



the  
**Henry  
Ford**®



### Ana “Bia” Beatriz

March 18, 1985–Present

Nationality: Brazilian

Started Racing in 1993

**Origins:** Ana Beatriz Caselato Gomes de Figueiredo, whose goes by her Brazilian nickname “Bia,” was born in Sao Paulo, Brazil. As a child she attended kart races at the famed Interlagos Race Track with her father and was immediately enthralled by the speed and skill the drivers exhibited. By the age of five she was already active in ballet, volleyball, horseback riding, and soccer, leaving little time to give racing a try, although she was incredibly interested in the sport.

**Early Influences:** At the age of seven Bia finally got her chance, having her first experience behind the wheel of a go-kart. Within the next year she completed a week-long orientation at Interlagos and started competing, entering her first go-kart race at the tender age of eight. She showed the promise and dedication to succeed, eventually competing in 30 karting events a year. Famed racing coach Nailor Campos took notice of the young driver and become Bia’s coach and chief mechanic when she was 12 years old. After seven years of racing, Bia’s parents, a psychiatrist and dentist, could no longer afford the equipment, crew, and maintenance associated with racing, but Campos stepped in and used his connections within the racing world to gain Bia a sponsor. Backed by former Brazilian racing champion Xandy Negrao and his Medley Drug Company, Bia, at the age of 15, was ready to seriously compete on a national scale.

#### **Racing Accomplishments:**

- In 2003 became Brazil’s Sorriso Petrobras Kart Cup Champion after being named runner-up in the 2000 Sao Paulo Championship, 2001 Sao Paulo Championship and Brazil Kart Cup, and 2002 Brazilian Championship.
- First woman to win a Formula Renault race, ending the 2003 season with two pole positions and three victories.

- First woman in the world to earn a pole position in a Formula 3 race during the 2006 Formula 3 South America Series.
- In 2008, Bia started racing in the United States, driving the #20 Healthy Choice car in the Firestone Indy Lights Series. She finished fifth in the Firestone Freedom 100 in Indianapolis in April of that year, the highest finish by a woman in the race's six-year history.
- She became the first woman to win an Indy Lights Series race, leading the most laps and claiming victory at the Nashville Superspeedway July 12, 2008. Her success continued throughout the season, with her finishing third in the 2008 Indy Lights point standings.
- First woman to win a race at the Iowa Speedway, winning her second Indy Lights event at the June 20, 2009 Miller Lite 100.
- Finished the 2009 season eighth in the point standings, even after being forced to sit out some races, following a hard crash and the lack of funding.

#### **Interesting Fact:**

- Bia is trilingual, being able to speak Portuguese, French, and English.

**Life off the Track:** Bia recently moved to Indianapolis to continue pursuing her racing goal of eventually breaking into the Indy Car Series. She enjoys travelling and visiting with friends, tennis, and reading, as well as keeping up with a strenuous fitness regime. Fittingly, Bia's favorite song is Queen's "Don't Stop Me Now."

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

- Won Brazil's Gold Helmet Award in 2001 and 2002 as the best driver in the kart category.
- Named 2003 Brazilian Formula Renault Rookie of the Year.
- Chosen as 2008 Firestone Indy Lights Rookie of the Year.
- Received the Indy Lights Tony Renna Rising Star Award in 2008. The award honors drivers who display exceptional teamwork, physical fitness, and resourcefulness.

#### **Sources Consulted**

- "Ana Beatriz Podium Best-Ever Finish by a Woman in Firestone Indy Lights Series." *Auto Racing Daily*. 6 April, 2008. 11 Nov., 2009. <http://www.autoracingdaily.com/news/firestone-indy-lights/ana-beatriz-podium-best-ever-finish-by-woman-in-firestone-indy-lights-serie/>
- Braun, Travis. "Beatriz Looks to Carve out Own Image Among Women Racers." *USA Today*. 16 July, 2008. 10 Nov., 2009. [http://www.usatoday.com/sports/motor/irl/2008-07-16-beatriz\\_indylights\\_N.htm?loc=interstitialskip](http://www.usatoday.com/sports/motor/irl/2008-07-16-beatriz_indylights_N.htm?loc=interstitialskip)
- "History-Again: Beatriz becomes first female winner in Firestone Indy Lights." *IndyCar.com*. 12 July, 2008. 10 Nov., 2009. [http://www.indycar.com/pro/news/?story\\_id=11980](http://www.indycar.com/pro/news/?story_id=11980)
- Lewandowski, Dave. "Instant Indy Classic." *IndyCar.com*. 24 May, 2008. 11 Nov., 2009. [http://www.indycar.com/pro/news/?story\\_id=11503](http://www.indycar.com/pro/news/?story_id=11503)
- Lewandowski, Dave. "SSM Sweep." *IndyCar.com*. 20 June, 2009. 10 Nov., 2009. [http://www.indycar.com/pro/news/index.php?story\\_id=14373](http://www.indycar.com/pro/news/index.php?story_id=14373)
- "Official Web Page: Ana Beatriz- Bia." 2009. 10 Nov., 2009. (Through Google Translate) [http://translate.google.com/translate?js=y&prev=t&hl=en&ie=UTF-8&u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.biaracing.com%2Fsitecompleto%2Fa\\_piloto.bia.biografia&sl=pt&tl=en&history\\_stat\\_e0=](http://translate.google.com/translate?js=y&prev=t&hl=en&ie=UTF-8&u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.biaracing.com%2Fsitecompleto%2Fa_piloto.bia.biografia&sl=pt&tl=en&history_stat_e0=)
- Olson, Jeff. "Racer Q & A: Ana Beatriz." *Racer.com*. 14 Sept., 2009. 10 Nov., 2009. <http://www.racer.com/RACER-Q-A-Ana-Beatriz/article/148900/>
- Wagner, Philip. "Is Bia Brazil's Danica Patrick?- Part I." *Motorsport.com*. 30 July, 2008. 10 Nov., 2009. <http://www.motorsport.com/magazine/feature.asp?C=Special&D=2008-07-30>
- Wagner, Philip. "Is Bia Brazil's Danica Patrick?- Part II." *Motosport.com*. 31 July, 2008. 10 Nov., 2009. <http://www.motorsport.com/magazine/feature.asp?C=Special&D=2008-07-31>

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