



Notes & Quotes: Nikon Indy 300 at Surfers Paradise

Vitor Meira: No. 14 ABC Supply Dallara/Honda

- **Vitor Meira will make his debut in No. 14 and at Surfers Paradise:** Vitor Meira will make his first start ever in the No. 14 ABC Supply Dallara/Honda/Firestone car in his first appearance ever in the Surfers Paradise IndyCar race on the Gold Coast circuit north of Brisbane, Australia. Meira spoke to fellow Brazilian Christian Fittipaldi, whose best finish of 3rd there came in 1998.

“He gave me some pointers,” said Meira. “He said it’s a very demanding race track for the car because you are constantly running on the curbs and the circuit has pretty fast chicanes. Because of the chicanes and curbs, the car’s bouncing around all the time—you have to hit the same spot every time. But you’re going pretty fast – it’s got 4th gear and high 3rd gear chicanes so it’s really fast. Because the track is rough, it’s one more complication. When the car bounces up, the wheels are off the ground so that’s a big complication right there. On a smooth race track, you just have to be worried about braking and the car sliding. On a bumpy race track, sometimes the best line is not the line that theoretically appears to be the best—but the one where you can avoid the bumps so it narrows down the margin of error even more. But Christian said he likes the track and I bet I will too.”

- **Meira on his goals in Australia:** “I think the goal is to really get to know the team – that’s the primary goal and getting the Foyt team to know me. By that I mean, knowing where we’re at on set-ups in relation to the others and then figuring out what we can do to make it better. For example, pitstops— if the race pitstops are not good, what can we do to make them better? I need to learn about the team overall and the team needs to learn me so we can nail down all the projects for the winter. That’s the main goal. If we accomplish that, we’ll be good but accomplishing that with a top-10 finish to be realistic—that would even better. So those are my primary goals—a top 10 finish and learning about the team.”
- **Houston Motorsports Ranch Shakedown Test:** Meira did a shakedown run in the No.14 car during the “ABC Supply Day at the Track” at the 2.4-mile road course outside of Houston on Oct. 8th.

“Testing was very good,” said Meira. “The car behaved beautifully—there were no surprises which is very good news, not having any ‘Whoa, What’s that?’ is good. The car felt very comfortable to me and that’s awesome. I didn’t push it for speed—I tried a little bit but not knowing the track—because you have to know what the car really does--you have to go far into braking and sliding the car which I didn’t do. It obviously wasn’t like a normal testing day but I tried a couple corners, safe corners that I knew even if I made a mistake that the car wouldn’t be hurt. I didn’t want to take any chances because that was the car we were going to go to Australia with so I pushed a little in some corners but mostly not.”

- **Past Performance at Surfers Paradise:** A.J. Foyt’s team had been to Surfers Paradise four times in the early 90s. In their first appearance in 1992, Swiss driver Gregor Foitek started 13th but dropped out after a tire puncture, placing 21st. In 1993, Robby Gordon qualified fourth and finished third. In 1994, Davy Jones dropped out with a broken transmission to place 19th and in 1995, Eddie Cheever started 17th and finished 7th for the Foyt team’s final appearance Down Under until this year. A.J. Foyt did not travel to Australia this week but will be following his team’s progress via the Internet and telephone communication.
- **The Nikon Indy 300** will be shown live at 10:30 p.m. ET Saturday night, October 25 on ESPN Classic; the race will be re-aired on ESPN 2 Sunday night, Oct 26th at 11 pm ET.