



ST. PETERSBURG, FL, March 24, 2013 - March Madness reached the 2013 Honda Grand Prix of St. Petersburg as James Hinchcliffe captured his first IZOD IndyCar Series win in an upset over championship contenders.

"I think fans certainly like a winner and now we can call ourselves that," said Hinchcliffe. "Hopefully it's not the last one."

Hinchcliffe was joined on the podium by runner-up Helio Castroneves, 2012 winner, and teammate Marco Andretti in third. Past champions Dario Franchitti and Ryan Hunter-Reay finished back in the field with top contender Will Power not faring much better.

Hundreds of fans crowded Victory Circle to catch a glimpse of the youthful Canuck as he stepped out of his car, lifting the maple leaf-blazon Canadian flag high above his head. More waited by the GoDaddy transporter for Hinch to return. Ernie Muschner, of Clearwater, and his son Elias were among that crowd. Hinchcliffe's victory was the perfect end to an enjoyable day for the father and son.

"Watching the speed, the drivers and everything that goes into to making this happen is amazing," said Ernie. "From volunteers to the crews, they help bring so much to our beautiful city. It's been a really exciting event."

Hinchcliffe Earns First Win in Thrilling Honda Grand Prix of St. Petersburg

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Clad in a GoDaddy hat and shirt while waiting for an autograph, Elias was elated with the win

The clouds did just enough to protect fans from the sun, and never opened up for more than a drop of rain all day. The grounds and grandstands were dense with fans, especially in the H-BLOCK Honda fan section along the front straight. It was there where another March Madness element popped up at the Honda Grand Prix: the 'big heads' that started in college basketball, featuring each Honda driver's likeness, were a popular and humorous element that added to the energetic atmosphere.



Matthew Brabham stayed hot on the streets of St. Petersburg as he claimed another win today in the Pro Mazda Championship and clinched a weekend sweep.

The second USF2000 Championship went much the same as the first, as Scott Hargrove snatched the overall victory for the second time and Scott Rettich continued his four-race winning streak in the National class.

James Sofronas drove his Audi R8 LMS down the Albert Whitted Airport front straight ahead of the field for a victory in the second Pirelli World Challenge Championships race of the weekend. In GTS, Jack Baldwin secured a second win for the weekend.

The final thought on a superb Honda Grand Prix of St. Petersburg goes to the first-time winner, James Hinchcliffe, "This race is so awesome. The people in this town are incredible. I'm glad we can open up our season here," Hinchcliffe said. "This is the realization of a dream."