

# Indy drivers adjust to the times

**INDIANAPOLIS (AP)** — The classic image is of the Indianapolis 500 winner on the victory stand swigging happily from the traditional bottle of milk, his hair mussed, a white T-shirt, a pair of work pants and dusty, nondescript black shoes.

But those days are long gone.

Today's drivers, businessmen and engineers, have clean hands, wear tailored, fire-resistant uniforms, specially fitted lightweight shoes and full-face helmets — the latest thing in safety equipment.

They are articulate and, in many cases, well-educated.

For the first 50 years of the Indianapolis 500 — the open cockpit years from the opening of Indianapolis Motor Speedway opened in 1909 as a test track through the '50s — the winners often fit the accepted public image of under-educated grease monkeys. Most worked on their own cars and took pride in the fact that the dirt under their fingernails showed their belief in the American work ethic.

But the front row qualifiers for this year's 68th running of the Indy classic, Sunday, includes two drivers — pole-winner Tom Sneva and teammate Howdy Holmes — who are college graduates.

In fact, of the 33 starters in this year's event, 17 have spent at least one semester in a university, college or junior college and 11 have earned either a four-year or associate degree.

Patrick Bedard, a second-time starter, has a bachelor's degree from Iowa State and an advanced degree in automotive engineering from the Chrysler Institute.

Italian driver Teo Fabi has a degree in aeronautical engineering from the Institute of Technology in Milan.

Of course, racing, too, has changed, with more drivers buying rides than earning them on the merits of their apprenticeships in lesser series.

"You have to be a businessman today," says Dick Simon, at 50 the oldest starter in the race. "You have to be able to sell yourself and

your team to a sponsor so that you can go racing.

"There aren't many guys around who have enough money to run their own racing team."

Reflecting that change, many of the drivers — like athletes in other sports — have business managers, read financial newspapers and magazines and even show up at some meetings in three-piece suits.

"Boy, I don't really understand what's happened," said Dick Ferguson, who finished 31st in the 1980 race but failed to make the field this year. "It used to be that you saw drivers hanging around the garage and helping out with the cars at night. I was here with my crew the other night and the only other driver I saw hanging around was A.J. (Foyt).

"Now, the track closes at 6 and the drivers are walking out carrying their briefcases at 6:05," he added. "I'd like to know what a race driver carries in a briefcase when he leaves the race track."

# US Olympic official blasts Soviets; claims 50 countries could boycott

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Calling the Soviet-led boycott of the Summer Olympics "a blatant political decision," the executive director of the U.S. Olympic Committee predicted Tuesday there would be as many as 50 nations absent from the Los Angeles Games.

Despite the boycott of the Soviet bloc nations, Col. F. Don Miller predicted the Olympics would be "a complete success." He termed the Soviet-led boycott "political overtones of self-serving nonsense."

Miller also predicted that the Soviet Union would compare the medals earned by the United States this year with its medals in the 1980 Moscow Games, boycotted by the United States.

Meanwhile, Romania, the only Warsaw Pact nation that has yet to join the boycott, delayed its decision on whether to attend, and the International Olympic Committee denied reports that negotiations for television rights to the 1988 Summer Olympic Games in Seoul, South Korea, have been suspended because of the

Soviet pullout.

Miller's comments came at a luncheon following a symposium to address the impact of the USOC Training Centers and the preparedness of U.S. athletes. He said that regardless of talk about the Soviets reversing their decision: "They're not coming."

Miller said, however, that there would be representatives from the Soviet Union and its allies at the Games, just as there were U.S. officials in Moscow four years ago.

He said credentials would be issued to representatives scheduled to attend the meetings of international sports bodies traditionally held during the Olympics, and to some members of the media.

But he lashed out at the Soviets for initiating the boycott, which has been joined by East Germany, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Laos, Vietnam, Mongolia and Afghanistan.

Cuba is expected to announce its decision Wednesday.

Miller said he came to the

conclusion that the number of boycotting nations would increase after last Friday's emergency meeting of the International Olympic Committee at Lausanne, Switzerland.

He said the number could reach 20 or 25, and it could be 50 "depending what the African nations do," if Britain adds South African-born runner Zola Budd to its track and field team or if it competes, as scheduled, against South Africa in a rugby match.

About 25 nations boycotted the 1976 Montreal Olympics after a rugby team from New Zealand played against a South African team.

Miller noted that politics has intruded on the Olympics since 1932 — the last time they were held in Los Angeles — but noted that the political intrusion has grown in intensity.

"Now, in my judgment, the total Olympic movement has been eroded, he said. "The athletes of the world are being used as sacrificial pawns."

"We are not blameless. We participated (in a boycott) in 1980."

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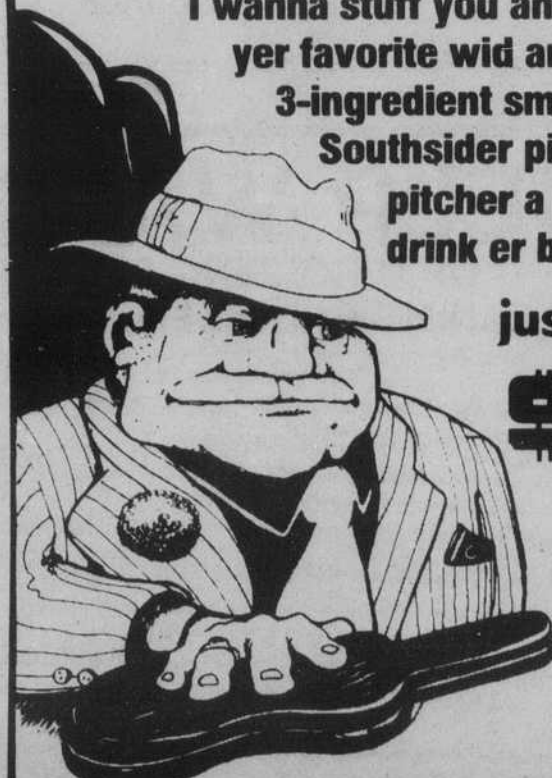


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