

## THE BORGWARNER TROPHY

The BorgWarner, one of the most recognizable trophies in all of sports, has been awarded to the winner of every Indianapolis 500 Mile Race since 1936. Crafted out of sterling silver by Spaulding-Gorham of Chicago, it was unveiled at a dinner in New York in February 1936, featuring the bas-relief sculptures of every "500" winner up until that time. There are 92 faces on the trophy's squares. The faces date back to Ray Harroun, winner of the first Indianapolis 500 in 1911, and include two sets of dual victors (one driver started the race and the other finished it) for 1924 and 1941. The new winner has been added every year since, and in 1986 (the trophy's 50th anniversary), the final space became filled. The last driver to have his likeness on the original trophy was Bobby Rahal. The solution for 1987 was to add a base, but this too became filled following Gil de Ferran's victory in 2003. In 2004, an even larger version replaced it, this one with enough spaces to last through 2034. Tom Sneva (1983) is the only champion who appears on the trophy wearing eyeglasses, by his request. The only sculptured face not of a winning driver is that of the late Speedway owner Tony Hulman, whose likeness, in gold, was placed on the base in 1987.

**Trophy's Value**  
1935: \$10,000  
2006: More than \$1 million

**Trophy Height**  
With base:  
63 3/4 inches  
Without base:  
52 inches

**Trophy Weight (with base)**  
Approximately  
110 pounds



## YELLOW SHIRTS

From the time the Indianapolis Motor Speedway opened in 1909 until immediately after World War II, all events at the track were policed by the Indiana National Guard. Shortly after Tony Hulman purchased the track in November 1945, one of his right-hand men, Joseph Quinn of the Clabber Girl Baking Powder Company, set up a Board of Safety which sought input from all of the major law enforcement agencies. By

1948, the track's own Safety Patrol had been established, featuring dark-blue uniforms and pith helmets, those of department heads painted gold, and the rank and file, silver. The long-sleeved shirts, made of wool, were extremely uncomfortable to wear, both on a hot day and when soaked with rain. In the early 1970s, some of the senior staff members switched on weekends to considerably more comfortable short-sleeved yellow shirts, while golden plastic "bump" or "batting" helmets replaced the pith helmets. By 1975, all of the blue uniforms had disappeared completely; baseball caps had replaced the bump helmets and the term "yellow shirt" had come into vogue.



## YARD OF BRICKS

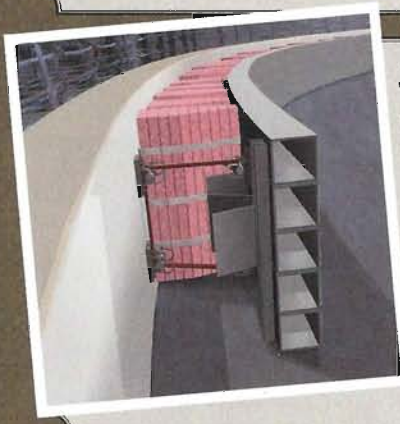
The Yard of Bricks is another nostalgic link with the past. After the track's original surface of crushed rock and tar was abandoned after only a few days of use in August 1909, it was replaced during that fall by 3.2 million street-paving bricks, hauled in by rail from the western part of the state. Approximately 90 percent were Culver Blocks, manufactured by the Washash Valley Clay Company of Veedersburg (near the Illinois border), the remainder being supplied by other firms in the same general area. The bricks were laid on their sides in a bed of sand, staggered in rows and separated by about 3/8 of an inch on either side so that mortar could be poured between them for strengthening. In the spring of 1936, patches of asphalt were applied to the rougher portions of the turns. Over the next couple of years, more and more asphalt was applied, so that by the time of the 1939 race, only about 650 yards of the main straight was still of bricks. This portion survived for another 22 years until October 1961, when it too was covered over, leaving exposed only 3 feet for the entire width of the track at the start/finish line. The entire 2.5 miles has been resurfaced several times since then, with a fresh batch of the original bricks being inlaid at the start/finish line once the new surface has had time to harden.

## WINNER'S DRINK OF MILK

Three-time "500" winner Louis Meyer regularly drank buttermilk on a hot day, as his mother had told him it would refresh him, and he consumed some in Victory Lane as a matter of course after earning his third "500" victory in 1936. A dairy industry executive happened to see a photograph of this in the following day's newspaper and, believing it to be regular milk, vowed to make sure this would be repeated in the coming years. Since 1937 milk has been a part of the Victory Circle ceremony; though the tradition was briefly interrupted by World War II, it was revived in 1956 and continues to this day.

## WINNER'S WREATH

Long used in Grand Prix racing, the winner's wreath at Indianapolis appears to have debuted in 1960, when a wreath featuring several exotic-looking, dark-yellow and brown flowers was placed on the shoulders of Jim Rathmann. Underwritten by BorgWarner Corporation, the wreaths were the creation of William J. "Bill" Cronin, a longtime Indianapolis florist, who was at one time a floral consultant for the parades of the Rose Bowl, the Cotton Bowl and the 500 Festival. He died in 1989. For most of the last 30 years, the wreath has featured 33 ivory-colored Cymbidium orchids with burgundy tips, plus 33 miniature checkered flags, intertwined with red, white and blue ribbons.



## SAFER BARRIER

On May 1, 2002, Indy Racing League CEO Tony George announced a safety innovation that would revolutionize the sport of automobile racing. George announced that the SAFER (Steel and Foam Energy Reduction) Barrier would be installed in all four turns of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. The SAFER Barrier is constructed in 20-foot modules, with each module consisting of four rectangular steel tubes, welded together, to form a unified element. The modules are connected with four internal steel splices. Bundles of 2-inch-thick sheets of extruded, closed-cell polystyrene are placed between the concrete wall and the steel tubing modules.