

## **Media Contacts:**

Meredith Powell, Hill & Knowlton  
(Kevin Burke, Hill & Knowlton)

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## **34<sup>TH</sup> ROLEX MONTEREY HISTORIC AUTOMOBILE RACES COMMENCES IN MONTEREY**

### *Legendary Drivers Take the Track in Historic Roadster Commemoration*

MONTEREY, Calif. – The 34<sup>th</sup> Rolex Monterey Historic Automobile Races presented by Toyota kicked off on Thursday, when drivers, including Al Unser Sr., Bobby Rahal, Parnelli Jones and Emerson Fittipaldi took a practice run for the “Legends of Motorsport,” which is scheduled for Saturday.

“These legendary drivers were purely in their element when they took the track on Thursday,” said Steven Earle, president of General Racing Ltd., the official race organizer. “It was great to see this group demonstrate their driving skills once again, and fans will enjoy seeing them race these premier vehicles on Saturday.”

The event, which takes place at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca this weekend, honors the legacy of Indy’s “Roadster Era,” as well as champion drivers and the host racetrack, which was established in 1957.

On Thursday, the media got a sneak preview of the Indy Roadsters during a feature photo line-up on the track. 33 Roadsters turned the track as they prepared for the upcoming races over this weekend.

In addition, Pete Lovely, winner of the first main event at Laguna Seca in November 1957, was honored on Thursday as an inductee into the “Legends of Laguna Seca.” The presentation was made by Monterey Mayor Chuck Della Sala, who joined hundreds of guests to honor Lovely with the award.

Also on Thursday, top experts in the motorsports industry participated in the “Evolution of Revolution” Forum presented by Toyota. The panelists included Richard Cregan, General Manager and Team Manager for Toyota Formula One Team; Pierre Dupasquier, former head of Michelin Motorsports Worldwide; Herb Fishel, former head of GM Motorsports; Mario Illien, co-founder of Ilmor Engineering; Richard Karlstetter, director of Shell Global Fuel Technology group; and Phil Remington, retired All American Racers. The forum was hosted by Speed TV’s Dave Despain and also included lively interaction from well-known drivers in attendance such as Al Unser Sr., Bobby Unser, Vic Elford, Johnny Rutherford, Derek Bell, Ove Andersson, and Parnelli Jones.

The spirited panel discussion covered topics related to past, present and future innovations in motorsports history, including safety, aerodynamics, fuel efficiency and the debate of drivers versus engineers. The event, which was open to a public audience, allowed for participants and race fans to interact with some of the biggest names in motorsports history.

### **Race Overview**

The 400 cars participating in the Rolex Monterey Historic are divided into 14 groups based on age and engine size, selected for their history, interest and current state of presentation. The

oldest car dates from 1914 (Mercer) and the newest from 1981 (Porsche 935K4). Porsche, Ferrari, Lotus, Corvette, McLaren and Shelby lead with the number of entries. A team of nine pre-World War II Bentleys also will be arriving from England to try and master the track.

Well-known drivers who will be competing include John Morton, Andy Porterfield, Chuck Daigh, Pete Lovely, Bobby Rahal and Brian Redman. The 14 races are split with seven groups racing Saturday and seven on Sunday. Qualifying practice sessions will be held on Friday.

### **Friday Action**

On Friday, the Ferrari Historic Challenge races take place, which will include historically significant Ferraris, Maseratis and Alfa Romeos that have contributed to the racing heritage of Ferrari cars today. A display by Ferrari Classiche and a gathering of Ferrari F40s, celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, will highlight event activities, along with honoring Pete Lovely, winner of the first main event at Laguna Seca in November 1957, driving a Ferrari 500TR.

On Saturday, Pete will race his Lotus 11 and then be officially inducted into the "Legends of Laguna Seca" that evening.

### **Race of Legends**

Fans can see some of their favorite drivers from past eras behind the wheel, as Toyota will host the inaugural "Race of Legends," in which drivers holding championships from nearly every level of racing, including Formula One, the Indy 500 and the 24 Hours of LeMans, will compete in an eight-lap charity race on Saturday driving 215 hp Scion tC sport coupes. The field consists of names such as Bobby Unser, Al Unser Sr., Johnny Rutherford, Bobby Rahal, Parnelli Jones, Vic Elford, Emerson Fittipaldi, Ove Andersson and Derek Bell. Autograph sessions will be scheduled with the drivers on Saturday and Sunday of race weekend.

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### **Rolex Monterey Historic Automobile Races**

Organized by General Racing, Ltd., the Rolex Monterey Historic Automobile Races is an "automotive museum brought to life," and the largest event, with over 40,000 visitors, of the renowned classic car weekend in Monterey, Calif. With a broad appeal, it attracts a diverse group of visitors and participants – including children, families, collectors, sports enthusiasts and automotive history buffs. The 34<sup>th</sup> *Rolex Monterey Historic Presented by Toyota* will be held August 17-19, 2007 at the historic Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca.

### **General Racing**

General Racing stages events across the United States to celebrate classic, historic, and vintage racing cars, where they can be shown and driven as intended. General Racing encourages the restoration of the cars as they once were and helps to preserve and promote the history of motorsports through these events.

General Racing's premier event, the Rolex Monterey Historic Automobile Races, is located at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in California. This event, now in its 34th year, has become one of the world's greatest vintage race weekends. Other General Racing events are located at Lime Rock Park CT, Infineon Raceway, Sonoma CA, and NAS North Island, Coronado CA.

**Additional information is available at [www.generalracing.com](http://www.generalracing.com).**