

# “PEAKING” IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR

By Ken Peak, RCC Historian

## Corvette’s Pace Cars: A Love Affair with the Indy 500

### Part 3

This three-part series has looked at Corvette's long history of providing Indianapolis 500s pace cars and their official replicas (those produced by GM for sale to the public) over the decades. The Corvette has paced the annual Memorial Day Indianapolis 500 race more often – 19 times - than any other car. (Sources for these articles provided at end).



2018 ZR1

The 2019 Corvette ZR1 was the official Pace Car for the 2018 Indy. With 755 supercharged hp and 8-speed auto. transmission, the Corvette ZR1 was actually more powerful than then-racing Indy cars, which varied between 550 and 700 horsepower, depending on boost levels.



### 2019 Grand Sport

The 2019 Corvette Grand Sport was the official pace car for the 2019 Indianapolis 500 for the race's 102nd running - and the 16th time a Corvette had led the pack. Finished in Long Beach Red Metallic Tintcoat, this car was presumed to be the last of the C7-generation pace cars. It boasted 460 hp with 8-speed paddle-shift automatic transmission, full-length silver racing stripes, carbon fiber ground effects kit, competition bucket seats, and a performance data recorder.



### 2020 Z51

A Torch Red 2020 Corvette Stingray coupe served as the official pace car for the 104th Indianapolis 500, driven by GM President Mark Reuss. Corvette had then led the Indy 500 pack in 11 of the previous 16 races. In a Z51 package, this Corvette made 495 hp from its 6.2-liter LT2 V-8, with a 0-60 time of 2.8 seconds and top speed of 184 mph. This Indy version C8 had a factory spoiler and ground effects package as well as "carbon flash" exterior accents and GT2 bucket seats.



## 2021

The 2021 Arctic White mid-engine Corvette Stingray hardtop convertible led the Indy 500's 33-car field. This version was powered by a 6.2L Small Block LT2 engine, producing 495 hp — the most horsepower for any pace car Corvette. It was also Chevrolet's first eight-speed dual-clutch transmission, which provided lightning-fast shifts and excellent power transfer.



## 2022

The 2022 Indy 500 was the new-for-2023 Corvette Z06 and a 70th Anniversary Edition, finished in white pearl tri-coat metallic paint, special Corvette crossed flags, red brake calipers and the anniversary edition logo on seats, steering wheel, and sill plates. Its 5.5-liter engine pumped out 670 hp, making it the most powerful naturally aspirated V8 to reach the U.S. market in a production car. It was also equipped with the Z07 Performance Package, featuring a carbon fiber rear wing, ground effects, and carbon ceramic brakes. Former Indy driver and three-time podium-finisher Sarah Fisher was driving.

**2023**

**A Red Mist Z06 pace car was driven by NBA All Star Tyrese Haliburton of the Indiana Pacers on May 28, 2023 – the 20<sup>th</sup> such time Corvettes have served for “The Greatest Spectacle in Racing.”**



**Information for these articles was drawn from a variety of sources. For more information, the following sources are all excellent:**

- **Chevrolet Corvette Pace Car Registry:**  
<https://www.pacecarregistry.com/whoweare.htm#:~:text=All%20owners%20of%20Corvette%20Indy,were%20produced%20by%20General%20Motors.>
- **CorvSport, “Corvette Pace Cars: The Ultimate Resource - Every Corvette Pace Car,** <https://www.corvsport.com/corvette-models/corvette-pace-cars/>.
- **Motor1, “Every Chevrolet Corvette Pace Car From All 19 Indy 500 Runs,”** <https://www.motor1.com/features/242804/chevy-corvette-pace-car-list/>.
- **Hemmings, “Corvette Indy 500 replicas make fun, interesting collectibles,”** <https://www.hemmings.com/stories/corvette-indy-500-pace-car-replicas-make-fun-interesting-collectibles/>.

**For more information about the May 2022 Mecum Auction where the collection of pace cars was sold, see “Corvette Pace Car Collection Sells For \$1.375 Million At Mecum Indy,”**  
<https://gmauthority.com/blog/2022/05/corvette-pace-car-collection-to-sells-for-1-375-million-at-mecum-indy/>.