

## Series to run Ethanol fuel in 2007

Racing series [IRL](#)

Date 2006-09-14

### INDYCAR® SERIES TAKES LEADERSHIP ROLE WITH 100 PERCENT FUEL GRADE ETHANOL IN 2007

#### Honda-powered IndyCars To Use Renewable Fuel Source To Make Motorsports History

SPEEDWAY, Ind. (Sept. 14, 2006) -- Last Sunday at Chicagoland Speedway, the IndyCar® Series used methanol fuel for the last time. In 1965, methanol was introduced to Indy car-style racing. Now, in 2007, a new fuel grade will be incorporated into the high-tech world of open-wheel competition. The IndyCar Series embraced alternative fuel sources with the introduction of ethanol into its fuel blend in 2006. A blend of ten percent ethanol fuel and ninety percent methanol powered the Honda engines in 2006.

But, in 2007, all of the machines in the IndyCar Series will run 100 percent fuel-grade ethanol. Ethanol, made from a variety of plants including corn, milo/sorghum, sugar cane and cellulosic material, is produced in the United States and has proven to burn cleaner than methanol and gasoline, the majority of current racing fuels. As a clean-burning and renewable fuel that is non-toxic and 100 percent biodegradable, fuel-grade ethanol reduces air pollution.

"We are proud to partner with the ethanol industry to showcase a great American fuel source," said Brian Barnhart, president and COO of the Indy Racing League. "Our series has been recognized for its technical leadership in automobile racing and now it is the industry's leader in renewable and environmentally responsible energy." As the IndyCar series moves from methanol to 100 percent fuel-grade ethanol in 2007, the transition has shown no significant technical stumbling blocks. In early 2006, pole speeds at Homestead, St. Petersburg and the Indy 500 were faster than the 2005 poles with the new fuel blend with ten percent ethanol.

"We have noticed little changes so far in the Honda engine's performance with the new ethanol blend in 2006," said Jeff Horton, director of engineering for the IndyCar Series. "We expect similar performance in 2007."

"The transition between methanol and ethanol in our cars has been very smooth," said Phil Casey, IRL senior technical director. "Our cars don't sound differently, smell differently or run differently than they have in the past."

By the conclusion of 2006, the U.S. ethanol industry will have a capacity of over five billion gallons annually, up more than 300 percent from five years ago. Five billion is just a small portion of the 140 billion domestic market ethanol is now blended into more than a third of the nation's gasoline supply.

"More than 92 U.S. ethanol plants are providing ethanol for our nation's fuel supply and this is growing as the demand for ethanol continues to grow," said Tom Slunecka, executive director of the Ethanol Promotion and Information Council (EPIC). "Our partnership with the IndyCar Series will prove that fuel-grade ethanol is a U.S.-produced high performance fuel that runs with fewer emissions. We are very excited to see the IndyCar Series run with ethanol-enriched fuel."

The 2006 IndyCar Series was not the first time ethanol has powered a car in the world's biggest race, the Indianapolis 500. In the 1927 "Brickyard" classic, a car driven by Leon Duray was operated with ethyl (grain) alcohols.

The Ethanol relationship with the IndyCar Series and its sanctioning body, the Indy Racing League, was assisted through the cooperation of a group of companies within the fast-growing ethanol industry, led by the major ethanol design-build firms Fagen Inc., ICM Inc. and Broin Companies. To gain awareness, the ethanol industry has sponsored a car in the IndyCar Series since 2005.

In 2006, the ethanol industry entered the No. 17 Team Ethanol Honda Dallara Firestone car from Rahal Letterman Racing in the entire IndyCar Series with rookie Jeff Simmons driving. Rahal Letterman Racing will field a Team Ethanol Honda car in 2007.

-credit: rlr/ethanol