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GBR
GAUNT BROTHERS RACING



DANIEL SUÁREZ

Toyota Driver Takes Fourth of July Celebration to Indy

MOORESVILLE, North Carolina (July 1, 2020) – From one iconic racetrack to another, Daniel Suárez, his No. 96 Toyota Certified Used Vehicles Camry team for Gaunt Brothers Racing (GBR) and their fellow NASCAR Cup Series competitors will break a 61-year-old tradition Sunday with the running of the Big Machine Hand Sanitizer 400 at Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

Since 1959, the Cup Series had raced on or around the Fourth of July at Daytona (Fla.) International Speedway in an annual rite of summer that began its existence known as the Firecracker 400. That streak comes to an end Sunday, when the relatively newer tradition that began its existence known as the Brickyard 400 in 1994 moves from its customary date later in the summer to this year's Fourth of July weekend.

The 111-year-old Indianapolis Motor Speedway is certainly a fitting locale for the break in tradition as the 2.5-mile oval, featuring its famed Yard of Bricks at the start-finish line, is endeared by most everyone with even the slightest interest in motor racing.

Suárez, who will be making his fourth career Indianapolis start in the Cup Series Sunday, is a huge fan of the place, for one. So are his teammates at GBR, perhaps most notably general manager Mark Chambers, a native of nearby Bowling Green, Indiana, and an electrical engineering graduate of Indiana State University who fondly remembers sitting in the grandstands at the Indy 500 each May before his first job in racing began taking him behind the scenes at the legendary facility. Chambers started his racing career in the 1990s with U.K.-based data acquisition hardware and software maker Pi Research, which provided services for the IndyCar Series and all of its teams.

Longtime racing veteran Nick Ollila, GBR's technical director, also has a rich history at Indianapolis Motor Speedway, having started his career with Team Penske as a mechanic in 1972, then returning to the organization as the its engine builder 10 years later. In addition to four IndyCar championships, his engines powered the winners of four Indy 500s – Rick Mears in 1984 and 1988, Danny Sullivan in 1985, and Al Unser in 1987. Ollila has worked at the Speedway countless times since as a NASCAR engineer for Team Penske – and its Hall of Fame driver Rusty Wallace – as well as Kranefuss-Haas Racing, Roush-Fenway Racing, Richard Childress Racing, and Red Bull Racing.

This weekend, Suárez and the No. 96 Toyota team hope to take another step forward in their evolution together after a workmanlike weekend with races both Saturday and Sunday at Pocono (Pa.) Raceway, a 2.5-mile triangular track with some characteristics similar to the rectangular oval at Indy. The team posted finishes of 28th and 26th last weekend at Pocono and looks to record its best Indy finish in its third consecutive outing at the track. Jeffrey Earnhardt drove the No. 96 Toyota to a 36th-place finish in 2018 and Parker Kligerman drove it to a 32nd-place finish last year.

Suárez's first of three Cup Series outings at Indy remains his best, when he started 15th and finished seventh in the No. 19 Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota. He finished 11th there last year in the No. 41 Stewart-Haas Racing entry. He also has a pair of top-seven results in his two NASCAR Xfinity Series outings at the track in 2015 and 2016.

Look for Suárez, his crew chief Dave Winston and the rest of the No. 96 Toyota Certified Used Vehicles Camry crew to pull out all the stops in their quest to show improvement each and every week by their program that is still in its relative infancy.

DANIEL SUÁREZ, Driver of the No. 96 Toyota Certified Used Vehicles Camry for Gaunt Brothers Racing:

The Indianapolis Motor Speedway is a special place for most everybody in racing. What does it mean to you?

“Obviously, it’s a very unique place. There is a lot of history there – a lot of history. There is not another racetrack that’s been around for many, many years, like that. It’s always been a lot of fun to go there. I’ve been fortunate enough to race there several times in the Xfinity Series and the Cup Series. It’s been a lot of fun. I feel like honestly it’s one of my favorite places to go. It’s a fun, fast oval with a little bit of road-course flavor.”

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You and the team had a very workmanlike weekend during the Pocono doubleheader. Now you're headed to the track at Indy which has some similar characteristics. Will your Pocono experience have any bearing on what to expect this weekend?

“It was a good amount of track time in one weekend, for sure, considering how little we've had the last couple of months. I appreciate every chance to spend time on the track with my Toyota. Sunday was a better day than Saturday, which was good, kind of what we were expecting. The balance of our Toyota was actually pretty good on Sunday. Corners one and three, I was pretty happy with those – the car got a little tight there in the long run but I was still pretty happy with it. Corner two, the one that is modeled after the corners at Indy, we struggled the entire weekend not because of the design of the corner, but because the bumps there are really bad and seem to get worse every year. I felt like we made the car probably a little bit better all through the weekend. Overall, we know where we're lacking, and that is overall grip that we're working really hard to get. We just have to keep digging, keep building. Obviously, I believe in this team, they believe in me, and we're going to get there. We're going to Indy this week and the goal remains the same as it is for us every week, and that is to get a little bit better.”

DANIEL SUÁREZ'S INDIANAPOLIS PERFORMANCE PROFILE

Year	Date	Event	Start	Finish	Status/Laps	Laps Led	Earnings
2019	9/8	Brickyard 400	20	11	Running, 160/160	0	N/A
2018	9/10	Brickyard 400	20	18	Running, 160/160	0	N/A
2017	7/23	Brickyard 400	15	7	Running, 167/167	0	N/A

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