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## Sarah Marie Fisher

October 4, 1980 - Present

Nationality: American

Started racing in 1985

**Origins:** Sarah Fisher was born in Columbus, Ohio on October 4, 1980 and was at the racetrack before she could even talk. Her father, Dave, raced go-karts against former IndyCar Series drivers Mark Dismore and Scott Goodyear. Sarah's mother, Reba, the daughter of one of the first female aviators in Ohio, would race go-karts in her backyard as a kid. Reba met Dave Fisher at a go-kart street race in Commercial Point, Ohio—beating him and later marrying and having Sarah. Sarah's first "car" was a pink Barbie pedal car when she was four. A year later, Sarah started her racing career as a five-year-old when her parents fitted her for her first racecar – a quarter-midget, which she raced until she was eight-years-old.

**Early Influences:** Sarah's achievement on the racetrack is only eclipsed by her performance in the classroom. Education has always played an important role in her life. Her parents Dave and Reba both hold bachelors degrees from Ohio State University (OSU). Reba is a middle-school teacher and Dave puts his Mechanical Engineering degree to work in the family business, Fisher Fabrication. Sarah followed in her parent's educational focus, having graduated seventh in her class with honors from Teays Valley High School in 1999. After graduation, Sarah was enrolled at OSU in August of that year when

she got her biggest opportunity in racing thus far—when she became the youngest person to ever pass the Indy Racing League Rookie Test, at that time, at Las Vegas Motor Speedway, turning her sole focus to a professional career in racing.

#### **Racing Accomplishments:**

- First woman in North American motorsports history to win the pole position for a major-league open-wheel race at Kentucky Speedway.
- Is the youngest team owner, currently, and the youngest female owner, ever, in the IZOD IndyCar Series.
- Holds the most number of starts for a woman in the 93-year history of the famed Indianapolis 500 with eight as of May 24, 2009.
- Fastest female to ever qualify for the Indianapolis 500, with a four-lap average of 229.439 mph.
- Youngest woman to compete in the Indianapolis 500, at age 19.
- Holds the track qualifying record at Kentucky Speedway, with a qualifying speed of 221.390 mph set in 2002.
- Became the first woman to run a full IZOD IndyCar Series schedule in 2001.
- Has a career best IZOD IndyCar Series finish of second place at Homestead-Miami Speedway in 2001.
- Became the first woman to stand on the podium with her third place finish at Kentucky Speedway in 2000.

#### **Interesting Facts:**

- Became the first IZOD IndyCar Series driver to appear in a Super Bowl advertisement.
- After the 2008 Indianapolis 500, Sarah was No. 2 on Yahoo.com's top searches, nationally; trumping the 32 other drivers, including the races' winner, Scott Dixon.
- She's attracted the attention of other female pioneers such as Sec. of State Hillary Clinton, tennis great Billie Jean King and *Everybody Loves Raymonds'* Emmy Award-winning actress Patricia Heaton.
- Formed Sarah Fisher Racing (SFR) in 2008 and enters her third season as a team owner in 2010, fielding two cars under the SFR umbrella.
- Fisher's team is a certified Women's Business Enterprise (WBE).
- Fisher made her first national television appearance at age 15 when NBC's *The Today Show* profiled her journey in racing.

**Life off the Track:** Sarah married her left-front tire changer, Andy O'Gara, now her team's Team Manager, in Sept. 2007 after becoming engaged on her 25<sup>th</sup> birthday. She revealed on Comedy Central's *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* that he is the only crewmember she has ever hit with her racecar. A rare woman in a man's sport, Fisher even admits a few female tendencies, like gardening and a love for cooking. Though she takes her career quite seriously, her passion for winning in no way precludes a passion for shopping, R&B music and Sushi.

#### **Awards and Achievements:**

- Voted "Most Popular Driver" four times in two separate Series (IndyCar and NASCAR).
- Named to the *Advertising Age* "Marketing 100 Class of 2001" in recognition for her marketing excellence, identifying her as a "visionary marketer and a brand that left an impression on advertising."
- Recipient of the prestigious "Scott Brayton Driver's Trophy" for her commitment to the sport of autoracing following the 2009 Indianapolis 500.
- Winner of the 2009 "Spirit of Leadership" Award by the Women's National Auto Dealers Association at NADA.
- Awarded "Indy's Best & Brightest Leaders Under 40" in 2008.
- The 2002 receiver of the Caschi D'oro (Golden Helmet) Award as the "Fastest Female on the Planet" as well as the "Discovery GP" award.
- Named the 1995 Dirt Track Round-up Rookie of the Year.
- Winner of the 1991, 93 & 94 World Karting Association (WKA) Grand National Championships.

**Research and biography written by Hilary Resteck and Casey Schuster, graduate students at Indiana University/Purdue University Public History Department.**