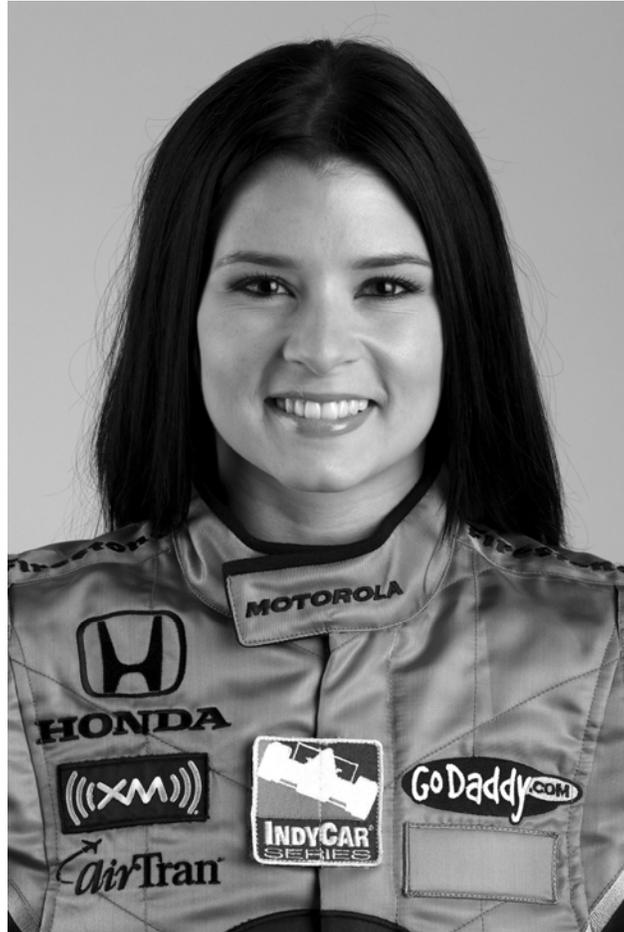




the
**Henry
Ford**®



Danica Patrick

March 25, 1982 – Present

Nationality: American

Started Racing in 1992

Website: www.danicaracing.com

Origins: Danica spent most of her childhood watching her dad, T. J., work on race cars and was fascinated by his knowledge of engines and all the other technical and engineering aspects of race cars. She came from a family of adventure seekers and was hooked the first time she stepped on the pedal of her first go-kart. She loved going fast, going around the tight corners and barreling down the straights. After finding her life's passion she had a one track mind and dedicated herself to becoming the best race car driver in the world.

Early Influences: T. J. and Bev Patrick were involved in racing, but it was actually a friend of Danica's sister, Brooke, who was into racing go karts and when Danica saw her race she became interested. Both she and Brooke started racing at the same time, but Brooke quickly lost interest. The family spent endless hours, days, and weekends, traveling around the Midwest so Danica could go racing. Spending time together as a family has stayed with Danica throughout her racing career. She soon started winning, setting track records, and championships. She was always competitive in everything she did; and was brought up to believe that a game is never *just* a game. Her dad taught her to never be satisfied with second place and to

believe you can always do better. The word “impossible” doesn’t exist for her. After attending the Women in the Winner’s Circle Driver Development Academy she was a guest of Lyn St. James at the 1997 Indianapolis 500 and was introduced to John Mecom, Jr., a former winning Indy 500 team owner, who began following her career and arranged for her to go to the U.K. to race Formula Fords. She finished 2nd in the prestigious Formula Ford Festival, the highest ever for an American driver. After returning to the states she met Bobby Rahal, former Indy 500 winner and team owner, who gave her some tests in different race cars, including racing in the Toyota Celebrity race at Long Beach, which she promptly won, then put her in the Toyota Formula Atlantic Series. Her success in the Atlantic Series led Bobby Rahal and her sponsor, Argent Mortgage, to decide to step up to the Indy Racing League. In 2005 she was named the Indianapolis 500 Rookie of the Year after leading 19 laps of the race, the first woman driver to lead laps at Indy. She was signed by Andretti Green Racing in 2007 and continues to pursue her dream of winning the Indianapolis 500 as well as seeking new challenges, like racing stock cars in NASCAR. She signed a contract with JR Motorsports, owned by Dale Earnhardt, Jr. and run by Kelley Earnhardt, to guide her into the NASCAR world of racing. She has become one of the most recognized names not only in racing, but in the world of celebrity. With sponsors like GoDaddy and Peak Antifreeze, she displays an edgy persona, both on the screen and on the pages of magazines, billboards, and the internet.

Racing Accomplishments:

- 2008 – Victory at Twin Ring Motegi 300 in Japan, first ever for a woman in Indycar racing.
- 2007 – Signed with Andretti Autosport to race in the Indy Racing League.
- 2005 - Indianapolis 500 Rookie of the Year; highest qualifying (fourth) and finishing (fourth) position for a female driver; leading nineteen laps, the first woman to do so in the Indy 500; also Bombardier IRL IndyCar Series Rookie of the Year.
- 2004 – Finished 3rd in the Toyota Atlantic Championship; the only driver to complete every lap of the season, first female driver to win a pole position in Formula Atlantic; three podium finishes.
- 2002 – Signed a multi-year driving contract with Team Rahal.
- 2002 – Pole position and won the pro-division for the Long Beach Grand Prix Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race.
- 2000 – Finished 2nd at the Formula Ford Festival, highest finish ever for an American driver
- 1993-1997 – Captured race wins, championships in go kart racing

Awards & Achievements:

- 2008-2009 – Featured in Sports Illustrated Swimsuit edition
- 2008 – Kids Choice Award for favorite female athlete
- 2005 - The first IndyCar driver to be featured on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* in twenty years.
- 2005 – Nominated for Best Breakthrough athlete at the ESPY Awards.
- 2005 – Named the second most influential driver in motorsports by *Racer* magazine
- 2005 – Named as one of the 100 Leading Women in N. American Automotive Industry by *Automotive News* magazine

Interesting Facts: Danica certainly understands the importance of fitness to be successful in racing, and at 5’1” 100# she really has to work especially hard. She actually prefers yoga as part of her workouts.

Life off the track: Danica lives in Phoenix with her husband, Paul Hospenthal. She makes numerous personal appearances on behalf of her sponsor, GoDaddy, along with other media appearances.

Sources Consulted:

“Danica, Crossing the Line” by Danica Patrick with Laura Morton, published by Fireside
Website: www.danicaracing.com

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