

McDONALD'S DRIVER WILSON AND HOLE IN THE WALL CAMPS DRIVER RAHAL RETURN TO SURFER'S PARADISE AND AIM TO BRING THE TEAM THEIR THIRD STREET COURSE WIN OF 2008

SURFER'S PARADISE, Queensland, Australia (October 21, 2008) --- Each time Newman/Haas/Lanigan Racing (NHLR) has competed on the streets of Surfers Paradise Queensland, Australia, they have had to consider the effect the outcome of the race would have on their season-ending standing or, as was the case in recent years, their fight for the title and run a semi-conservative strategy. The goal of their 18th appearance at this year's Nikon Indy 300 will still be to win but since this event is a non-points, exhibition race the annual affair could produce even more surprises than usual for an event that has seen only one repeat winner – former NHLR driver Sebastien Bourdais -- in 17 years.

“There's not a championship on the line this year going to Surfer's Paradise but that doesn't mean that the drivers don't still want to win really bad,” said Justin Wilson, driver of the No. 02 McDonald's race car and the most recent winner on a street course after having won in Detroit. “There certainly is no added pressure from a championship standpoint but it means so much to win at this track so it's a very important race for the drivers. To have a win here on your resume means you've overcome a lot of odds.”

The seaside venue is the site of many fond memories for NHLR as Bourdais and the team clinched the last three of their eight titles and won three of the past four races here dating back to Bruno Junqueira's win in 2004 and subsequent 1-2 finish with Bourdais who also earned dramatic title clinching wins in 2005 and 2007. Wilson is no stranger to these results as he was the team's biggest challenger and went on to finish third in the season-ending standings to both NHR drivers in 2005 and second to Bourdais in 2006 and 2007 before being hired to replace the Frenchman who moved to Formula One. Wilson is the highest finisher from the 2007 to return this year and is hoping to continue the momentum of a win in the previous Indy car street race in Detroit.

“Last year I finished second after a good race with Sebastien (Bourdais),” said Wilson who has competed here every year since 2003 except 2006 when he broke his wrist in Friday's pre-qualifying warmup. “We were trading positions on the pit stops and I passed him on track and he passed me back on the last pit stop. It was a good, fun battle. The two of us got out front and once Oriol crashed it was just myself and Sebastien that were pushing hard for the race win so it was a lot of fun! We'll be riding high after winning the previous two street races this year between myself (Detroit) and Graham (St. Petersburg). That will give us a lot of confidence but the track is so different that it doesn't guarantee that our setup is going to work. But we're hopeful that we have a good understanding of what it's going to take to tune it in if it's not good straightaway.”

NHLR is the only team competing in this year's event to have raced in every round held here. Of the 17 previous races, NHR/NHLR has won six times (Nigel Mansell, 1993; Paul Tracy, 1995; Cristiano da Matta, 2001; Bruno Junqueira, 2004, Sebastien Bourdais, 2005, 2007), earned 10 podium finishes and racked up 14 top-five and 21 top-10 results. In addition they have earned seven poles – the most recent of which came in 2005 by Oriol Servia. Despite the transition to a new series, Wilson has been competitive on all road and street courses this season and is hoping to continue that on one of the most challenging courses of the season.

“The event is rated highly in my opinion because it is a very demanding track,” said Wilson who started from pole on the streets of Long Beach in April's Champ Car finale. “It's very physical and very demanding on the drivers. Your concentration level needs to be at its highest point because you have to

be able to commit to all of the high speed corners on a street circuit where you don't have any runoff or leeway. The smallest mistake can lead to a big accident so it is very psychological. There are a lot of curbs you have to jump and a lot of cambered and crowned corners also which are very tricky and I'm sure they will be even trickier in the Indy car."

Wilson's teammate Graham Rahal, driver of the No. 06 Hole in the Wall Camps car, is also looking forward to his return to the streets of Surfer's Paradise. After coming here once as a child in 1998 to watch his father Bobby race, he competed here for the first time last year and it was a memorable experience.

"As far as the enthusiasm and excitement of the fans and community around the circuit, Surfers Paradise is one of the best events I have been to and been a part of," said Rahal, 19. "Last year my expectations for how good the event would be were high based on what I had heard and seen as a kid and the experience completely surpassed my expectations. It was an amazing event last year and it's really exciting for me to go back this year. It's probably the best race on the schedule other than the Indy 500. In terms of fan attendance and the enthusiasm that the fans have toward the race, it may be unmatched. I look forward to competing there again this year."

Last year Rahal started ninth and proved his competitiveness by setting the fastest lap of the race for the first time at this level but finished 11th after being hit by Nelson Philippe on Lap 26 of 61 while fifth. He will be one of 12 drivers in the 24-car field to have competed here before. After a record-setting performance last year, he hopes to have a trouble-free race this year and earn a strong result.

"I think we ran a really good race last year but unfortunately we didn't have the best of finishes because of the fact that Nelson Philippe hit me when I was running fifth and spun me out but that's how things go," said Rahal, who along with Wilson were the only transition drivers to win during the 2008 Indy car season. "I was able to set the fastest lap of the race for the first time. We didn't say 'Let's try to run the fastest lap' but the car was really good and I was able to push it really hard and we were able to do it which is really cool. And I don't think the lap time will be beaten any time soon because the Champ Car's had more horsepower."

The race in Australia has always been known to produce surprises beyond the usual contact-related incidences. In addition to multiple occurrences of torrential rain to a then-drought stricken area, a caution or two has also been brought out by hail in the warm, beach town. Although it's impossible to predict Mother Nature's role in the outcome of the race, Rahal expects it to be full of action.

"I do think you will see more bonsai moves because there isn't a championship on the line," said Rahal. "There are going to be people with the mindset that they are just trying to prove themselves and that it doesn't really matter what happens at the end of it all. Since it's not for points, I think everyone is just going to go all out and see what happens. That's the mentality that a lot of these guys have and unfortunately any one of us could pay the price for it. The race is known for surprises and I definitely think that will be the case again this year."

Between wins by Rahal (St. Petersburg) and Wilson (Detroit) in the first and last street races of the 2008 season, respectively, the team made visible gains with the new Dallara/Honda/Firestone Indy car racing combination throughout the season. Armed with a better understanding of the equipment with each race, Rahal figures he and his teammate should provide strong competition for the rest of the field.

"Surfers will be the only street course we will run on this season in an IndyCar that we ran on last year in a Champ Car but we should be able to adapt pretty quickly," said Rahal. "We ran strong in the last IndyCar Series street race in Detroit and Justin won so we are learning more and more about the Indy car."

Overall we were pretty quick last year. I hope we can contend for a win this year. I think Justin will be very tough to beat there but I really enjoyed the circuit last year and for rookies coming in that haven't been there before, it's a tough track. Dixon and all of those guys have seen the place so it's not going to be too different for them.

While the team is excited to get back to racing action after a six week break, they will do so with heavy hearts after the passing of team co-owner Paul Newman on September 26. The same love and appreciation of competition that brought Newman and fellow team co-founder Carl Haas together to form Newman/Haas Racing in the winter of 1982 will continue to propel the team in their quest to honor Paul the best way they know how – with continued success.

“It will be the first race without Paul which is obviously going to be difficult,” said Wilson. “We all miss Paul and it will mean a lot for either myself or Graham to go out there and try and get a win for him. We'll just do our best and give it everything we can and try to come out on top.”

“It's going to be tough racing for the first time without Paul,” added Rahal. “We're just going to go out there and approach it like we always have. We want to go out and get a win for him because we all know that winning made him really happy so that's what we're going to try to do.”

This weekend's Nikon Indy 300 can be seen on live on ESPN Classic on Saturday, October 25 at 10:30 p.m. EDT and will be re-aired at 11 pm. Oct. 26 on ESPN2. The event will get underway with practice on Friday, qualifying on Saturday and the 60-lap race will begin at 12:40 p.m. local time (14 hours ahead of ET) on Sunday. As always, fans can follow the action from every on-track session via the official website of the IndyCar Series, www.indycar.com. It will also be broadcast live on IMS Radio Network.

-NHLR-

Newman/Haas/Lanigan Racing – PREVIEW
Nikon Indy 300
Streets of Surfers Paradise, Queensland, Australia
Round 18 of 18 – The IndyCar Series, non-points exhibition event

DATE: Friday – Sunday, October 24-26, 2008
BROADCAST: Live on ESPN Classic at 10:30 p.m. ET on Oct. 25 in the US
TRACK LAYOUT: 14-turn, 2.795-mile temporary street course
RACE LENGTH: 60 laps / 167.7 miles
2007 WINNER: **Sebastien Bourdais**
2007 POLESITTER: Will Power

NHLR Stats – Surfers Paradise (17 events, 1991-2007; 1st for IndyCar Series)
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WINS:	6	(Bourdais 2007 & 2005, Junqueira 2004, Da Matta 2001, Tracy 1995, Mansell 1993)
POLES:	7	(Servia 2005, Bourdais 2003, Da Matta 2002, Mi. Andretti 1995 & 1991, Mansell 1993-1994)
PODIUM FINISHES:	10	(2 nd – Bourdais 2004; 3 rd - Fittipaldi 1998, Mi. Andretti 1997, Ma. Andretti 1994)

**WILSON’S BEST ROAD/
STREET START/FINISH:** 1st (seven poles) / 1st (six wins)

**WILSON’S BEST ROAD/
STREET S/F IN ’08:** 1st in Long Beach & 2nd in Watkins Glen ’08 / 1st in Detroit ’08

**RAHAL’S BEST ROAD/
STREET S/F:** 4th, three times in ’07 / 1st in St. Pete ’08

**RAHAL’S BEST ROAD/
STREET S/F IN ’08:** 6th in Detroit ’08 / 1st in St. Pete ’08

JUSTIN WILSON, driver of the #02 McDonald’s Dallara / Honda / Firestone:

- **JW IN SURFERS PARADISE:** 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.

- **INDYCAR SERIES WINNER IN TRANSITION SEASON:** After being competitive on all road/street races this season, Wilson broke through to win in Detroit and became the ninth different driver to win in 2008. **Rahal (St. Pete) and Wilson are the only two “transition” drivers to have won during the 2008 season.**

- **2006 & 2007 RUNNER UP TO THE CHAMPION:** 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 championship contender until the conclusion of the penultimate race of each season. He also finished third to NHR drivers Bourdais and Oriol Servia in 2005.

- **PERSONAL:** Justin Boyd Wilson was born on July 31, 1978 (30) in Sheffield, England...He married the former Julia Coggins in England on 12-29-2006 and reside in a suburb of Denver with their newborn daughter Jane Louise (born 4-12-08; expected 6-1-08)...His father Keith was an amateur Formula Ford racer in England but retired before Justin was born due to a crash that broke his back and legs. Instead of taking interest in mother Lynne's love of horses, Justin followed his father's passion and began racing karts when he was eight...In order to help finance his 2003 season in Formula One, Justin created a company -- Justin Wilson PLC -- and approx. 900 investors "bought shares of Justin" which raised \$2 million. A portion of his earnings go toward repaying the debt...He has conquered the challenges of dyslexia and, if he wasn't a race car driver, would be a designer of cars or etc. because he is curious about how things work or how to improve them...Hobbies include cycling, miniature golf, video games, karting and trying to fly one of his two RC Helicopters...He spends his free time plotting and completing home improvement projects as well as trying to find time to mow the yard between races...His typical day begins at 7 a.m. and he calls the U.K. and checks his email before spending an hour at his local gym with Julia. After lunch he rides his bike for 1.5 hours and devotes the remainder of the day to home projects, reading 50+ pages of NHLR engineering reports and hanging out with friends...At 6' 3-1/2" he is the tallest IndyCar Series driver...Listens to Coldplay, Stereophonics, The White Stripes and dance music.

GRAHAM RAHAL, driver of the #06 Hole in the Wall Camps Dallara / Honda / Firestone:

- **GRAHAM IN SURFERS PARADISE:** Will be his second race here and only fourth this season 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.

- **ONE OF TWO TRANSITION DRIVERS TO WIN:** Rahal earned the first Indy car win for a driver transitioning from Champ Car when he drove to victory in St. Petersburg, Florida. His teammate Wilson earned the second in Detroit.

- **PERSONAL:** Graham Robert Rahal, 19, was born in Columbus, Ohio on 1-4-1989 and resides in New Albany, Ohio...The 6'2" driver is one of four children of Bobby Rahal, three-time open wheel champion, Indy 500 winner and Hall of Fame race car driver...Has two sisters (Michaela and Samantha) and one brother (Jarrad)...Became the youngest IndyCar Series winner with his victory in his series debut in St. Pete on 4-6-08 and appeared on "Late Night with David Letterman" on 4-16-08 to discuss the feat...Graduated from New Albany High School with a 3.8 GPA on 6-3-07 despite missing over 80 days of school that year due to racing. *ESPN The Magazine* covered his graduation... When not racing he likes to work on cars, hang out with friends and family or play other sports for fun...Is a self-proclaimed "Car Guy" and still has the first car he received when he was 16 -- a Subaru WRX sti -- and is in the process of turning it into a race car with a Cosworth race engine. He purchased an '07 Atomic Orange Corvette Z06 with his prize money but later sold it and now has an '07 Ron Fellows limited edition Corvette Z06 as well as an '08 Chevy Trailblazer SS. In addition he has a 1964 Mini Cooper that he restored for his high school senior project. He also temporarily owned a Porsche GT3 and an Audi he earned by graduating high school with a GPA of 3.5 or above...To prepare for the physicality of racing he spends many hours doing cardiovascular training and weightlifting, skiing, running or bicycling... His favorite type of clothing is anything made by Puma... His favorite food is sushi and his weaknesses are ice cream and white chocolate mocha drinks at Starbucks...His favorite books are those written by Lance Armstrong (and anything he read other than for school)...His favorite thing to watch on TV is any Ohio State Buckeye game, his favorite actor/actress are Owen Wilson and Eva Longoria and favorite movie is "*Wedding Crashers*."

What They're Saying About...

JUSTIN WILSON, No. 02 McDonald's Dallara/Honda/Firestone: "There's not a championship on the line this year going to Surfer's Paradise but that doesn't mean that the drivers don't still want to win really bad. There certainly is no added pressure from a championship standpoint but it means so much to win at this track so it's a very important race for the drivers. To have a win here on your resume means you've overcome a lot of odds.

"Last year I finished second after a good race with Sebastien (Bourdais). We were trading positions on the pit stops and I passed him on track and he passed me back on the last pit stop. It was a good, fun battle. The two of us got out front and once Oriol crashed it was just myself and Sebastien that were pushing hard for the race win so it was a lot of fun!

"In 2006, I didn't get to drive because I broke my wrist in practice before qualifying. I clipped the tire bundle at Turn 12 which ripped the steering wheel through my hands and broke my wrist. It was disappointing not to race that weekend but I was able to recover. I watched the race from home on the TV which was frustrating.

"The event is rated highly in my opinion because it is a very demanding track. It's very physical and very demanding on the drivers. Your concentration level needs to be at its highest point because you have to be able to commit to all of the high speed corners on a street circuit where you don't have any runoff or leeway. The smallest mistake can lead to a big accident so it is very psychological. There are a lot of curbs you have to jump and a lot of cambered and crowned corners also which are very tricky and I'm sure they will be even trickier in the Indy car.

"We'll be riding high after winning the previous two street races this year between myself and Graham. That will give us a lot of confidence but the track is so different that it doesn't guarantee that our setup is going to work. But we're hopeful that we have a good understanding of what it's going to take to tune it in if it's not good straightaway.

"I'm going there a day early to give myself a little more time to adjust to the time difference and try to get into the rhythm and routine of sleeping when you're meant to sleep and not when you feel tired. It takes a few days to get over the jetlag so I'll just enjoy my time there before the work starts. It's a great place.

"It will be the first race without Paul which is obviously going to be difficult. We all miss Paul and it will mean a lot for either myself or Graham to go out there and try and get a win for him. We'll just do our best and give it everything we can and try to come out on top."

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"I think we ran a really good race last year but unfortunately we didn't have the best of finishes because of the fact that Nelson Philippe hit me when I was running fifth and spun me out but that's how things go. I was able to set the fastest lap of the race for the first time. We didn't say 'Let's try to run the fastest lap' but the car was really good and I was able to push it really hard and we were able to do it which is really cool. And I don't think the lap time will be beaten any time soon because the Champ Car's had more horsepower. Newman/Haas/Lanigan Racing won there last year when Seb (Sebastien Bourdais) earned his fourth straight title and has won four of the last seven races there so we are hoping to continue the competitiveness. Surfers will be the only street course we will run on this season in an IndyCar that we ran on last year in a Champ Car but we should be able to adapt pretty quickly. We ran strong in the last IndyCar Series street race in Detroit and Justin won so we are learning more and more about the Indy car. Overall we were pretty quick last year. I hope we can contend for a win this year. I think Justin will be very tough to beat there but I really enjoyed the circuit last year and for rookies coming in that haven't been there before, it's a tough track. Dixon and all of those guys have seen the place so it's not going to be too different for them.

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“My dad finished second twice in Australia and raced there many times. He didn’t win there so it’s up to me to get a win for the Rahal’s in Australia. It was great to get back there last year and actually compete. I think everyone starts to look forward to going back there once they get back home. I went there once as a kid in 1998, the last year my dad was racing in CART. It is a great place; absolutely beautiful! I was only 9 or 10 so I missed the best part which is the girls. I wasn’t paying attention to them then. My dad was knocked out right away so I didn’t see much of the race. I went back to the hotel and jumped in the pool.

“It’s going to be tough racing for the first time without Paul. We’re just going to go out there and approach it like we always have. We want to go out and get a win for him because we all know that winning made him really happy so that’s what we’re going to try to do.”