



Track: 1.8-mile, 14-turn temporary street circuit (clockwise)

Race distance: 110 laps / 198 miles

Entry List: [Firestone Grand Prix of St. Petersburg](#) (PDF)

Push-to-pass parameters: 10 activations for 15 seconds each

Firestone tire allotment: Seven sets primary, three sets alternate

Twitter: @GPSTPETE, @IndyCar, #FirestoneGP, #IndyCar

Event website: www.gpstpete.com

INDYCAR website: www.IndyCar.com

2014 race winner: Will Power (No. 12 Verizon Team Penske car)

2014 Verizon P1 Award winner: Takuma Sato (No. 14 ABC Supply A.J. Foyt Racing car) ... 1 minute, 01.8668 seconds (104.738 mph) in Firestone Fast Six

Qualifying lap record: Sebastien Bourdais on Feb. 22, 2003 (1:00.928; 106.710 mph)

ABC race broadcast: Sunday, March 29 (3 p.m. ET)

Allen Bestwick is the lead announcer for ESPN on ABC broadcasts for the second consecutive year alongside analysts Scott Goodyear and Eddie Cheever Jr. Rick DeBruhl, Dr. Jerry Punch and Jon Beekhuis are the pit reporters.

Video Streaming: All practice sessions for the 2015 Verizon IndyCar Series season will be available on the INDYCAR YouTube channel www.youtube.com/indycar and RaceControl.IndyCar.com. Qualifying for races telecast by ABC will also be available via live streaming.

Radio broadcasts: Paul Page is the chief announcer alongside analyst Davey Hamilton. All Verizon IndyCar Series races are broadcast live on the IMS Radio Network, Sirius 213, XM 209, IndyCar.com, indycarradio.com and on the INDYCAR 15 app.

Verizon IndyCar Series qualifying is broadcast on Sirius 213, XM 209, IndyCar.com, indycarradio.com and the INDYCAR 15 app. Verizon IndyCar Series practice sessions plus Indy Lights practice and qualifying are on IndyCar.com, indycarradio.com, and the INDYCAR 15 app.

At-track schedule (all times local):

Friday, March 27 (Promoter Day)

12:30-1:45 p.m. (Verizon IndyCar Series practice)

4:15-5:30 p.m. (Verizon IndyCar Series practice)

Saturday, March 28

12:30-1:15 p.m. (Verizon IndyCar Series practice)

4:15 p.m. (Three rounds of qualifications)

Sunday, March 29

12-12:30 p.m. (Verizon IndyCar Series warm-up)

3 p.m. ABC on air

3:37 p.m. Firestone Grand Prix of St. Petersburg green flag

Race Notes:

* The Firestone Grand Prix of St. Petersburg marks the competition debut of aerodynamic bodywork kits designed, manufactured and supplied by Chevrolet and Honda. Cars will be differentiated by their shape on the street course as the manufacturers have designed separate aero kit specifications for road and street course/short ovals and speedways for the Dallara IR-12 chassis. References to the cars will incorporate the name of the corresponding manufacturer.

* Aero kit competition complements the fourth year of engine manufacturer competition between Chevrolet and Honda with their 2.2-liter, twin-turbocharged V-6 engines. It will be another season testing speed and durability to determine the Manufacturer Champion.

* Five drivers will make their first start at St. Petersburg - Stefano Coletti, Sage Karam, Gabby Chaves, Luca Filippi and Francesco Dracone. The first three are Sunoco Rookie of the Year award candidates. Filippi has competed in eight Verizon IndyCar Series races and makes his debut with CFH Racing. Chaves was the 2014 Indy Lights Presented by Cooper Tires champion, while Karam, who be the youngest driver to start an Indy car for Chip Ganassi Racing, won the 2013 title. Dracone competed in two races in 2010.

* Will Power, who had earned consecutive poles at St. Petersburg in 2010-13, won the 2014 season opener at St. Petersburg after qualifying fourth. He went on to win his first Verizon IndyCar Series championship. Power also won the race in 2010. Team Penske has won the pole position in five out of the last eight Grand Prix of St. Petersburg races.

* Tony Kanaan seeks to start his 234th consecutive race, which would extend his Indy car-record streak that began in 2001 at Portland. Teammate Scott Dixon has made 175 consecutive starts.

* Dixon, the longest-tenured driver for Target Chip Ganassi Racing, is tied with Bobby Unser for fifth on the all-time Indy car victory list with 35. He has three runner-up finishes at St. Petersburg but has not won.

* Helio Castroneves, who has won the race in 2006, 2007 and 2012, has been the Verizon IndyCar Series championship runner-up the past two seasons. Castroneves finished third at St. Petersburg in 2014.

* Simona de Silvestro, who made 65 starts over four Verizon IndyCar Series seasons, returns to the series in an Andretti Autosport Honda after a year absence to pursue a Formula One career.

* There were a record-tying 11 different winners in the 18 races of 2014, and equally tight competition is projected for the 2015 season.

* With six victories in 11 races at the Firestone Grand Prix of St. Petersburg, Team Penske is the winningest team in the history of the Verizon IndyCar Series. Three different Team Penske drivers have visited Victory Lane at St. Petersburg. Helio Castroneves has won three times at the venue (2006, 2007, 2012, more than any other driver), while Will Power has two St. Pete wins to his credit (2010 and last season). Ryan Briscoe opened the 2009 season with a victory for Team Penske. Chip Ganassi Racing has won four of the last 10 Verizon IndyCar Series openers (Homestead: 2006, 2007, 2008; St. Pete: 2011).

* The 2015 Firestone Grand Prix of St. Petersburg is the 12th Indy car race on the streets of St. Petersburg, Fla. Paul Tracy won the inaugural race on Feb. 23, 2003, under CART sanction. Sebastien Bourdais, entered in this year's race, started from the pole. On March 21, Bourdais co-drove to the overall victory in the 12 Hours of Sebring. He is a St. Petersburg resident.

Pre-Race Quotes:

Will Power (No. 1 Verizon Chevrolet, defending Verizon IndyCar Series champion and 2014 Firestone Grand Prix of St. Petersburg race winner): "I'm really excited to get the 2015 Verizon IndyCar Series started and represent the sport as the champion throughout the year. Even though I was able to break through last year and win my first title, I am preparing to go into this season just as hungry as I was before I became a champion. The drive to win multiple championships is just as strong as the drive to win one. To do that, it's important to get off to a good start at St. Pete. Winning there last year in the No. 12 Verizon Chevrolet was critical to the championship push. Now that I'm in the No. 1 Verizon Chevy for 2015, we need to put the new number in Victory Lane as well." (About debut of aero kit competition): "As we are starting to understand the new Chevrolet aero kits, it's clear that they have done a proper job in the design and development of them. The kits produce massive downforce, low drag and the cars are absolutely glued to the track. Obviously, as we go along in the year we are going to learn more and more about what we need to push for wins. That is where having a new, fourth car with Simon Pagnaud will be key. His ability to communicate what a car is doing and what it needs is really impressive. He's going to add a lot to Team Penske and I look forward to racing as his teammate for quite a while."

Juan Pablo Montoya (No. 2 Verizon Chevrolet): "The 2014 Verizon IndyCar Series season was one of a lot of adjustments for me getting re-introduced to these cars again after 13 seasons away from the series. The race at St. Pete was a bit of a struggle for me last year, especially since I had never been on the 'red' Firestone tires until the race started, and it took some adjusting. Toward the end of the year, though, we were really competitive, leading laps and running at the front of the field. With that year under my belt I really think we can get the season started strong at St. Pete. The No. 2 Verizon Chevy has been solid in our preseason testing and

with a couple more days on track before we get to St. Pete we should be able to dial it in even more."

Helio Castroneves (No. 3 Hitachi Chevrolet): "While we would all have loved to race in Brazil this year, there is something cool about keeping the tradition of opening the Verizon IndyCar Series season in St. Pete. This is a track that has been very good to Team Penske, and to me personally. Even though we are introducing new aero kits to the series this year, I think you will see Team Penske and Chevrolet at the front of the field when the laps are winding down in the race. I have been encouraged with the speed in the No. 3 Hitachi Chevy during our testing over the last couple of weeks. Team Penske is always strong in qualifying at St. Pete as well. If we can get a good starting spot I believe we can keep the car up front all day and challenge for the win. A fourth win at St. Pete would be awesome. And then, who knows, maybe a fourth win in another race later on in the season at Indianapolis."

Stefano Coletti (No. 4 KV Racing Technology Chevrolet): "I am really excited to start the championship and the challenge of learning all the new tracks. I have done a few tests now with KV Racing Technology and gathered some valuable data, which I'm looking forward to being able to use this weekend at St. Petersburg. I have been able to watch some past races, so I have an idea of what the track will be like and especially what to expect in Turn 1, which looks extremely tight. Having such an experienced teammate as (Sebastien) Bourdais has been really helpful and we work well together, so I am looking forward to having a great first season to my Indy car career."

James Hinchcliffe (No. 5 Arrow/Lucas Oil Schmidt Peterson Honda): "St. Pete is like the first day of school, providing that you like school, that is. I love going there. The race is awesome, the track is fun and it's a place that I've always run well at. It's been nice getting back in the cars to go testing but I think the whole Schmidt Peterson Motorsports team just wants to get back to racing and see what we can do in the Arrow car. It can't come soon enough."

James Jakes (No. 7 Schmidt Peterson Motorsports Honda): "I'm very excited about starting the season in St. Pete this weekend, and really looking forward to driving the No. 7 MediaTech SPM Honda around there. We've had a busy few weeks leading up to the race and hopefully everything we've learned will benefit us for the Verizon IndyCar Series season opener. We're looking to start the season strong so that we have a good baseline for 2015."

Sage Karam (No. 8 GE LED Chip Ganassi Racing Chevrolet): "I can't tell you how excited I am to get the season started. When I signed as a development driver with the team last year, I was able to get in and help out the IMSA team, but now it's time to get the INDYCAR season started. St. Pete is a track I've had success on before in the ladder series and I'm ready to go. We've been testing a lot the past few months and I've really been trying hard to absorb everything I've learned from my teammates and our driver coach Dario Franchitti. I can't wait to get the GE LED car out for practice and start working on the car with my team and my engineer Eric Cowdin. It's a dream come true to be racing for Chip and this team and I'm going to be ready to go."

Scott Dixon (No. 9 Target Chip Ganassi Racing Chevrolet): "St. Petersburg is one of the best places to kick off the season. It's around spring break time, they do a fantastic job of getting the community in and obviously the party atmosphere there too with different things going on during the day. All the different classes of cars that race there and all the variety of things to do in St. Pete make it pretty fantastic for a lot of people. I live in Indianapolis and we finally get to have some sun and get hang out in some warm weather. The track itself is always fantastic racing with

big braking zones going into Turn 1. It's also very wide, great for starts, restarts and overtaking throughout the race. I think it's definitely been some great racing over the years and this year I expect the same. I haven't won there either, so I need to work on that one. I've had three or four podiums but have never won."

Tony Kanaan (No. 10 NTT Data Chip Ganassi Racing Chevrolet): "It's been a lot of fun getting to know the new Chevy aero kits over the last month, but I think it's safe to say that I'm ready to get back on track for the season opener in St. Petersburg this weekend. I'm loving my new colors representing NTT DATA this season and it's been a seamless transition working with my new lead engineer Todd Malloy. I think everyone at NTT DATA Chip Ganassi Racing is just excited to get out there to start the new season and really see what these new cars can do."

Sebastien Bourdais (No. 11 Team Hydroxycut-KVSH Chevrolet): "I am looking forward to the start of the 2015 Verizon IndyCar Series season. We have had a long time off and it will be good to be back racing in the No. 11 Hydroxycut - KVSH Racing Chevrolet car. We have had some good tests during the offseason and collected some valuable data, but you never know how you stack up until you are on the track when it counts. I wish we would have had more time with the new aero kits, but it is the same for everyone." (About racing in his adopted hometown of St. Petersburg): "St. Petersburg is my home race, but unfortunately, other than a pole in my first race (2003), I haven't really had the success I would have liked. We had a good race going last year and I think we were in a position to finish in the top four or five, but things just didn't go our way. I don't feel any additional pressure to do well in St. Petersburg...but it's nice to be able to sleep in my own bed and have friends and family at the track."

Takuma Sato (No. 14 ABC Supply A.J. Foyt Racing Honda): "I just naturally feel good about St. Pete. In 2013, the tire's characteristic was quite different from the previous year but we were able to find a good balance very quickly and that was why we were quick. Last year, it was a tricky condition from damp track to drying for every segment of qualifying but I was able to commit every timed lap, so it was a quite special moment when we got the pole. Hopefully we can repeat another front-row start."

Graham Rahal (No. 15 Mi-Jack Honda): "I'm excited to race again in St. Petersburg. For me, St. Pete has always been one of the best tracks, one of the best places we go all year, a place that I just love. Because of the fact that I got my first win and my first pole there, it has always had a sweet spot in my heart. The town has always embraced the racing and I've enjoyed that. More than anything, I'm ready to just get this season going. It's such a long offseason that I feel like we're kind of behind. The team has been doing such a great job and I'm just thrilled to get this thing going. I think it's going to be a great year. I'm excited and ready to go. St. Pete is going to be interesting because it will be our first hard run with the new aero kits. The car seems to be handling everything pretty well. Durability seems to be pretty good. At the end of the day, I think everybody is ready to get to St. Pete. Honda is ready to perform and I think we can lead the charge for them and hopefully do a great job. It's going to be tough, tricky to see how this all plays out. We're going to have to be very cautious of contact and make sure that we are staying clean and sharp. All in all, I'm really excited to get going."

Luca Filippi (No. 20 Fuzzy's Vodka CFH Racing Chevrolet): "We are all very excited for St. Pete. It will be my first race with CFH Racing and I really can't wait to get there. Obviously, it's been a long winter for everyone, but it's good that we had an opportunity to test the car with the old package and the new aero kit. I think Chevy has done a great job and we are really looking

forward to seeing where we are. I think we are going to be competitive and the entire team is really excited about it."

Simon Pagenaud (No. 22 Penske Truck Rental Chevrolet): "To say that I'm ready to get to St. Pete would be a huge understatement. I'm like a kid on Christmas Eve ready to go with my new No. 22 Penske Truck Rental Chevy team. Making the move to Team Penske has been everything I thought it would be. The resources available to us are second to none, but I also feel that both (engineer) Ben (Bretzman) and I can contribute a lot to the team as well. We've already been quite busy with testing over the last few weeks, trying to really hone in on the new Chevrolet aero kit. Chevy did an amazing job with it and we will continue to improve as the season goes along. I have to say, though, that it is really an honor to have Team Penske start a fourth team for me, something that has never been done in team history. That gives me a lot of confidence to go out and do my job, which is to win races and compete for the Verizon IndyCar Series championship."

Simona de Silvestro (No. 25 Andretti Autosport Honda): "I'm really looking forward to St. Pete. It's a place I've always done pretty well, and I really enjoy the track, the atmosphere. It's the first race of the season, so it's always really exciting, and especially for me, I'm going there after a year away from INDYCAR... It's going to be great; especially with Andretti Autosport - it's going to be a new challenge but I can't wait to start the season with them. Hopefully we'll get a good result, and I think we'll do that."

Carlos Muñoz (No. 26 AndrettiTV/Cinsay Honda): "These three days of testing (at Sebring International Raceway) are only going to help us going into St. Petersburg. We have a little more work to do, but I think we are going to be right there when we arrive to St. Pete. I'm really looking forward to this weekend; this is the start of my second Verizon IndyCar Series season and I like the St. Pete track a lot. I have been fast in the past there, and last year I did quite a good job qualifying (seventh). There are a lot of cars running today in Sebring, so we are going to have a good reference for the race weekend ahead."

Marco Andretti (No. 27 Snapple Honda): "I can't wait to be back in race conditions this weekend. As always, St. Pete will be a great setting to start the season and I'm excited to see where things ultimately shake out with the new aero kits."

Ryan Hunter-Reay (No. 28 DHL Honda): "It's a new era in INDYCAR with the introduction of the aero kits and I'm really looking forward to the season opener on the streets of St. Pete. We're still developing the new package and will be for quite some time, but the DHL team is focused on the challenge ahead. We've been on the St. Pete podium too many times in the past without a win, now we have our sights set on a victory and starting the 2015 season the best way possible."

Jack Hawksworth (No. 41 ABC Supply A.J. Foyt Racing Honda): "The (St. Pete) track is a lot of fun and pretty technical, especially the middle sector. It's a track I have won at twice in Pro Mazda and in Indy Lights so it has always been good to me. Couple that with the great weather and it's certainly one of my favorite events. I also lived in St. Pete during my first year in the States, so I know the city quite well and really enjoy going back there. It's a great place to kick off the season."

Josef Newgarden (No. 67 Hartman Oil CFH Racing Chevrolet): "I am really excited to get to St. Pete with the whole team. We've had a great winter getting to know one another. It's been a really good marriage between two fantastic groups (Ed Carpenter Racing and Sarah Fisher Hartman Racing). Chevy seems to have brought us a great package with their new aero kit. It's

been fun developing that and working with Luca (Filippi) to try to figure out what we need to win races. I feel that CFH Racing is as prepared as we can be rolling into the first round of the season. We're obviously looking to start it off right and score good points. I think starting off on a high note and taking care of the equipment is the priority. Hopefully that will snowball into more success throughout the entire year."

Charlie Kimball (No. 83 Novo Nordisk Chip Ganassi Racing Chevrolet): "After a long offseason and some productive test days these past few weeks, I think we're all more than ready to take the green flag on Sunday. The entire Novo Nordisk Chip Ganassi Racing team has been working really hard over the winter in preparation of the new Team Chevy aero kits. Now that we've had on-track time, it's about soaking up as much as we can to make small gains here and there that add up to big results. We'll be looking to have the No. 83 NovoLog FlexPen car on the podium this weekend to get the momentum going. I can't wait to see how things shake out once we're in a real race setting at the Firestone Grand Prix of St. Petersburg; I think the fans are in for a treat this season."

Gabby Chaves (No. 98 Bowers & Wilkins/Curb Honda): "We have been making progress every time we get on track and I expect nothing less heading into the race weekend. It is an incredible opportunity that I have here and I will do all I can to get the results we want and deserve. It will be a steep learning curve for me as a rookie but I have a great team around me that will help me with that process. I have complete confidence in them to get us to our true potential."