

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF SEBRING INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY

Below is a “thumbnail history” of Sebring International Raceway:

- 1941** — Hendricks Field built near Sebring as an Army Air Force training base.
- 1945** — Hendricks Field deactivated and becomes Sebring Airport
- 1950** — Alec Ulmann suggests Sebring Airport site for a sports car road race ... Sam Collier 6 Hour Memorial race held on December 31 is first racing event ever held at Sebring and the first sports car endurance race held in the U.S.
- 1952** — First 12 Hours of Sebring race held on March 15.
- 1953** — The 12 Hours of Sebring is the first event of the new FIA sports car world championship. A Chrysler-powered Cunningham wins, giving America its first international sports car victory.
- 1954** — Stunning upset as an OSCA co-driven by Stirling Moss wins.
- 1955** — Jaguar wins in classic battle with Ferrari.
- 1956** — The legendary Fangio drives a Ferrari to victory.
- 1957** — Fangio wins his second consecutive Sebring race.
- 1959** — Sebring hosts first ever Formula One race in the U.S. in December.
- 1961** — Olivier Gendebien and Phil Hill win their third Sebring 12-hour race.
- 1964** — Ferrari wins fourth consecutive Sebring race despite strong challenge from Shelby's Cobras.
- 1965** — First American car to win Sebring in over a decade as Chevrolet Chaparral wins with Hap Sharp and Jim Hall driving.
- 1966** — Sebring hosts first Trans-Am race ... Tragedy strikes as four spectators are killed in an incident at Webster Turn... Dan Gurney's Ford, leading with two minutes left, stops on course. As he tries to push the car across the finish line, the Miles/Ruby Ford passes him in the final minute.
- 1967** — Promoter Alec Ulmann announces the race will be moved to the new Palm Beach International Raceway (now called Moroso Motorsports Park) in West Palm Beach. Two months later he changes his mind ... First major change made to the circuit as the Webster Turn is replaced with a chicane.
- 1968** — Trans-Am race included within the 12-hour race.
- 1969** — Last “Le Mans start,” in which drivers run to their cars to start race.
- 1970** — Mario Andretti gives Ferrari a thrilling 22-second victory over actor Steve McQueen and Peter Revson in a Porsche.
- 1972** — Mario Andretti wins his third 12 Hours of Sebring ... Ulmann announces this will be last Sebring race.
- 1973** — Sebring revived by John Bishiop and Reggie Smith under IMSA sanction.
- 1974** — Race canceled due to “energy crisis.” Several hundred fans show up anyway to party.

- 1975** — Race revived with John Greenwood as promoter.
- 1978** — Tampa businessman Charles Mendez takes over promotion of race ... FIA sanction restored.
- 1983** — Sebring Airport Authority takes over promotion of race ... First major circuit change in 20 years takes place as a new section bypasses airport runway ... In biggest upset in endurance racing history, a GT Porsche takes overall win, coming from 11 laps down.
- 1984** — Another upset as an aging Porsche 935 wins ... Paddock moved out, increasing course length to 4.86 miles.
- 1985** — Co-driving with Bob Wollek, A.J. Foyt wins his first Sebring race, the last win of his career as a driver.
- 1986** — Akin, Stuck and Gartner drive a Porsche 962 to the fastest 12 hour race average ever.
- 1987** — Track configuration results in new 4.11-mile course that bypasses the airport runways, making Sebring a permanent year-round circuit.
- 1989** — Nissan victory ends 13-year Porsche win streak.
- 1990** — Sebring Airport Authority leases facility, major improvements begin immediately, including resurfacing and a new paddock bridge.
- 1992** — Sebring celebrates its 40th anniversary. Toyota wins first endurance race with Juan Fangio II and Andy Wallace driving.
- 1994** — World Sports Car era begins, GT Nissan wins overall.
- 1995** — Ferrari records historic win, first in 23 years at Sebring ... Chicane is relocated and renamed the Fangio Chicane.
- 1996** — Oldsmobile with Riley & Scott chassis scores first victory for an American manufacturer at Sebring in 27 years.
- 1997** — Sebring acquired by International Motorsports Speedway Group; Ulmann Straight is resurfaced. Andy Evans sells Sebring lease to Panoz Motor Sports.
- 1998** — Hairpin turn reconfigured.
- 1999** — ALMS debuts with closest Sebring finish ever ... New Pit Tower and media center constructed as part of multimillion dollar improvement program ... Hotel constructed adjacent to the Hairpin.
- 2000** — Audi records historic one-two finish ... Vipers dominate GTS.
- 2001** — Audi sweeps top four positions ... Saleen upsets Corvette in GTS class ... Large portion of track resurfaced.
- 2002** — Sebring celebrates 50th Anniversary as Audi scores its third straight victory.
- 2003** — Joest Racing wins fourth consecutive Sebring race.
- 2005** — Champion Racing gives Audi sixth straight win at Sebring.
- 2006** — Tom Kristensen scores his 4th Sebring win as Audi records first win for diesel-powered R10.
- 2007** — GT2 class produces closest finish in Sebring history.
- 2008** — Roger Penske's Porsche team breaks Audi's eight-year Sebring win streak.