Mears; 59-60, B.Unser; 61-63, Ongais; 64-91, Johncock; 92-95, B.Unser; 96, Johncock; 97-98, Andretti; 99-104, Garza; 105-112, Johncock; 113-118, B.Unser; 119-121, Johncock; 122-125, Andretti; 126-132, Garza; 133-140, Johncock; 141, B.Unser; 142-148, Andretti; 149-178, B.Unser; 179-181, Johncock; 182-200, B.Unser.

YELLOW LAPS: 5-7, metal on track; 26-29, Rutherford tow-in; 33-43, Don Whittington hit wall; 67-81, Ongais hit wall; 130-136, Halsmer hit wall; 140-144, Garza hit wall; 146-151, Smiley hit wall; 152-156, B.Whittington tow-in; 162-165, Bigelow stalled in turn one; 180-184, Foyt tow-in; 185-188, debris on track.

TOTAL YELLOW LIGHTS: 11.

ELAPSED TIME UNDER YELLOW LIGHTS: 1:42.08.