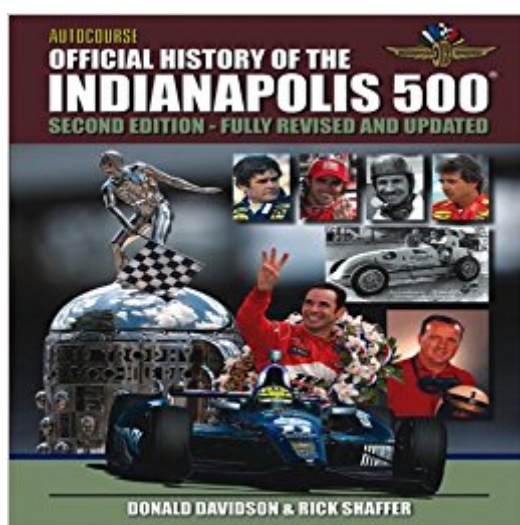


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# Autocourse Official Illustrated History Of The Indianapolis 500: Revised And Updated Second Edition Includes Tribute To Dan Wheldon



## Synopsis

THE Indianapolis "500" is much more than merely the best known automobile race in the world. It is a cherished time-honored institution with a glorious history dating back more than one hundred years. Known to most as, quite simply, "The 500," it has been held every year since 1911, the only exceptions being 1917-18 and 1942-45, during the periods when America was involved in the two world wars. Steeped in tradition, it has meant many things to many people and has played an enormous role in the lives of human beings, perhaps even more so for the spectators and devotees than for the participants themselves. For over half a century, Memorial Day meant either trekking to the track or else ensuring that whatever other activity was planned for the day, a radio would always be within earshot. In more recent decades, settling down in front of the television has been added to the equation, while it is now the Sunday of Memorial Day weekend on which the extravaganza takes place, rather than on Memorial Day itself. But the feeling is the same. For the participants, it has been a nearly 100-year saga of dreams, innovation, ingenuity, bravery, triumph, and tragedy. Paupers became millionaires, young men from small towns and broken homes became international celebrities, and regrettably, some of them gave their lives. The "500" has endured world wars, depressions, recessions, political strife, and negative journalism, and yet it continues to draw massive passionate and emotional crowds, whose loyalty is rewarded with never-to-be-forgotten moments such as the finishes of 2006 and 2011, when Dan Wheldon snatched victory on literally the final turn. This, then, is the story of the Indianapolis 500 and how it came to be. This is the story of more than 100 editions of the race, interspersed with a look at some of the compelling personalities, some little-known facts, an attempt to document the origins of some of the traditions, and perhaps even to dispel a few myths. From Harroun to Franchitti, it's all here!

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Indianapolis Motor Speedway Historian Donald Davidson first showed up at the track in 1964, obsessed with the 500 and having memorized a plethora of trivial facts about the event and its participants. Returning in 1965, he was invited by IMS Radio Network Chief Announcer Sid Collins to participate as a commentator on the race-day broadcast, a duty he has performed ever since. The week after that race, he was hired (by Director of Competition Henry Banks) to be the keeper of records for the United States Auto Club (USAC), and since that time has contributed to dozens of books, written numerous magazine stories and local newspaper columns, given hundreds of talks, been featured on ABC News, and been a guest, along with Mario Andretti and Jackie Stewart, on Ted Koppel's Nightline. He has hosted a call-in radio show every May since 1971, and for 20 years has conducted a four-night course on 500 history for IUPUI, the Indianapolis-based combined campus of Purdue and Indiana Universities. He joined IMS full time in 1998. He is regarded as the ultimate authority on the race, its history and its participants.

Donald Davidson Indianapolis Motor Speedway Historian Donald Davidson has been blessed with what he is told is a "selective retentive easy access" memory. He showed up at the track in 1964 as a young adult from England, obsessed with the "500" and having memorized a plethora of trivial facts about the event and its participants. To his amazement, he was immediately embraced by the racing fraternity and taken into its inner circle. Returning in 1965 (this time on a one-way ticket and clutching a "green card"), he was invited by IMS Radio Network Chief Announcer Sid Collins to participate as a commentator on the race-day broadcast, a duty he has performed ever since. The week after the race, he was hired (by Director of Competition Henry Banks) to be the keeper of records for the United States Auto Club (USAC), and since that time has contributed to dozens of books, written numerous magazine stories and local newspaper columns, given hundreds of talks, been featured on ABC News, and been a guest, along with Mario Andretti and Jackie Stewart, on Ted Koppel's Nightline. He has hosted a call-in radio show every May since 1971, and for 20 years has conducted a four-night course on "500" history for IUPUI, the Indianapolis-based combined campus of Purdue and Indiana Universities. He joined IMS full time on January 1, 1998.

Rick Shaffer For most youngsters growing up in Indianapolis, the "rite of passage" can mean one's first visit to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. In the case of writer/historian Rick Shaffer, it came during

October of 1962, when his father took him and his older brother on a surprise trip to the track and museum. Like his co-author, Shaffer got to witness his first Indianapolis 500 in 1964. A combined interest in history and auto racing led him to major in journalism in college, and he has been writing stories on the subject since 1973. From 1987 through 1993, he helped cover the sport for The Indianapolis Star. Over the years, he has also written articles and columns for a number of racing publications. Shaffer currently resides outside of Indianapolis where he continues to write, occasionally lecture and collect books on the subject of auto racing. This is his second published book and he rates the latest experience the combination of "a labor of love" and "a dream come true."

Majestic in every single way. Simple as that. This book has everything from Indy 500 including the 2013 edition. It is marvelously illustrated and wisely written. At the end of the book, there are complete sheets containing the complete results of every edition. For each year, there is a chapter explaining technical innovations for that year, rookies pilots with great expectations, surprise entries, funny facts. Also, there are boxes containing brief sketches of famous drivers biographies (like Rutherford, Johncock, Mears, Unser, Foyt, Vukovich, etc). The book begins with a very detailed history of the origins and history of the track and the race.

Cannot pass this book without sneaking a peek at the fantastic photos and text, therefore I'm not getting too much done around the house!! EVERY Indy fan should have this book! I have a big collection of Indy books and this is already one of my favorites. Mr. Davidson has always amazed me with his knowledge.

This is a great book written for anyone who is interested in the Indianapolis 500 history. Recently I had the opportunity to meet Rick Shaffer and Donald Davidson. They are not only great writers but also incredibly knowledgeable about the sport of racing. 5 stars does not give justice to this book. It deserves 10 stars.

From the Definitive Indy 500 Historian, Donald Davidson with Rick Shaffer. Excellent photographs and paired with accurate and entertaining story telling. You're instantly taken back to those early pioneering days where courageous men dreamed up the speedway right through the stories and events that lead to modern-day winners. The traditions, the origins and the spectacle that is the The Greatest Race Course In The World.

This captures the Indy 500 spirit and history over the years. The photos are excellent, and the statistical details are good, but not exhaustive.

I grew up in Indianapolis, and am very familiar with Donald Davidson's work. The book is informative, fun, very detailed, and the pictures! The best work on 500 history that I have seen.

I bought the book as a gift for my 19 year old son. He is a big fan of Indy car racing. He loves it. My husband picks it up to read as soon as he puts it down. Lots of interesting facts and history. I highly recommend this book.

Expectations have been exceeded!!! Excellent photos and wonderful comments. Donald Davidson at his best. I highly recommend this book for anyone interested in the Indy 500. I've attended 27 races.

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