

Castroneves tide rolls in Alabama

Team Venom Energy race strategist Kyle Moyer was “looking for a yellow” to aid race leader Marco Andretti. It came, but too late to help the Andretti Autosport driver from seeing the dual checkers for the second time in his IZOD IndyCar Series career.

Instead, the No. 26 car had to pit for a 3.3-second splash of 100 percent fuel-grade ethanol on Lap 82 of 90, relinquishing the lead to Team Penske’s Helio Castroneves.

That’s all it took in a race full of fuel strategy and excitement – with all 25 cars running at the finish for the first time in IZOD IndyCar Series history, only two brief full-course cautions breaking up the lap dashes and a crowd double that of any event previously held at Barber Motorsports Park (53,555; three-day total of 84,126) cheering on every lap.

“The inaugural Indy Grand Prix of Alabama far exceeded our expectations,” said Gene Hallman, president and CEO of event promoter ZOOM Motorsports.

Castroneves, winning his first road/street course race since Infineon in August 2008, had a similar assessment. He stopped the No. 3 Team Penske car on the cool-down lap and thanked spectators for attending the inaugural Indy Grand Prix of Alabama by climbing the safety fence in Turn 9.

Photos by MSA Staff

