

Newman/Haas/Lanigan Racing
Nikon Indy 300 – Streets of Surfer’s Paradise, Queensland, Australia
QUALIFYING NOTES/QUOTES – Saturday, October 25, 2008

McDONALD’S DRIVER WILSON SET FASTEST LAP OF WEEKEND BUT QUALIFIED NINTH FOR THE NIKON INDY 300; RAIN ALSO LIMITED HOLE IN THE WALL CAMPS DRIVER RAHAL TO 13TH

POLE: Will Power	1:34.9451 / 105.977 mph	
9th: Justin Wilson	1:42.0429 / 98.606 mph	(P1 in AM session at 1:34.5072)
13th: Graham Rahal	1:55.6155 / 87.030 mph	

OVERALL: Rain fell at the start of qualifying for Rahal and the rest of Group 1 and eased as the session went on. Wilson and Group 2 ran their session on rain tires as well and when Wilson progressed to Round 2 the 12 drivers gradually switched to slick tires as part of the track quickly dried. With limited time left in the session when the action went back to green, Wilson’s mid-field pit location made it difficult for him to run another lap before the checkered flag came out and he dropped out of the top-six while others ahead of him in the pit order were able to run an additional lap and improve their lap times on the drying track and continue to the Firestone Fast Six.

Justin Wilson, No. 02 McDonald’s Dallara/Honda/Firestone: “Based on our potential I am pretty disappointed. The McDonald’s team ran the quickest time the whole weekend but our starting position doesn’t reflect that. I thought we had a lot of potential but we couldn’t get a lap out of it quick enough. We were slipping and sliding around. In conditions like that where its wet and drying you need to be able to get on it and I couldn’t for whatever reason. Anything can happen in this race especially with a rolling start here. It’s going to chaos at Turn 1. I think we can still be very smart and work this out because it’s by no means over. We can still win this race and show what we are capable of.”

- **FAST FACTS:** Will be his fourth race here (in five attempts) and only fourth time this season to race on a track he has previous experience on. The last two times he has come to Surfer’s, he was a contender for the title but doesn’t have that pressure this year since this is an exhibition race. He finished second to eventual champion Bourdais here last year after he started fifth. In 2006 he did not compete here after he broke the scaphoid bone in his right wrist in Friday’s pre-qualifying warm-up while third in the point standings, with an outside shot at the title. He started and finished seventh in 2005 and started seventh and finished eighth in 2004...His highest start on a road/street course this season is pole in the Long Beach Champ Car finale. On road/street course in the IndyCar series, he has started 3rd (St. Pete), 2nd (Watkins Glen), 4th (Mid-Ohio), 6th (Edmonton; brushed wall in Q2), 7th (Sonoma) and fourth (Detroit) and his highest finish is 3rd in Edmonton...Finished runner up in the Champ Car championship to the driver he recently replaced, four-time champion Sebastien Bourdais, in 2006 and 2007. Was a title contender until the conclusion of the penultimate race of each season...Highest start this season is pole on the streets of Long Beach and his highest finish is third on the street course in Edmonton.

Graham Rahal, No. 06 Hole in the Wall Camps Dallara/Honda/Firestone: “I’m extremely disappointed with our qualifying session. We have had a good car this weekend and had it been dry I really do think we could have challenged for the pole position. Its frustrating knowing we’re starting 13th and unfortunately we’re starting near some people who can make our lives more difficult in the race. I feel bad for the guys who have worked so hard. We were just so close and only missed progressing to the next session by a tenth of a second.”

- **FAST FACTS:** Will be his second race here and only fourth on a track he raced on prior to this year. In 2007, he started 9th, set the fastest lap of the race but finished 11th after being hit by Nelson Philippe on Lap 26 of 61 while 5th... In his IndyCar Series debut on a road/street course he became the youngest winner in major open-wheel racing in North America after winning in St. Pete on 4-6-08 at 19 years, 93 days old.
- **NHLR IN AUSTRALIA:** In the previous 17 years of racing here, NHR/NHLR has earned **SIX WINS** (Sebastien Bourdais 2005 & 2007, Junqueira 2004, Da Matta 2001, Tracy 1995, Mansell 1993), **SEVEN POLES** (Servia 2005, Bourdais 2003, Da Matta 2002, Mi. Andretti 1995 & 1991, Mansell 1993-1994) and **10 PODIUM** finishes (2nd – Bourdais 2004; 3rd - Fittipaldi 1998, Mi. Andretti 1997, Ma. Andretti 1994). Of their 107 wins, 80 have come on road/street courses while 89 of their 107 poles have also come on this type of track.