

# Race Report

Nikon Indy 300

Surfers Paradise, Australia

October 26, 2008

## RYAN HUNTER-REAY AND RAHAL LETTERMAN RACING WRAP 2008 INDY CAR ACTION WITH AUSSIE PODIUM

**SURFERS PARADISE, Australia** - Ryan Hunter-Reay (#17 Ethanol Dallara/Honda/Firestone) and his Rahal Letterman Racing teammates decided that if they were going to go halfway around the world to race only for prize money, you may as well go get yourself a chunk of it before you leave.

Hunter-Reay had one of his most consistent efforts of the 2008 season, running in the top-four all day and using a strong late-race pit stop to wrap 2008 IndyCar Series action with a podium finish in Sunday's Nikon Indy 300. Hunter-Reay finished just nine seconds behind Ryan Briscoe and Scott Dixon, and was never headed for third after the Team Ethanol crew got him ahead of Alex Tagliani on their final pit stop of the day.



The podium finish is the second of the year for Rahal Letterman Racing and the team's first since Ryan's victory at Watkins Glen. Hunter-Reay started fifth and immediately vaulted into fourth when Dario Franchitti stumbled at the start.

"Luckily I was able to get around Dario early in the race, that made things a bit easier. I thought it was a pretty good move," Hunter-Reay said. "After that we just settled into a rhythm and started ticking off some good laps."

Hunter-Reay and the Ethanol car were content to run fourth for the majority of the race, but had run down the third-placed Tagliani with 20 laps to go and spent the next few trips around the 2.795-mile Surfers Paradise road course looking in vain for a way past the Canadian.

When the on-track charge came up short, the Rahal Letterman Racing crew jumped into action as it has done all year long. Hunter-Reay came down Pit Lane behind Tagliani for a green-flag stop on Lap 42 but the RLR crew turned that around, getting Hunter-Reay out ahead of the Conquest Racing machine and into third place.

"I was getting held up for sure behind Tagliani," reported Hunter-Reay. "But as they always do, my Rahal Letterman Racing guys were able to get the job done in the pits and got us out ahead of him. From there we just tried to make sure that we didn't make any mistakes. I love this race course and always seem to do well here, so today went according to plan."

The 60-lap event went incident free for the remaining 18 laps, allowing Briscoe and Dixon to pull away from the field, leaving Hunter-Reay to power away from Tagliani for an easy third-place result.

The event was the first non-points paying race in the six-year career of Hunter-Reay, who finished on the podium for the second time this year. It was also the first podium in a non-points race for Rahal Letterman Racing, which last took part in an exhibition race in 1992 when Bobby Rahal finished sixth in the now-defunct Marlboro All-Star Challenge.

The team will now begin all preparations for the 2009 IndyCar Series and American Le Mans Series seasons. The team will release all relevant data about the team, sponsors and drivers as circumstances warrant.