
KEY POINTS TO KNOW TO TALK ABOUT SPORTS

The next section gives you some of the most basic information you should know about each of the kinds of sports your colleagues are most likely talking about. For each sport we give you a 'big picture' description, the basics of how the sport is played, the timing for each sport, i.e. how long each sporting event takes, some terms to learn, five names to know and five key facts.

***Important note to diehard sports fans
checking out the content in this book:***

You may think we've left out an important rule, or term. You'll most likely disagree with one or more of the 'Five Names to Know' and 'Five Key Facts'. Just please remember that these descriptions are a primer for people who don't understand your sport at all. So, if you do disagree with what we've written, go ahead and tell your non-American friends why. Start a conversation and help them learn.

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AUTO RACING



DID YOU KNOW?

The Motorsports Hall of Fame of America is located in Novi, Michigan, and the International Motorsports Hall of Fame can be found in Talladega, Alabama.

The Big Picture

Two types of auto racing are popular in the United States, Indy Cars and NASCAR. Indy Cars, also known as open-wheel racing, feature race cars with wheels that extend outside the car's main body. NASCAR or stock car racing involves cars that superficially resemble family sedans.

The most prestigious open-wheel race is the Indianapolis 500, which is held annually over the Memorial Day Weekend and is billed as “the greatest spectacle in racing.” It is the largest single-day sporting event in the world with attendance over 400,000. The race is 500 miles long, or 200 laps around the track.

The most widely followed NASCAR racing series is the Sprint Cup. But, the Daytona 500 is generally regarded as the most important and prestigious NASCAR race.

The Basics

Both forms of auto racing take place on oval-shaped tracks. Both involve races that vary in distance but are typically 200-

Auto Racing (*con't.*)

500 miles long or 100-200 laps. The first car to cross the finish line is declared the winner.

Indy 500 drivers are narrowed down to a field of 33 through pre-race qualification days. On race day, those 33 cars start in 11 rows of three cars each. The race consists of 200 laps around the 2.5-mile oval track.

The Sprint Cup Series is made up of 36 races over a 10-month season with more than \$4 million in prize money for the taking at each race.

The Indy Racing League (IRL) is the sanctioning body of a predominantly American-based open-wheel racing series.

The National Association of Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR) is the largest sanctioning body of stock cars in the U.S.

Timing

Televised races generally take 3-4 hours to complete.

Terms to Learn

Checkered flag: Indicates that a driver has won the race.

Green flag: Indicates the start of a race and also signals a clear track.

Pit stop: Where race cars stop to refuel, get new tires and mechanical adjustments.

Auto Racing (*con't.*)

Red flag: Indicates that all drivers must stop due to an extreme hazard.

White flag: Indicates that the lead car has started on the final lap.

Yellow flag: Indicates a hazard on the track and requires drivers to slow down.

Five Names to Know

Mario Andretti – One of the greatest drivers of all time. He won four Indy Car titles and is one of only two drivers to have won both the Indianapolis 500 and the Daytona 500. In US pop culture, his name has become synonymous with speed.

Dale Earnhardt – Tied for the most NASCAR championships won, with 7. He was nicknamed “The Intimidator” due to his aggressive driving style.

AJ Foyt – One of the greatest drivers of all time. He won the Indianapolis 500 four times and is one of only two drivers to have won both the Indianapolis 500 and the Daytona 500.

Jeff Gordon – A current NASCAR driver who has won four NASCAR championships and three Daytona 500s. In 2009, he became the first driver to reach \$100 million in winnings.

Richard Petty – Recognized as NASCAR’s greatest driver by many and nicknamed “The King.” He is most well-known for

Auto Racing *(con't.)*

winning a record 200 races during his career including winning both the NASCAR Championship and the Daytona 500 seven times each.

Five Key Facts

17 of the top 20 most attended sporting events in the U.S. are NASCAR races.

It is a tradition for the winner of the Indianapolis 500 to drink a container of milk in “Victory Lane” (the place where the winner of a motor race goes to celebrate victory after an event, also known as the Winner’s Circle).

The banking in the turns at Bristol Motor Speedway, a NASCAR racetrack, is 36 degrees, the steepest of any track.

Danica Patrick became the first woman to win an Indy Car race in 2008 and began NASCAR racing in 2010.

Indy cars have attained speeds of over 250 miles per hour during races.

For More Information

www.indycar.com

www.nascar.com