



Dixon Leads Team Target in Australia as Franchitti Makes IRL Return

SURFERS PARADISE, Australia (Oct. 26, 2008)-Target Chip Ganassi Racing's new duo of Scott Dixon and Dario Franchitti picked up in Australia where the team left off at Chicagoland Speedway after wrapping up the 2008 IndyCar Series points championship. Dixon, finished a scant 0.5019-seconds behind racewinner Ryan Briscoe to finish second, while Franchitti finished 16th after contact on lap 29 of the 60-lap event.

Dixon and Franchitti started out the weekend's first practice session third and fourth, respectively, and used that speed to power their way into the final round of Firestone Fast Six qualifying. The two worked together for the first time as IndyCar teammates, and translated their experiences into a front row starting spot for Dixon (second) with Franchitti lining up right behind in fourth.

Dixon, driving the No. 9 Target machine, took advantage of his starting spot, led the race for a brief moment and knocked more than a second off Briscoe's advantage in the final two laps. The second-place finish for him in the final race of the 2009 IndyCar Series season marked his 13th podium finish of the year.

Franchitti, driving the No.10 Target car for the first time, started fourth, led once for two laps and finished 16th after making contact with the Turn 6 tire barrier on Lap 29. The 1999 Surfers winner was able to return and was running at the finish. Also notable was the fact Franchitti set the fastest lap of the race at 1 minute, 35.1552 seconds (105.743 mph) on Lap 54 – his first official time back in an IndyCar after winning the 2007 championship.

Up next for the Target team is the season-opening Honda Grand Prix of St. Petersburg on the streets of St. Petersburg, Fla. on Sunday, April 5th 2009 (2:00 p.m. EDT, Versus).

TCGR Quoteboard:

Scott Dixon: "We had a bit of a bad start and had to shortcut the track and give (Ryan) Briscoe a position back. It was unfortunate because it's so hard to pass on the track. The traffic at the end made it exciting. We were quicker than him in different spots. He was quicker than me, but we were quicker on the backside. I don't know, if he had made a mistake, we could have got him."

Dario Franchitti: "I was surprised at how quickly it came back to me. I have not driven here for five or six years but the first lap felt like I had not been away, so I am happy with that. It certainly was weird getting in the car. I made the point with Chip (Ganassi) when I was doing the deal that for the past 10 or 11 years I have been either just in front or behind the Target car. So to be in it was pretty cool."

About Chip Ganassi Racing Teams, Inc.

With 14 wins in 2008, the team is enjoying its most successful season in history as it continues to add to its tally of 103 trips to victory lane. Chip Ganassi created his own one-car IndyCar team in 1990 and established a partnership with a new sponsor, Target. Today, his teams include two IRL IndyCars, and along with Felix Sabates he has two cars in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series, one entry in the NASCAR Nationwide Series and a Daytona Prototype in the world of Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series racing. Ganassi's IndyCar teams have amassed six Championships and 64 wins since 1994; his NASCAR teams have 12 wins and two Rookie-of-the-Year titles; and the Grand American team has won three Rolex Series Daytona Prototype Championships and are the three-time defending Champions of the Rolex 24 At Daytona. Chip Ganassi Racing operates out of state-of-the-art race shop facilities in Indianapolis, Ind., and Concord, N.C., with a corporate office in Pittsburgh, Pa.

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