



Pit Notes

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Honda Grand Prix of St. Petersburg – Friday, April 3 through Sunday, April 5, 2009

Yacht Club Party Deck Open to Ticket Holders at the Honda Grand Prix

If you have ever wanted to visit the Yacht Club at the Honda Grand Prix, you will have your chance in 2009. For the first time ticket holders can access the Yacht Club and catch the race on a special party deck inside the Yacht Club. Previously the Yacht Club was not open to ticket holders, but that has changed for this year. “We made some changes to the Yacht Club this year and the biggest one is more access for general ticket holders at the Grand Prix,” said Dale Dillon, manager of the Honda Grand Prix Yacht Club. “Our spot along the bay has great viewing and the new party deck is sure to be one of the best spots on the race circuit.”

Andretti Foundation Gala Moves to the Vinoy

The 2009 Michael Andretti Foundation Gala is scheduled for Friday, April 3 and the popular annual event has a new home in St. Petersburg. For the first time the Gala will be held at the Renaissance Vinoy Resort. Many of the drivers from the IndyCar Series and the American Le Mans Series attend the event and are a big part of the festivities. IndyCar stars Danica Patrick, Marco Andretti, Tony Kanaan, Hideki Mutoh and Dario Franchitti are already confirmed for this year’s Gala. Proceeds from the event benefit All Children’s Hospital Pediatric Trauma Center, Bayfront Baby Place and The Mayor’s Mentors & More Program. Tickets for this year’s event are \$200 each. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit www.AndrettiFoundationGala.com.

3 Questions with Racing Legend Michael Andretti

What is the key to the continued success of the event?

“It’s just that – it’s an event. It’s not just a race. We know from years and years of attending motorsports events that you have to offer something for everyone to be successful. Events that do that are the ones that have a real “buzz” to them. Racing is great, but we want everybody to be able to enjoy themselves whether they are a huge race fan or not. We’ve built our event in that way and try to improve on it every year.”

The Honda Grand Prix marks the second season after unification for the IndyCar Series. How would you evaluate the field going into this year?

“This is one of the deepest fields and most-talented fields we’ve probably ever seen in the IndyCar Series. The transition teams have had a year to develop their cars and work on their programs, and I think you’ll see the results of that when everyone starts the season in St. Petersburg.”

This will be Marco’s fourth year racing for Andretti Green. Is it easier or harder to have your son racing for you?

“I wouldn’t want him racing anywhere else because I think this is the best place for him. But, I think it is harder in a lot of ways. It’s hard enough to watch drivers race for you as an owner, but adding in the fact

that he is my son makes it that much more difficult. I want him to be successful like any father would, but I'm also probably more critical of him during a race weekend than I am of someone else. It's a challenge, for sure."

Next week St. Petersburg's Dan Wheldon will be featured.