

## **CURTIS GRAY: PRESIDENT, HOMESTEAD-MIAMI SPEEDWAY**

Curtis Gray knows motorsports. As President of Homestead-Miami Speedway and former director of the NASCAR Winston Cup Series for R.J. Reynolds (1993-99), the South Florida native offers an intimate knowledge of the sport's fabled history, as well as NASCAR's evolution to its current standing as the No. 1-ranked sport in terms of both attendance and brand loyalty.

"Once you get involved with racing, it becomes a passion," said Gray, who began his affiliation with NASCAR in 1983. "I love this sport, the people involved with this sport and the challenge of managing the growth of this sport in South Florida."

Gray is a veteran authority on all issues motorsports—from drivers among the many circuits, to marketing and fan development. In 2008, he was inducted into the Miami Sports Hall of Champions for "significant recognition to Greater Miami through achievements in, and contributions to, sports and the competitive spirit of the local community."

**LEGENDS OF THE TRACK:** In his role as Homestead-Miami Speedway president, Gray works closely and has developed relationships with some of the industry's most legendary names: Dale Earnhardt Sr., Richard Petty, Jeff Gordon, Mike Helton, Rick Hendrick, the France and Penske families, and countless other drivers, team owners, track presidents and corporate executives.

"These guys weren't always as much in demand as they are now," Gray said. "But that's a credit to what we all wanted and still want—for racing to continue to grow."

**EVOLUTION OF "SPORTS MARKETING":** As Director of the Winston Cup Series for R.J. Reynolds, Gray was charged with introducing NASCAR to a national audience extending beyond the sport's traditional Southeastern roots. Key to the effort: an eventual four-time Cup champion hailing from California.

"When Jeff Gordon was becoming the heir apparent to Dale Earnhardt Sr. in the mid-'90s, he helped us cross a line," Gray said. "He enabled us to market the sport to a mainstream audience and to take the sport to bigger markets."

Indeed, Gray's tenure with Winston Cup was highlighted by NASCAR's expansion (via new tracks) into the less-traditional motorsports regions of Los Angeles, Dallas and Las Vegas. And through campaigns like the "Winston Million"—among the first big-money promotions in all of sports—Gray not only helped launch NASCAR's unparalleled success, but he also played a role in pioneering and defining what we today know as the industry of "sports marketing."

Today, NASCAR has an international following of more than 75 million fans—one-third of the U.S. population—and draws higher television ratings than every U.S. sport with the exception of pro football. NASCAR's success never is more evident than mid-November, when the fan base Gray helped create fills Homestead-Miami Speedway during Ford Championship Weekend—the championship-crowning races in the Sprint Cup, Nationwide and Craftsman Truck series.

"When I first got involved with NASCAR, we were learning by trial and error how to get exposure for the sport," Gray said. "It's phenomenal the way motorsports has grown—NASCAR in particular—and the amount of interest it receives from loyal fans across the U.S. and abroad,"

**THE CIRCUITS:** Throughout his extensive career, Gray has directed and promoted all types of racing in South Florida, including: NASCAR, IndyCar, Grand-Am Sports Cars, motorcycle racing, and both regional and national karting circuits. As a result, the Speedway is "hot" more than 260 days a year with not just races but also team and manufacturer testing, karting events, car-club racing, motorcycle instruction, product launches, off-road experiences, commercial and movie filming, bicycle clubs and private rentals at the luxurious Champions Club overlooking Turn 1.

"People don't always realize all of the events we have at the track, and don't comprehend the breadth of the businesses and organizations we're equipped to accommodate," Gray said. "In reality, the Speedway is a very versatile, in-demand venue that stays very busy year-round."

**THE FANS:** With more than a quarter-century of motorsports marketing and promotion to his credit, Gray knows what matters most to the industry's lifeblood.

"Racing fans want an *experience*—and that's what we give here at Homestead-Miami Speedway," he said. "Racing is so much more than cars going around a track. It's everything, from the concerts and other ancillary activities, to the camaraderie and the community. Give an experience to a race fan, and you've got a fan for life."

**THE COMMUNITY:** A sampling of Gray's active involvement in the South Florida community:

- Board of Governors, Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce
- Co-Chairman, Southern Region for Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce
- Member, NASCAR Diversity Board Committee
- Board of Directors, Homestead Hospital Foundation
- Board of Directors, Miami-Dade County Sports Commission
- Named 46<sup>th</sup> Citizen of the Year by the Civitan Club
- Recipient of the inaugural Automotive Image Award and South Florida Achiever Award, presented by *In Focus* Magazine, a national publication featuring technology and diversity
- Inducted into Miami Sports Hall of Champions by the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce

*Curtis Gray—an authority on NASCAR, IndyCar and all issues motorsports—is available to media by request. Please contact Jay Rand, Homestead-Miami Speedway Director of Public Relations, at (305) 230-5233 or [jrand@homesteadmiamispeedway.com](mailto:jrand@homesteadmiamispeedway.com).*