



**Day Three**  
**Thursday, November 7, 2019**  
**Practice Day**

**MARCO AURELIO BRASIL QUICKEST IN THURSDAY PRACTICE FOR OPEN-WHEELS 500**

Thursday's third day of practice for the Open-Wheels.com 500 Mile Race presented by Mitchell Transmissions was led by another Brazilian driver in Marco Aurelio Brasil, making it a clean sweep of three straight days the South American country has topped the time charts.

Marco's quickest lap averaged a speed of 232.799mph (38.660s) and led Nate Stewart (231.446mph), Thales Toledo (230.793mph), Silvio Roberto Sanchez (230.793mph) and Danyyil Moysa (230.639mph) in the top five.

Wilson Neto – who was sixth-quick in Thursday's practice – logged the most laps with 316 circuits completed. In the end, four Brazilian drivers found their way into the first six positions on the leaderboard.

For Stewart, driver of the No. 37 FUEL Gonzalez Motorsports Dallara IR-18 Honda, it was a thrill to end the practice just one spot away from the top with just a couple days until qualifications begin.

"So far, I've been running about mid-pack of those that are practicing. That's where I expected to be. I'm mostly a stock car guy, so coming over here, I didn't really expect to be the fastest," said Stewart.

"My teammates at FUEL Gonzalez Motorsports are working super hard on the setup, and hopefully we can all make the show. Heading into the weekend, I'm doubtful on my attempt at making the field. I'll be happy to leave with a top 50 time since the competition is so stiff. I'm working my ass off to get faster, hopefully I can show it during qualifying."

In total, 45 drivers reached the track on Thursday – and 65 of the 104 cars on the entry list have practiced in official on-track sessions. Many drivers prefer to practice in private servers, as well, and a slew of those drivers are expected for qualifications on Saturday.

On Thursday evening, the draw for Saturday morning's initial qualifications order was also held. Drivers will have one guaranteed chance to qualify in the initial order line (between 6:00 AM and 3:00 PM Eastern) before the track is open from 3:00 to 5:50 PM Eastern for additional qualifications attempts. On Sunday,, the track will be open from 6:00 AM to 5:50 PM Eastern for qualifications, as well.

**THURSDAY'S SCHEDULE (All Times Eastern)**

3:00 PM-3:00 AM	Open-Wheels.com 500 Mile Race Practice
7:00 PM	Draw for Initial Qualifications Order
8:00 PM	<i>Today at the 500 presented by Thru Kaiser's Visor</i> Airing

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**ENTRY UPDATES**

- Carter McCue, driver of the No. 27 Screenmobile/Driven2SaveLives/Open-Wheels.com Watkins Motorsports Group Dallara IR-18 Chevrolet, remains ineligible to participate in today's practice due to safety rating restrictions.
- Tommy Gossett, driver of the No. 80 VPR/GTR Simulators/K&M Graphics Outlaw Motorsports Dallara IR-18 Chevrolet, will not be eligible to participate in today's practice until he accepts the Open-Wheels Motorsports Sanctioning league invitation on iRacing.
- Sean Fay, Frank Ferry Jr., Carter McCue, and Chris Stofer have withdrawn their names from the initial qualifications draw to be held later today. They will attempt qualifications runs in the open sessions on Saturday and Sunday.

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After Hulman & Company announced their sale on Monday to Penske Corporation, another interesting bit of news came out of Indianapolis on Tuesday. The Indianapolis Motor Speedway will host an autonomous race car challenge in 2021, featuring the Indy Lights' IL-15 Dallara chassis. The winner of the competition will earn \$1 million, and the announcement was made at the SEMA Show in Las Vegas.

From an IMS press release:

The Indy Autonomous Challenge is a competition among universities to create software that enables self-driving Indy Lights race cars to compete in a head-to-head race on the IMS track. The development of such software can help speed the commercialization of full autonomous vehicles and enhance existing advanced driver-assistance systems (ADAS) in people-driven cars. These technologies help drivers remain in control and avoid accidents by prompting awareness and improving accuracy.

"There's a fundamental connection between innovations on the racetrack and real-world improvements on the highway," IMS President J. Douglas Boles said. "With the launch of the Indy Autonomous Challenge, IMS continues to embrace its historic role as a catalyst for the next generation of vehicle technologies in motorsports competition and wider consumer platforms. And while drivers will always be at the heart of racing at IMS, we're excited to be part of this groundbreaking and exciting initiative."

The Challenge consists of five rounds. Teams submit a short white paper during the first round, and in the second round, teams must demonstrate vehicular automation by sharing a short video of an existing vehicle or by participating in Purdue University's self-driving go-kart competition at IMS.

The Indy Autonomous Challenge's simulation sponsor ANSYS will supply its industry-leading VRXPERIENCE Driving Simulator powered by SCANeRTM and its SCADE software development

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suite to teams for their use in developing autonomous vehicle software. ESN and ANSYS will co-host "hackathons" to familiarize teams with the simulator's full potential and ANSYS will award \$150,000 in prizes to top finishers of a simulated race during the third round. The fourth round enables teams to test their actual vehicles at IMS in advance of the head-to-head race around the oval, which will award \$1 million, \$250,000, and \$50,000 to the first, second, and third finishers, respectively.

"What we're asking universities to do is hard," said Matt Peak, director of mobility at Energy Systems Network. "Our hope is that by bringing together and offering up to participating teams the world's premier automotive proving ground, performance chassis manufacturer, engineering research center and simulation platform, as well as nearly \$1.5 million in total cash awards, universities will see the Challenge as not just throwing down the gauntlet but also extending the helping hand to accelerate innovation and the arrival of new technologies."

Joining IMS and ESN for the announcement were race car manufacturer Dallara Automobili and the Clemson University International Center for Automotive Research (CU-ICAR). Through Clemson University's long-running vehicle prototype program Deep Orange, Clemson graduate automotive engineering students will collaborate with ESN and Dallara to engineer an autonomous-capable version of Dallara's 210 mph IL-15 Indy Lights chassis that can accommodate the competing university teams' driverless algorithms. Participating teams will be directly involved in the converted vehicle's design and specifications through monthly virtual design reviews (VDRs) and other feedback channels throughout the competition.

Five universities registered for the competition upon its opening on Tuesday morning: Korea Advanced Institute of Science & Technology (KAIST), Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI), University of Florida, University of Illinois and the University of Virginia. Members of each of these early registered teams joined the organizers at the SEMA Show for the announcement.

"Nearly 15 years ago, the DARPA Grand Challenge helped prove the innovation-generating and industry-creating role of prize competitions, while recent years have seen the value of autonomous vehicle proving grounds - including Texas A&M RELLIS/TTI Proving Grounds Research Facility - on full display", said Ivan Damnjanovic, associate professor and director of engineering project management at Texas A&M University. "We're excited to be in on the ground level of such a dynamic effort that leverages both of these tools while adding others that can excite and empower students, inspire classrooms and coursework, and altogether help transportation research institutions advance their programs."

Registration is open for accredited, tax-exempt colleges and universities (including foreign institutions of higher education) through Feb. 28, 2020. For more information and to register for the competition, visit [www.indyautonomouschallenge.com](http://www.indyautonomouschallenge.com).

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**OPEN-WHEELS.COM 500 MILE RACE PRACTICE**

3:00 PM – **GREEN.** The Speedway is open for practice for all entrants.

3:24 PM – Wilson Neto (No. 421 Interlagos Motorsport Dallara IR-18 Honda) posts the quickest time in early practice, going 230.374mph (39.067s) for Club Brazil.

4:01 PM – Firestone reports that the track temperature is 115 degrees Fahrenheit and the ambient temperature is 78 degrees Fahrenheit under partly cloudy skies. The winds are calm, blowing 2 mph out of the North.

5:17 PM – 23 drivers have set times today and 24 have brought their cars to pit lane. 658 laps have been turned to this point, and Wilson Neto has logged the most laps of all drivers today with 80.

5:31 PM – Hugo Olsson (No. 39 Independent Dallara IR-18 Honda) has the best consecutive five-lap average thus far in today's practice, going 229.299mph (39.250s). AJ Burton (Indy 500 Group with Broken Aero/ART Dallara IR-18 Honda) has the quickest consecutive 15-lap run of all drivers with a 223.242mph stint (40.315s).

6:15 PM – Nate S Stewart (No. 37 FUEL Gonzalez Motorsports Dallara IR-18 Honda) goes quickest in the session with a best lap at 231.446mph (38.886s). Stewart has completed 11 laps thus far in practice, and is looking to be the first non-Brazilian driver to lead practice by the end of the day.

7:00 PM – Dylan Freckelton and AJ Burton have continued their strong runs from the UK and Ireland club, currently sitting second and third overall on today's leaderboard. Freckelton has a best lap average speed of 230.103mph while Burton reached 229.903mph.

7:02 PM – The draw for the initial qualifications order is held live on Twitch.TV/OpenWheels to determine how drivers will roll off for Saturday's Pole Day qualifications sessions. Justin Carey (No. 50 JaySkinz Dallara IR-18 Chevrolet) will be the first driver to hit the track at 6:10 AM Eastern to begin qualifications.

8:00 PM – The third airing of *Today at the 500 presented by Thru Kaiser's Visor* is held, featuring a slew of accomplished guests: Flinn Lazier, the 2019 SCCA Formula Atlantic champion; Adam Blocker, a top-split race winner at the 2019 iRacing Indianapolis 500; Brendan Lichtenberg, also a top-split race winner at the 2017 iRacing Indianapolis 500; and Chad Simpson, a veteran in the iRacing IndyCar community who won the first giveaway item in the Open-Wheels.com 500 Mile Race Photo Contest. Simpson will be gifted a 1958 issue of Sports Illustrated, which features a preview of the 1958 Indianapolis 500 and an in-depth interview with former Indianapolis Motor Speedway owner Tony Hulman.

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- 8:22 PM – Firestone reports that the track temperature is 115 degrees Fahrenheit, and the ambient temperature is 78 degrees Fahrenheit. The winds are blowing at 2 miles per hour out of the North.
- 8:43 PM – Club Brazil is beginning to re-assert themselves atop the timesheet today, with four drivers within the first five spots now. Silvio Roberto Sanchez (No. 407 Corinthians Rally Team Dallara IR-18 Honda) is second-quick behind Nate Stewart, going 230.793mph. Thales Toledo (P3, 230.792mph) and Wilson Neto (P5, 230.374mph) round out Brazil's contingency at this moment.
- 8:50 PM – Thales Toledo has the highest trap speed number of the day – 241.4 miles per hour at the end of the straightaway earlier in practice.
- 9:01 PM – The first 22 positions in practice belong to Dallara IR-18 machines, while Frank Ferry Jr. (No. 97 ACME Racing Dallara DW-12) is the fastest non-Dallara IR-18 entry in 23<sup>rd</sup>. Ferry has a best lap speed of 227.669mph.
- 9:13 PM – Wilson Neto (P5 overall) has the quickest 15-lap average speed of 40.287s per lap – or 223.397mph. Neto also just completed his 200<sup>th</sup> lap of the day, making him to complete at least 200 laps of practice for each of the three event days thus far at the Open-Wheels.com 500 Mile Race.
- 9:25 PM – A total of 1,882 laps have been completed to this point in today's practice. In each of the first two days of practice, more than 2,000 laps had been completed – and we are on track for that once again today.
- 9:27 PM – Five drivers have logged at least 100 laps today – Neto, Borja Bueno, Peter Bennett, Adam Blocker, and Niles Anders. Anders is shaking down cars for Snake Pit, and will not be participating in this year's Open-Wheels.com 500 Mile Race.
- 10:45 PM – Marco Aurelio Brasil posts a new quick time in the session, a 38.881-second lap to leap over Nate Stewart. Brasil was the quickest driver at the end of Opening Day practice in his No. 812 TES Racing Dallara IR-18 Chevrolet, and he also owns the quickest trap speed in today's practice – 242.4 miles per hour.
- 11:23 PM – Brasil improves his best lap to a 38.726-second (232.402mph) lap. It was Marco's 81<sup>st</sup> lap completed in the session.
- 11:25 PM – Wilson Neto eclipses the 300-lap mark in practice today. Neto is currently P6 with a best lap of 230.373 mph for Interlagos Motorsport.

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3:00 AM – Practice has concluded for Day Three at the Open-Wheels.com 500 Mile Race. Marco Aurelio Brasil was the quickest driver with a best lap speed of 232.799mph (38.660s). A total of 2,522 laps were turned for the day.

A total of 45 cars were on-track today, and 65 cars have made laps at the Speedway thus far. 60 drivers have piloted Dallara IR-18 chassis, while three entrants have driven the Dallara DW-12, and two drivers have made laps in the Dallara IR-05. There were zero yellow flag periods today. The high was 78 degrees Fahrenheit and the track temperature began the session at 112 degrees Fahrenheit, ending the session at 115 degrees Fahrenheit. Winds were out of the North at 2 mph.

Cars on track today (in order of speed): #812 Marco Aurelio Brasil, #37 Nate Stewart, #407 Silvio Roberto Sanchez, #77 Thales Toledo, #12 Danyyil Moysa, #421 Wilson Neto, #313 Dylan Freckelton, #57 AJ Burton, #42 Chad Simpson, #144 Christopher Demeritt, #33 John Hajek-Doggett, #39 Hugo Olsson, #52 Dan Ensich, #2 Zachary Campbell, #46 Jeffrey Stanton, #36 Jeff Wills, #23 Yang Ou, #51 Borja Bueno, #72 Hugo Hernandez-Gutierrez, #02 Matt Hollibaugh, #35 Michael Chinn, #54 Payton Gries, #5 Oliver Silva Barrera, #8 Peter Bennett, #738 David Soranzo, #53 Joe Flanagan, #91 Ernie Williams Jr., #19 Craig Hawkins, #74 Adam Blocker, #97 Frank Ferry Jr., #87 Geoff Costeloe, #92 Ryan Myrehn, #70 Aaron Smith II, #17 Niles Anders, #86 Raul Alvarez, #71 Richard Valli, #048 Nick Autorina, #58 Riley Thompson, #66 Michele Costantini, #55 Tim Doyle, #4 Jeff Drake, #47 Rob Powers, #666 Uldis Puteklis, #45 Alexander Williams, and #59 Evan Adams.

**FASTEST TIMES/SPEEDS OF THE DAY**

Pos.	Car	Name	Team	Time	Speed (mph)
1.	812	Marco Aurelio Brasil	TES Racing	38.660s	232.799mph
2.	37	Nate Stewart	FUEL Gonzalez Racing	38.886	231.446
3.	407	Silvio Roberto Sanchez	Corinthians Rally Team	38.996	230.793
4.	77	Thales Toledo	Independent	38.996	230.793
5.	12	Danyyil Moysa	EVO SR	39.022	230.639
6.	421	Wilson Neto	Interlagos Motorsport	39.067	230.373
7.	313	Dylan Freckelton	Independent	39.113	230.103
8.	57	AJ Burton	Indy 500 Group w/ Broken Aero/ART	39.147	229.903
9.	42	Chad Simpson	Last Lap Motorsports	39.155	229.856
10.	144	Christopher Demeritt	Broken Aero w/ Indy 500 Group	39.179	229.715

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## **POST-PRACTICE DRIVER QUOTES**

**P2. NATE STEWART (No. 37 FUEL Gonzalez Motorsports Dallara IR-18 Honda):** "So far, I've been running about mid-pack of those that are practicing. That's where I expected to be. I'm mostly a stock car guy, so coming over here, I didn't really expect to be the fastest. My teammates at FUEL Gonzalez Motorsports are working super hard on the setup, and hopefully we can all make the show. Heading into the weekend, I'm doubtful on my attempt at making the field. I'll be happy to leave with a top 50 time since the competition is so stiff. I'm working my ass off to get faster, hopefully I can show it during qualifying. Still can't believe we got P2 in practice. Hope to talk to you guys soon, and hopefully it isn't when I barely miss the field."

**P3. SILVIO ROBERTO SANCHEZ (No. 407 Corinthians Rally Team Dallara IR-18 Chevrolet):** "Brazilians are ready for the weekend and we want pole position. Today I focused the work on the car that will be used in the race; I have a fantastic pace walking alone but I am looking to improve tire wear when I walk many laps behind other cars."

**P4. THALES TOLEDO (No. 77 Independent Dallara IR-18 Honda):** "Last practice session was a good one. I decided to try another approach on my race and qualifying sets, and got a great response from the car. Pretty excited for the qualify session!"

**P5. DANYIIL MOYSA (No. 12 EVO SR Dallara IR-18 Chevrolet):** "I'm very excited about this event. Being among the best drivers makes me nervous, but I've been trying my best and I hope it's going to be enough for a good qualifying."

**P6. WILSON NETO (No. 421 Interlagos Motorsport Dallara IR-18 Honda):** "My third day of official practice was very intense. Unlike previous days, early in the session I did a few qualifying laps to understand how the rubber build-up will affect lap times. I was not lucky on Qualifications Draw and will be the 43rd car going to the track from a total of 44 cars, so my main goal for Saturday will be at least to be on the top-20. I also did many tests with my teammates' race cars, in search of something to help me in my race setup, and to do so, I had to put a considerable amount of laps. But at the end of the day, it was worth it."

**P7. DYLAN FRECKELTON (No. 313 Independent Dallara IR-18 Honda):** "It's nice to be up near the sharp end of the field, but obviously practice times won't count for anything at the weekend so I'm not getting too excited. That being said, I think I've got a car setup that works well over four laps so I'm cautiously optimistic that I can have a good qualifying run and fight to make the field for the race. Looking forward to it."

**P9. CHAD SIMPSON (No. 42 Last Lap Motorsports Dallara IR-18 Honda):** "Right now I'm just focusing on getting as much out of the car as I can for all four (qualifying) laps. I found a little bit of speed in the early hours of the morning that's helping build up my confidence (that) we'll be able to put it in the show, but right now I know it's still not as fast as other teams."

**P10. CHRISTOPHER DEMERITT (No. 144 Broken Aero with Indy 500 Group Dallara IR-18 Honda):** "The focus this week has definitely been on qualifying. With the limited attempts, it's more important than ever that I'm prepared to put down a run with as little mistakes the first time. Finishing in the top-10 is a good indication of how this weekend could go and I'm excited for the qualification weekend to start!"

## **FRIDAY'S SCHEDULE (All Times Eastern)**

3:00 PM-3:00 AM      Open-Wheels.com 500 Mile Race Practice