



Transcript for:

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WITH MARIO ANDRETTI

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Interview conducted June 20, 2017
Conducted at Mario Andretti's Residence
in Nazareth, PA

Interviewers:

Matt Anderson, Curator of Transportation, The Henry Ford
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Interviewed By: Matt Anderson, Curator of Transportation, The Henry Ford
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Time	Comments
00:00:10	Matt Anderson All right, today is Tuesday June 20, 2017. We are in Nazareth, Pennsylvania. My name is Matt Anderson, Curator of Transportation with The Henry Ford, and we're here today with Mario Andretti.
00:00:21	Matt Anderson Winner of the Daytona 500 multiple times, Winner of the Indianapolis 500, Formula One world champion and surely one of the greatest drivers of the 20 th Century and we're in the basement of Mr. Andretti's home. You've agreed to talk to us a little bit about your life and career, your thoughts on racing and its evolution over your time in the sport, so thank you so much for agreeing to have us here today.
00:00:40	Mario Andretti It's my pleasure. My pleasure. Surely welcome.
00:00:43	Matt Anderson Wonderful. We-, we'll keep this informal – conversational – and say if there are any things that you'd like to add to your answer, you're welcome to do that; any other ideas you'd like to throw out, that's fine.
00:00:53	Matt Anderson Or if there's anything you'd rather not answer, that's fine as well.
00:00:56	Matt Anderson So we'll start with an easy question though, something to just kind of get warmed up here, but what kind of music is your favorite?
00:01:02	Mario Andretti Oh! Actually, I'll- I'll say this – it's classic. Classical because basically my background, you know, I was born and raised in Italy, and it's a long story but early on, I

	was introduced to opera and- and I started appreciating that.
00:01:21	Mario Andretti Obviously, you know, I love rock and roll, even the country and all that overall, but when you play the classical I just like to be maybe in my sports car and just really turn it on and get a (<i>indiscernible</i>) there along with the great noise of the engine, you know?
00:01:38	Mario Andretti It's just a great mix, (laughter) and that's really good. It gets the back of your hair to stand up.
00:01:44	MATT ANDERSON That's fantastic. That's probably an unexpected answer for a lot of folks, so wonderful.
00:01:49	MATT ANDERSON Well, we'll start a little bit about your background. I wonder if you might tell us a little about your youngest years: where you were born, growing up in Italy, and your experiences there.
00:01:59	Mario Andretti Basically, O- he- it was- I was- our family are a product of World War II. By saying that is that where I was born is now part of- is Croatia.
00:02:15	Mario Andretti So after the second World War, the borders were realigned and the part where I was born, it was-, actually became Yugoslavia under hardline Communism, Marshall Tito.
00:02:34	Mario Andretti And- and all of us- well, all of us said the inhabitants of that area, which were somewhere around 300,000 throughout the Peninsula of Istria, had a choice of remaining and succumb to Communism or maintain the Italian citizenship, and move on, and actually become refugees in your own country, which was what- that was the choice that was made by our family and probably 90% of the rest of the population there.
00:03:07	Mario Andretti And so we were in a refugee camp in Lucca, in Tuscany, for seven and a half years before the decision was made to come to America because we had an Uncle on my mother's side that had been here since 1909.
00:03:24	Mario Andretti

	And we always kept correspondence, and at one point, he suggested to my father. He said, "Why don't you come to America, you know, if things still don't get any better."
00:03:35	Mario Andretti So we were in that camp from 1948 to '55. But in 1952, my dad applied for visas to come to America, and three years later, the visas came through so it was decision time.
00:03:51	Mario Andretti And so Dad says, "Ok, we're going to America. We're going there for five years and then come back."
00:04:00	Mario Andretti And-, and again, so we sailed in a Conte Biancamano the ship of the moment, in- June 16 th , 1955.
00:04:12	Mario Andretti And it was my sister, Anna Maria's twenty first birthday. We're sailing under the Statue of Liberty, five in the morning – beautiful day – and that's where our life began in The United States.
00:04:26	Mario Andretti So I was fifteen and have a twin brother, Aldo, and we were already enamored with the motor racing because obviously, Italy's so prominent in Formula One and- and sports cars with Ferrari, Maserati, Alfa Romeo, and world champions of the moment which, you know, Alberto Ascari was my idol.
00:04:49	Mario Andretti And anyways, so racing was part of what our dream that was really sort of becoming, more of you know, of an important-, say important goal somewhere, even though we were just still teenagers.
00:05:12	Mario Andretti So, fifteen years of age, we arrived there. Two years later, we started building a stock car to race locally on a half-mile track, you know, here in Nazareth.
00:05:23	Mario Andretti Two years after that, the car was finished in 1959 and we started driving. Aldo and I both wanted to drive one car, two drivers, so we had to obviously alternate.
00:05:38	Mario Andretti But that's how the career – my career – started in 1959, and my last race was in 2000 in the 24 hours in Le Mans.
00:05:45	Mario Andretti

	But that's- that's how it all started.
00:05:49	MATT ANDERSON Well, that's wonderful. I'm curious. Fifteen years old, you and your brother race driving. What did your parents think about this?
00:05:56	Mario Andretti Well, my dad didn't really want to know and we didn't tell him either, so, he obviously was not a fan of the sport and in those days, especially in those days, what was really publicized at most was the fatalities unfortunately.
00:06:20	Mario Andretti I mean, even on the way over in 1955, it was during the 24 hours of Le Mans, and that's when they had that terrible, terrible accident when Pierre Levegh's car wound up in the grandstand, killed 85 spectators.
00:06:34	Mario Andretti So like I said, all the news were always- the news that he understood were always negative, so, and any time we mentioned that you know, we just got a sneer out of him.
00:06:48	Mario Andretti So, we built this car without him knowing. In fact, we ran the very first season without him knowing, and we were winning races locally, and of course we were written about.
00:07:01	Mario Andretti And- and the only defense that we had was the language barrier, because he didn't really- his boss at work would say, "Hey, Gigi, your kids are really you know, doing well," and all that congratulations. And he thought he was congratulating him for his work, you know, for what he was doing you know, in his job.
00:07:24	Mario Andretti So, and it wasn't until the very last race of that season that Aldo got hurt.
00:07:31	Mario Andretti And it was an invitational race, and, um, actually they gave him his last rights that night. You know, it was a very severe fractured skull, and he was you know, in a coma for a long time.
00:07:48	Mario Andretti But that's how my dad found out that we were racing, you know, so I was on the receiving end of that one obviously. In fact, when Aldo came, came back to us and

	started talking, first thing- first sentence he said to me, he says, "I'm glad you had to be the one to face the old man." (Laughter)
00:08:06	Mario Andretti So we got him back, you know? He's thinking clearly there, so- so that's the story.
00:08:10	Matt Anderson That's a great story. I can imagine the conversation you must've had with your father over that otherwise this very serious accident. He, of course, Aldo retires from racing at that point, but how did that affect your own decision-making? Did you have some doubts at that point?
00:08:28	Mario Andretti No, I didn't then. As a matter of fact, Aldo did not retire at that point. Aldo raced for another ten years, and he had another accident in a sprint car in Des Moines, Iowa, that-, that's what ended his career.
00:08:45	Mario Andretti But, as far as myself and still having the desire and the will to continue, that was never in doubt.
00:09:00	Mario Andretti I mean it's you know, those are the negatives of our sport, and there were too many in those days because of the safety aspect, you know, was obviously not dealt with as vigorously it is today.
00:09:14	Mario Andretti But still, you know, we knew that the danger was there and the possibilities, but uh, if you have that burning desire to just be there and the love of what, you know, you're doing, you know, nothing will deter you, you know, from continuing.
00:09:34	Mario Andretti So again, there was never any doubt as far as my continuing my career.
00:09:43	Matt Anderson I've read that that first race car that you and your brother worked on was a '48 Hudson Hornet I think?
00:09:48	Matt Anderson Have you had any experience with cars, working on cars at that point, or were you both kind of learning as you went along?
00:09:52	Mario Andretti

	<p>Oh gosh! I mean, no experience whatsoever. Like I said, it's- it's just-, we were just motivated by just the desire to do it, and you find a way.</p>
00:10:05	<p>Mario Andretti We didn't do it alone, you know? We had some-, we had four other buddies and you know, there's always the geek in the group you know, that really knows everything.</p>
00:10:13	<p>Mario Andretti And we fed off of one another, and- and asking questions and-, and trying to just reach out, you know, for information.</p>
00:10:23	<p>Mario Andretti We bought information from one of the NASCAR teams that actually had folded because Hudson was out of racing officially just about the same time that we started building this car.</p>
00:10:35	<p>Mario Andretti But we had the right information as to the chassis, that we needed, the short wheelbase and all that; lot of things that the gearing was correct and the track, you know, was wider in the rear.</p>
00:10:48	<p>Mario Andretti There was a lot of factors that obviously led us in the right direction but only because it's one of our buddies, you know, was the one that was doing all the research.</p>
00:10:57	<p>Mario Andretti And-, and we tried to cover all the bases, and actually when we finally built this thing, we had a lot of you know, the setups and everything else that were running in NASCAR you know, with Marshall Teague, Herb Thomas. And we bought information from the Marshall Teague team.</p>
00:11:21	<p>Mario Andretti So we had on a local level, we show up and you know, they were almost laughing, "Haha" you know, because everybody was running this 32, you know, rail, you know, Fords, or Chevys, or so forth. And- and we show up with this big Hudson which, in NASCAR, was very popular, especially on the dirt tracks it was really actually, it was winning you know, most of the races.</p>
00:11:42	<p>Mario Andretti So we showed up, and we won the very first race; Aldo driving.</p>

00:11:48	Mario Andretti You know, obviously we tossed a coin, and he won. I was glad.
00:11:53	Mario Andretti But, we won the heat and the feature in the very first race, and I had to do the same the following week obviously, you know?
00:12:00	Mario Andretti But we- we were winning races locally so there was very auspicious beginning of course for us, and then we did all the crashing and all the normal things as time went on but at least you know, we- we got our foot in there, and- and of course we- we were in debt, you know, by about a thousand dollars, you know?
00:12:22	Mario Andretti And we started earning. The first- the first weekend, we earned a hundred and fifty dollars for the win and twenty-five dollars for the heat. That was a hundred and seventy-five dollars already, you know?
00:12:34	Mario Andretti So it started a cash flow, you know? And-, but the first- the first race was March, 27 th , and by July, we paid off our debt to the bank, you know?
00:12:46	Mario Andretti So you know, we were in business.
00:12:49	Matt Anderson Encouraging results.
00:12:50	Mario Andretti Encouraging results! (laughter)
00:12:52	Matt Anderson So that, I assume, helps you with this decision ultimately, to go pro and make this your full-time career, but maybe you could tell us a little bit about that decision and how you came to it.
00:13:02	Mario Andretti Well, it was not even a decision like it was- had to happen. I never had a plan-B quite honestly and you know, obviously, we got started, and I must say, in those days, legally, you had to be twenty-one to race. And that- and that was...
00:13:21	Mario Andretti

	When we started building our car, we figured, "Oh, we've got plenty of time." But we finished it in two years, so we were only 19.
00:13:30	Mario Andretti So we had, you know, local friend who also was the editor of the local newspaper, Les Young. We said, "Les, we've got to do something with our birth date on our license," so he fudged that.
00:13:42	Mario Andretti And of course in those days, no computer or anything, you know? So we got by and almost got called out on that one because when Aldo got hurt, in the hospital, you know, if you-, if you would've- would've found out he was underage, insurance probably wouldn't have paid, so it would've been hell to pay for me.
00:14:04	Mario Andretti But anyway, <i>[that's how it?]</i> all started, but as far as the decision to continue, it was just-, continue- for me, I was the fortunate one; the lucky one that had no interruptions.
00:14:22	Mario Andretti And so my objective was from stock car, not to stay in stock car but it was to get into single-seaters, to get into midgets, and then sprint cars, and to get onto the Indianapolis car level, and this was the road to take me there, and that's what I worked toward.
00:14:40	Mario Andretti But then I married. I was quite young. It occurred when I was twenty-one, and my wife, Dee Ann's father and his partner helped me buy a three quarter midget so I could race indoor in the winter, and then try to be noticed so I could get a full-ride with somebody, you know, else
00:15:06	Mario Andretti With a full- mid-sized, you know, full-size midget, and accomplished that because I bought one of the very famous- the famous Deuce as they called it indoors.
00:15:17	Mario Andretti And I won some races, one of the bigger races you know, at Teaneck Armory, and I did get a ride in a full-size midget you know, with a team that was quite good but they had never won a race.
00:15:28	Mario Andretti

	<p>And I won the first race for them, and then I won three races in one day later on, which was you know, one of the days that you'll always remember, you know, three races within a twenty-four hour period, and on Labor Day 1963, and on and on, so.</p>
00:15:45	<p>Mario Andretti So my career progressed with stepping stone to stepping stone, but every year, I like to look back and say, "Am I better off and did I really move forward from last year?"</p>
00:15:58	<p>Mario Andretti And if [the] question - yes-..., the answer was yes, you know, you would move on. You try to- never try to stay in any level until I reach my final-, you know, the final goal if you will.</p>
00:16:11	<p>Mario Andretti And that's the way it progressed for me, and again, you know, I can look back and-, and count my blessings for that from that standpoint, because things were happening just the way that I was hoping.</p>
00:16:29	<p>Matt Anderson That's fantastic. So it feels like a very logical progression as you look back and you say you're always striving for that next step up the ladder.</p>
00:16:36	<p>Matt Anderson I'm glad you mentioned racing in the midget cars. I'll open it up to our first kind of broad question here. Now, you've raced obviously the midgets. You've gone open-wheel racing, NASCAR, Stock Car racing, Sports Cars. You've been in the IROC series. You've been even a little drag racing too you've done.</p>
00:16:52	<p>Matt Anderson How did the skills transfer between those types of racing? Is there a lot of crossover, or do you find that you have to be in a different mindset between each type of racing?</p>
00:16:59	<p>Mario Andretti Well, I mean, all of what you're saying as far as the skills to develop, but you develop skills. And what it is-, is as a race driver, you develop a skill or a feeling, you know, for a race car, which is basic what you want to feel no matter what type of car you drive.</p>
00:17:23	<p>Mario Andretti There's only one feel of balance, responsiveness, and so on and so forth.</p>

00:17:27	Mario Andretti But then the other side is the curiosity. From my standpoint, how did this animal act versus the other animal?
00:17:35	Mario Andretti And motor racing offers, you know, the different disciplines to be able to explore at the top level.
00:17:40	Mario Andretti And as I went on, I just you're always motivated by somebody that- that obviously is the champion of the day, and you say, "I want to be like him," and so on and so forth.
00:17:56	Mario Andretti And so, it gives you the motivation, you know, to pursue the different size, start at midget, sprint cars, and then what's my objective, you know?
00:18:07	Mario Andretti I want to get to the top level, say of Indy cars because if I get there and I do well, then I have opportunity maybe to do something else – to get into sports cars, and sort of start migrating in some of the other, which is exactly what happened to me.
00:18:25	Mario Andretti And again, I find that-, yeah, it is an incredible challenge to try to be able to extract everything out of every different car that you drive, but that's really what-, you know, what it's all about, isn't it? That's what really, you know, motivates you to do it and to keep going.
00:18:48	Mario Andretti You're looking for the challenge, and you want to master that, you know? So that's the satisfaction that you derive from it.
00:18:58	Mario Andretti And for me, I was always curious about that, and that's why, yes, my specialty was open-wheel single-seaters, because I consider that the thoroughbred of the sport of motor racing because a single-seater open-wheel car is built for just that purpose. It's not a derivative.
00:19:20	Mario Andretti A sports car is a derivative of something you can drive on the road later and modify and a stock car the same way.
00:19:26	Mario Andretti

	So- but the single-seater is the- it's like the fighter aircraft, only one purpose.
00:19:34	Mario Andretti And- and that's my specialty. But, I wanted to see what the other side is enjoying too, and so, the opportunities started coming my way, you know, once I reached the Indy car level and things you know, were beginning to gel for me.
00:19:52	Matt Anderson That's a terrific analogy; the thoroughbred of Motor Sport or Motor Racing. I love that.
00:19:57	Matt Anderson Well, I want to- do you need a break right now? You doing alright, or- ?
00:20:01	Mario Andretti No, no.
00:20:02	Matt Anderson Wonderful! Well, I wanted to move into talking maybe about some of your specific accomplishments in different fields of racing at this point if we could. We'll start with what's been a big focus at the museum of course. The fiftieth anniversary of Ford's involvement in the Le Mans program and their great battle against Ferrari in the 1960s.
00:20:20	Matt Anderson And we just of course celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of that '66 one, two, three finish last year, and then the our own car in our collections, the Mark IV from '67 that Dan Gurney and A.J. Foyt drove, so we've been very busy celebrating that this year. And I wondered if you could tell us about your involvement, how you got involved in Ford's Le Mans effort.
00:20:37	Mario Andretti Well, this is again, this goes with what I've been saying about reaching a certain level where all of a sudden, hopefully opportunities come your way.
00:20:48	Mario Andretti So in 1965, which was my rookie year here at Indianapolis, I was- it was a very auspicious beginning for me because I finished third in the race with Ford power. That's- that's when we had the new, double overhead cam Ford engine, which actually also won the race for Jim Clark.
00:21:08	Mario Andretti

	<p>And-, but my objective, because where my love started for the sport was always through getting to Formula One as well, and so after that race, I told Colin Chapman, you know, obviously the principal of Lotus.</p>
00:21:30	<p>Mario Andretti I said, "Colin, some day, I would like to do Formula One." And he said, "Mario," he says, "when you think you're ready, you call me."</p>
00:21:39	<p>Mario Andretti So I needed road racing experience, and this was where Indy Car was beginning to dabble, and I was really you know, just trying to you know, get behind-, to get him to do some road racing, but I just needed some earnest, you know, experience in that, and here comes the Ford program, you know, the Le Mans program, which was all of a sudden a very ambitious program.</p>
00:22:08	<p>Mario Andretti And uh, they needed you know, multiple drivers but also test drivers and so forth, and, at the time, some of the top drivers were obviously just very much involved, in [Le Mans] or so forth, and I made myself available. I said, "Whenever you want to test, I'm going to be there," and that's what I really needed.</p>
00:22:28	<p>Mario Andretti And we put so many miles, you know, into testing of first Mark II, and then you know, of course later on, the Mark IV, and that was golden for me.</p>
00:22:41	<p>Mario Andretti And that's why I told Edsel actually that I owe Ford so much because that's what gave me a lot of the basic, good skills, you know, to get into-, you know, to feel more comfortable in road racing and so forth, even though you know, I kept lobbying you know, an Indy car to do more road races, and this- and they were starting to, you know, to get in- dabble into that quite a bit more.</p>
00:23:07	<p>Mario Andretti In fact, between Dan Gurney and I, we were either first or second in most of the races- the road races you know at the time, but going back to the Ford program, again, it was just, for me, it was the best thing that could've happened because three years later, like in 1968, that's when I asked Colin Chapman, "So, I'd like to do, you know, Formula One." and the last two races of the season, and my debut was at Watkins Glen, and I put</p>

	the car on pole here again with Ford power, you know, because I'm ... my very first race.
00:23:46	Mario Andretti But going back, even to the year before, when we-, we actually- Ford felt that they needed to do something with the Mark II and develop the Mark IV you know, very quickly was in '67.
00:24:08	Mario Andretti And I was part of that testing and so forth, and we-, Bruce McLaren after I won Daytona 500 you know, here with Ford, with the Holman & Moody car.
00:24:20	Mario Andretti Two weeks later, Bruce McLaren and I won the very first race in the Mark IV at Sebring, you know? So you know, all these events were just-, I mean, just happening for me, and-
00:24:36	Mario Andretti And again, obviously, the Le Mans program you know, just went on in- in best possible way, and all of the most ambitious goals were obviously achieved.
00:24:48	Mario Andretti And I feel very fortunate that I was you know, a small part of it, but it also benefited me personally in my career tremendously actually.
00:25:01	Matt Anderson That's terrific. Well, you're too modest in your- small part of it as you mentioned, Bruce McLaren have the chance to take the Mark IV out on its first competition at the 12 Hours of Sebring, and you win that race in the car – the first win for the Mark IV right out of the gate, and I wondered if you could tell us a little about the Mark IV as a car; how it handled, how it felt, what you thought of it.
00:25:22	Mario Andretti The car was born very, very well, and, you know, it seemed like, it's just- everything was you know, they tried to make it- improve it from the Mark II, and everything that they did from the data they had at the time and all the testing we had done, they were able to definitely, immediately, see an improvement.
00:25:46	Mario Andretti And I remember the first high-speed test that we did in Kingman, Arizona on a test track. It's like I think five miles long, where we did high-speed testing, and we put

	the Mark II versus the Mark IV, even as far as the aerodynamics.
00:26:03	Mario Andretti Immediately, the Mark IV you know, just showed that improvement that we were hoping for, but then also you know, you could add some spoilers and get some downforce for a slower circuit, like at Sebring for instance.
00:26:18	Mario Andretti And the car was just, extremely responsive and the best part about it is also that on the mechanical side, it was so well-tested because the Mark II was- you know, had been around for a couple years, so a lot of what was known about that Mark II.
00:26:36	Mario Andretti The [aero]dynamics of that were employed in the Mark IV, the Mark IV was a Mark II with a brand new suit; a brand new dress, you know, and with a shining armor.
00:26:48	Mario Andretti And it did its job. It did its job in a very admirable way.
00:26:55	Matt Anderson Well, that's great. I wondered if you could tell us a little bit about Le Mans, thinking about Ford's efforts there, and I've heard it described basically as Ford sending an army over to France in those years. I mean, they had a crew of at least a hundred people, if not more; everyone from machinists, to technicians, to of course, executives and their assistants bringing you over whole machine shops to repair the cars, even I think Coca Cola vending machines and things like that to kind of make you feel like this little island of American-ness in the middle of the track.
00:27:24	Matt Anderson If you could describe what that force was like over there, just the sheer manpower....
00:27:28	Mario Andretti Well, to me, to be part of that was- and it even started at Daytona 24 Hours where, you know, <i>I befriended because I know I had driven for Ferrari up to that point, even before Daytona.</i>
00:27:44	Mario Andretti And so I hired my friend because of my Italian language and so forth. Daytona and some of the drivers like

	<i>Bandini</i> would come over and they were just actually, intimidated, which was the idea.
00:27:57	Mario Andretti And I think Ford intimidated everyone by going to Le Mans with the effort that they showed, and did, and-, but they went there to win no matter what, and they did it right, again, you know? Just, they prepared, which is the only way to do it.
00:28:15	Mario Andretti And- but they left no stone unturned, and that was amazing to be a part of that effort because you knew that you know, again, they entered enough cars, you know?
00:28:30	Mario Andretti But, I actually, I took, a lot of criticism in that race because I had a failure. I had a brake failure that nobody knew just going out of the pits when the- one of the mechanics inverted the brake pads, and as I went out of the pits before the Dunlop curve in the first braking, the steering was taken right out of my hands, and I went into- and I took out two other Fords – two other team cars which, I mean, obviously I you know, that was the lowest point of my life at that time.
00:29:09	Mario Andretti But I was criticized. They thought that you know, that I was overzealous and I crashed.
00:29:15	Mario Andretti But it wasn't until about probably a month later when John Holman finally, God bless him, because he relieved me.
00:29:22	Mario Andretti I said, you know, they did not- could not understand what happened, but he said that they saw what they found out when they examined the pieces that you know, on the left front, they put the pad, the metal part against the disk.
00:29:38	Mario Andretti And so we went out- when you go out of the pits in those days, you had almost 80 gallons of fuel, so the car was very heavy.
00:29:45	Mario Andretti

	So in the first braking, there was no braking. It took the wheel right out of my hands, and I just head-on to the side and to the dirt embankment.
00:29:53	Mario Andretti And, so anyway, I felt, "Oh my gosh, I'm the one that's taking a lot of the chances away, you know, from Ford," and no one was you know, commiserating with me, but it was not my fault.
00:30:09	Mario Andretti And uh... But, you know, again, they were there in numbers and A.J. and Gurney brought it home, so everything was okay, regardless.
00:30:20	Mario Andretti Yeah, for me, there was a negative obviously on that point and- but again, I think, I feel that I was absolved by the fact that at least it was not my fault, you know? So... And for a driver, you want to know that, that's important.
00:30:38	Matt Anderson Well, you have some- some incredible experiences at Le Mans having driven first in the mid-60s, and then your last race there in 2000.
00:30:45	Matt Anderson A span of 25 [35] years or so have gone by. How did the race change between those times in how you had to handle the car and treat the competition?
00:30:53	Mario Andretti Well, you know, obviously, there's an evolution, you know? There's always a progress going on, and you know, in my career, when I look back with the- when I got to the level that I really wanted to be in maximum level in an Indy car, in '65, there was so much development yet to be done to the cars.
00:31:18	Mario Andretti It was the aerodynamics side, the engine side, you know, going from normally aspirated to turbos, and the tires, you know, the development of the tires.
00:31:25	Mario Andretti And I was a part of a lot of that for Firestone for instance because there was this war, tire war, between Firestone and Goodyear at the time. In fact, even the Ford team was split, you know, in Firestone and Goodyear and you know, with different team, with Carroll Shelby on the

	Goodyear side and Holman & Moody on the Firestone side.
00:31:46	Mario Andretti And so all of this actually, there was a gain from the standpoint of technology because when you have that type of competition, you know that's always going to bring the best out of everyone.
00:31:59	Mario Andretti And so again, it was- it was a great period to be part of this, you know, because of so many things happening and things to look forward to. I'm so happy and fortunate that I was part of that period quite honestly because I have a better understanding of the dynamics I think of, a racing car by knowing what it was like to have just the pure, mechanical chassis without aerodynamic help and how to deal with that, then how to blend the two later on and so forth.
00:32:38	Mario Andretti So you know, I felt that I derived a lot of- personally a lot of benefits from all of that you know, from this type of progression that we experienced.
00:32:49	Matt Anderson All right! Well, before we leave Le Mans and endurance racing, I mean you've competed obviously in Sebring at Daytona in 24- the 24-hours of Daytona in addition to the Le Mans 24 hour.
00:33:00	Matt Anderson How are the cultures and atmospheres of those two events different?
00:33:05	Mario Andretti Well, I you know, again, they're both classics but Le Mans is Le Mans. You know, as far as when you talk about a sports car race, to-, not even a racing fan, we mention Le Mans, 24 Hours of Le Mans. They know it's sports car racing.
00:33:25	Mario Andretti So the event just concluded an 85 th running so, true classic.
00:33:33	Mario Andretti And the thing about it is I think it's in the nature of the layout of Le Mans where you experience half of the circuit is actually rural roads used, and the other half is you know, more groomed and more type of professional road course.

00:33:53	Mario Andretti I mean, even that characteristic you know, is attractive, you know, to me.
00:33:59	Mario Andretti And the fact that it's- it's got so much high speed but also with a lot of very sort of demanding, the chicanes, and the hairpins, and it's got a variety, you know, of curves if you will, turns, you know, in the course that presents the challenge that a driver- I think most drivers really welcome - some elevation, so forth.
00:34:33	Mario Andretti And so from that standpoint, I think Le Mans really shines when it comes to the long-distance racing.
00:34:41	Mario Andretti I personally really love driving that course, and you talk about the ambiance. I mean, this is not just a motor race. I mean, it's an event. Really an event per se' because, you see that-, you know, the fans that come there.
00:35:00	Mario Andretti I mean, they have Ferris wheels and things going on... while you're driving! Of course you can you know, look over and see a Ferris wheel turning. So ah... somebody's getting a view from up there!
00:35:09	Mario Andretti So it's- you can tell that you know, you can take the family, and everyone can enjoy while you know, we're out there hustling and so forth, but this life throughout the night, you know? And it's just, it's a very, very emotional place to be in so many ways because it means so much, you know, career-wise.
00:35:32	Mario Andretti I mean, it's probably the only race, long distance race, that's even televised around the world for twenty four hours, you know, by many countries, you know?
00:35:40	Mario Andretti So it's got all that going for it and the value is tremendous, you know, career-wise for a driver and for a manufacturer to be involved, because you're showcasing you know, your technology to the world, and-, tremendous challenges there you know because you're really exposed, and I know why manufacturers want to be involved, you know? It's ok, you can be a race fan and so forth, but the ultimate purpose is you know, to

	just come away with pride, you know, with, where everybody can just- when something is as exciting as that, say, "We were the best in the world that particular day."
00:36:27	Matt Anderson That's a great answer, and you're right. There's just so much prestige associated with that race that people want to be a part of it.
00:36:34	Matt Anderson And thinking about prestigious races, certainly in the United States, there's none greater than the Indianapolis 500. I always think of that as being like the Kentucky Derby or the Super Bowl.
00:36:43	Matt Anderson You know, people who don't watch football will watch the Super Bowl and the same with the Indy 500. It becomes a national event.
00:36:49	Matt Anderson Was it- what is it do you think that makes Indy different among American auto races?
00:36:54	Mario Andretti Well, I think, you got to look at the tradition at Indianapolis. There's no other major motor race that claims to be around over a hundred years, you know, and the one hundred and first anniversary was accomplished just this year.
00:37:13	Mario Andretti So, even from that standpoint. You mentioned Indianapolis; everybody knows Indianapolis.
00:37:20	Mario Andretti In '69, I keep saying this, and I'd like to repeat it. In '69 when I won that race, I got fan mail from the Tibet region. And I said, "Okay, so even there, they know Indianapolis exists."
00:37:36	Mario Andretti When I was in Italy as a youngster, you know, just a teenager, I remember Bill Vukovich winning in 1954 where his average was over 120 miles an hour which, in kilometers, it transfers over 200 kilometers per hour.
00:37:53	Mario Andretti So as a kid, headlines – this is 1954 – "Bill Vukovich wins Indianapolis at the average of 200-" I think it was 210 kilometers per hour. Oh my goodness!
00:38:08	Mario Andretti

	You know, you look at the cars you know, driving on the road, and the maximum speed on the speedometer's 200. Oh my god, his average was that! You see what I mean?
00:38:18	Mario Andretti It just- there was just something about it, but we knew Indianapolis was happening you know, then, and we certainly know it now.
00:38:26	Mario Andretti So the fact that it's that well known from any driver's standpoint, you just- you got to win it because it's unfair! You're judged on your performance.
00:38:39	Mario Andretti If you're an Indy car driver, fortunately or unfortunately, you're judged by your performance at Indianapolis, so you want to get that big monkey off your back, you know, and it's got all that going for it.
00:38:52	Mario Andretti Again, it's just one of those. I mean, it's been around for over a hundred years, and it may not be necessarily the toughest race that you'll ever run and all that, but it's the one that will be the best known.
00:39:08	Mario Andretti So you better win it if you- if you want to consider your career complete, and again, it can be tough for you know, individuals that are certainly capable and never able to cross that finish line first.
00:39:24	Matt Anderson Well, you've said it perfectly there, you know, and win it you did in '69 obviously, and so you went there. You were supposed to race a Lotus Super Wedge, right, and lost in a crash there before the race began or in the you know, pre-race testing.
00:39:40	Matt Anderson How does that affect your strategy? Now all of the sudden, you're out of that car. You're going to be driving a Brawner Hawk instead. Everything's sort of out the window at that point.
00:39:47	Mario Andretti Well, yes. I mean, the master plan, of course, was to be able to take advantage of the latest technology -- four wheel drive Lotus, which was a derivative of the turbine chassis, you know, at least with that running gear and-,

	but better aerodynamics and with a power that we derived from the turbocharged Ford engine at the time.
00:40:17	Mario Andretti Four-wheel drive was beneficial of course because my cornering speed in practice was like I had never seen before, you know?
00:40:24	Mario Andretti So- but it turned out to be that the car was actually underbuilt, you know? We-, there were several failures, not just my failure, but even the other team cars had failures and suspension failures that after my hub sheered, on my car, the right rear sheered coming off of turn four.
00:40:46	Mario Andretti And I had- the lap before, I had a set a record, you know?
00:40:50	Mario Andretti But, you know, and there was no time to really do anything about it, you know, even before the race to redesign all of that.
00:40:59	Mario Andretti So, you know, two days before qualifying, we had no choice but to withdraw all the Lotus cars, and fortunately, we had a spare car, which was never intended to be raced there, but it was worthy because the race before Indy was in Hanford, California, and I won that one with that Brawner Hawk, which was new car. It was built you know, just as a derivative of the Brabham that we had, which was a tube chassis.
00:41:33	Mario Andretti But, it was- you know, this was monocoque chassis with base suspension geometry as the Brabham that we had, so it turned out to be you know, it was a good car.
00:41:45	Mario Andretti But it was not as nice to drive as the Lotus was, quite honestly.
00:41:50	Mario Andretti But fortunately, we only had two days to get the thing up to speed, and we put her in the front row, so there was some hope and we won with that car, and probably shouldn't have, you know, with all the races that I've had there that I've dominated...
00:42:10	Mario Andretti

	You know, this one, you know, we- I-, I led you know, many, many laps you know? But at the same time, I didn't feel that I really had a dominant car for sure.
00:42:20	Mario Andretti And here we go and it lasted you know, to the end, so here we go and pull it off, and... But I was happy- I was happy that I won for, Andy Granatelli put so much into that race. That race was the only thing that he cared about, and I'm glad I was the first one- the one to bring him the first win.
00:42:38	Matt Anderson I'm glad you mentioned Andy Granatelli, you know, when people think about him in the '69 race, they think about that kiss he gave you on the cheek. Were you expecting that, or was that a surprise?
00:42:48	Mario Andretti Huh! You kind of expect anything from Andy, you know, he was obviously very emotional always and he would express himself, and-, but great character, Andy; good friend.
00:43:02	Matt Anderson Well, if you'll excuse, we're all museum people, so I'll ask you a kind of museum geek type question, but your car – The Hawk – it's in the Smithsonian collection now, and that's of course the peak for American museums. How does that make you feel?
00:43:14	Mario Andretti Very proud, very proud indeed. And actually, it was just about a year after the race that I was invited there when they presented it to the Smithsonian, and again, you know, of course you know, extremely proud to have that type of exposure.
00:43:35	Matt Anderson That's fantastic. It's a great testament I think to your career and your accomplishment.
00:43:39	Mario Andretti Well, all of it, I mean, it's like I said, it's- these are the things that you can never expect to happen, but when they do, it's- they're very precious.
00:43:51	Matt Anderson So you're part of a pretty exclusive club at Indianapolis not only as a winner, but as a person who's actually raced against members of his own family. In fact, your

	sons, you raced against them in 1991 and 1992, and how do you do that? How do you separate being a father from being a competitor in racing against your own kin like that?
00:44:09	Mario Andretti Well, that's a very good question, you know? How do you really compare, because number one, there was no comparison for us even because in 1991 and '92, it was the first and only time even since that four members of the same family were at Indianapolis-were in the race. And of course, it was my two sons, Michael and Jeff, and then my nephew, John – John Andretti.
00:44:36	Mario Andretti And-, it's a lot of pride, you know? It's-, let's face it, there's a lot of tension of course, especially on the girls' side because you know, they're the ones that sit in the background, and pray, and all that, you know?
00:44:50	Mario Andretti But us, you know we're doing the thing that we love and the thing that we want to do, and again, you know, it's the family business support care, you know?
00:44:59	Mario Andretti It's-, for me to have the two sons in there and I have a daughter – wonderful daughter – Barbie who is as competitive as they were, but she's into horses, you know, winning there.
00:45:12	Mario Andretti But again, it's the competitive spirit that's something that is very much alive, you know, in our family.
00:45:19	Mario Andretti And, to be- you know, and in this particular race together, obviously very important. But we've had some great-, you know, great events, you know, where- as a family.
00:45:35	Mario Andretti In 1993, there was Milwaukee, there was a podium with Michael winning, John second, I was third – the three Andrettis on the podium.
00:45:46	Mario Andretti You know, we-, I'll tell you another race was in 1986 – the Pocono 500. Michael and I were in the 500, but my son – the younger son – Jeff was in the supporting race, which was like the Indy Lights.
00:46:02	Mario Andretti

	And so he was on pole in that race, and he won that race - support race, and Michael was on the pole for the 500, and I won the 500. So the three of us, we won everything there was to win on that weekend, but nobody probably noticed but us, you know?
00:46:20	Mario Andretti So as a family, you know, how wonderful is that, you know?
00:46:26	Mario Andretti So we have so many of those memories, even Michael and I just finished first and second you know, in Indy cars; I think first and second like eight times, and we were on the podium like fifteen times or something like that, you know, together.
00:46:41	Mario Andretti Again, this is the ultimate satisfaction for us, me as a father, and it's a double-edged sword in so many ways as you can imagine because you have your kids out there, and you know what you're facing potentially.
00:46:56	Mario Andretti There's a- there's a danger aspect.
00:47:00	Mario Andretti When you're in it, do you think about it? Not really, because if you do, you don't belong.
00:47:05	Mario Andretti But once I came out of the cockpit, I started realizing what my poor wife was going through, you know, just watching. Being on the sideline, you're almost- being on the same track with them, it almost felt like oh, you have some control over it, so I- I'm in the mix as well.
00:47:24	Mario Andretti But on the sideline, all of a sudden, you think, "Oh gosh, that's what poor Dee Ann's been going through all of her life," you know, with us because then, like I said, you just feel like, "Oh, you're helpless," you know, and- but you know what they're facing, so there is that, you know?
00:47:40	Mario Andretti You can't help it because the sport can be dangerous. We know all that.
00:47:47	Mario Andretti But at the same time, it's a choice. You make the choice. I made the choice, and my kids made a choice. I tried to make it as clear as possible, you know, to them. I said

	<p>when they were young and decision time, I sat down. I said... Michael said the same to his sons- his son, "Don't do it because you think that I want you to do it. If you're going to do it, do it for yourself, please!" And then I feel clear that it's their choice.</p>
00:48:23	<p>Mario Andretti However, when you look at it in background, I mean, the environment they were brought up, there's no environment; they were brought up into that, so I'm in some way responsible I think for maybe just instill that, putting that into there, into their decision process.</p>
00:48:43	<p>Mario Andretti But, nevertheless, overall like I said, the sport has been phenomenal to us.</p>
00:48:52	<p>Matt Anderson Well, I hate to even ask the next question, but I have to because people are always curious about this. But the- the famous Andretti curse. Do you- do you laugh about that, or do you uh, think there's anything to it, or do you just laugh it off?</p>
00:49:03	<p>Mario Andretti Well, like I said, the Andretti curse at Indianapolis is something good ol' Tom Carnegie just came up with and some others.</p>
00:49:12	<p>Mario Andretti But, you know, I never looked at it as naturally as that because when you look at, I only won, say one, race officially; I think I won two at least. But-, but I was so fortunate in 29 times I was there because I'm the third all-time lap leader. I led more laps of all the four-time winners except one.</p>
00:49:40	<p>Mario Andretti So I was there. They knew I was there. I dominated that race to the point that, you know, I was even over a lap ahead in '87 you know, with 23 laps to go, you know, the engine lets go and stuff like that.</p>
00:49:56	<p>Mario Andretti And my own son, Michael? Same way. He never won there, but he dominated that race more than a four-time winner, so we got to go with that. I got to look at the positive side of it, and- and that cannot be a curse in any possible way.</p>
00:50:12	<p>Mario Andretti</p>

	You know, I was on pole, was on the front row like 5, 6 times and all that, so I had my time that was positive there, and it's only ov-, I mean, it's over- overwhelming over what the negatives were.
00:50:29	Mario Andretti And so, even look at, in 2003, when I was practicing for Michael, potentially substituting Tony Kanaan at Indy, and you know, and following Kenny Brack he exploded the engine. And anyway, he had a piece from the fence. I hit it and went airborne. I was up in the air 220 miles per hour, and I landed on my wheels. That was a blessing. That was not a curse.
00:51:00	Mario Andretti You know, so I said that all around, you know, I have nothing to complain about, at all.
00:51:08	Matt Anderson That's terrific. Thank you so much for talking about that, and doing good? No need for a break yet or uh...
00:51:14	Mario Andretti No, no. I'm ready to go.
00:51:15	Matt Anderson Great! Well, I want to get into uh, NASCAR a little bit if we can and um, you know, NASCAR is a whole different culture I think than open-wheel racing, not just the drivers but the fans are a different set, whole different environment and atmosphere and uh...
00:51:27	Matt Anderson You're coming into NASCAR from a background in open-wheel racing and so forth, and do you feel like you were treated kind of differently because of that? Did other drivers look at you with some suspicion, or were you welcomed?
00:51:39	Mario Andretti I don't know how the other drivers felt you know, but- about me, but I felt welcome, quite honestly.
00:51:49	Mario Andretti The first thing was that Bill France, Senior, he was such a wonderful man.
00:51:56	Mario Andretti And he you know, my first experience was there in '66, and- and also in the 24 Hours, and he invited me into his office, and he made it clear how welcome I was by him, you know, in Daytona.
00:52:15	Mario Andretti

	And that was to me, that was a very gallant way you know, to- to express himself to me.
00:52:24	Mario Andretti And so from that standpoint, I felt ok. I mean, it's another discipline, but it's still motor racing. We're still the same family, but there's a rivalry, which is healthy. It was a healthy rivalry between the disciplines.
00:52:40	Mario Andretti And I was lucky that the third time I was there, I was there with the Ford effort you know, Holman & Moody and this falls into the category of the relationship that I had with Ford where I would express myself and said, "I would like to do Daytona," or would like to do Riverside or something, and they always accommodated me.
00:53:04	Mario Andretti And I mean, there was no better opportunity to go to Daytona at the time you know, to be alongside Freddy Lorenzen, and you know, who was obviously winning at the time when the cars were very strong. And again, it satisfied a big, big curiosity for me.
00:53:27	Mario Andretti Stock cars were not my wheelhouse, you know? But it was motor racing, and still and motor racing very important. Motor racing...
00:53:37	Mario Andretti And Daytona still was then still the "shining diamond" of the series of the NASCAR series.
00:53:48	Mario Andretti So, to be part of it and be competitive, you know, was the ultimate that I could expect. And I can thank Ford again, you know, for giving me that opportunity quite honestly.
00:54:02	Mario Andretti They gave me a piece that was capable of winning and I brought it home.
00:54:08	Mario Andretti And, you know, I felt that what was most satisfying to me was that I led early on, and I led, you know, I led the most laps, you know, in a race. And that showed that I didn't just luck into it, you know?
00:54:22	Mario Andretti I had a car that was capable, and I brought it home.
00:54:28	Matt Anderson 1967, yeah. Fantastic.

00:54:31	<p>Matt Anderson Well, let's go back then and talk a little bit about the Andretti family and your sons, your nephew, and do they come to you for advice? Did they before, have they since, and if so, do they listen to what you tell them?</p>
00:54:43	<p>Mario Andretti Well, I- they- yeah, as a family, our discourse is you know, motor racing for the most part, and that's what keeps, you know, our interest on and off the track if you will. Could be boring for the rest of the family around us, but- but it's front and center and mainly because again, everything- it's so competitive.</p>
00:55:09	<p>Mario Andretti Everything's so competitive that you don't only think about it when you're there, you know, practicing or qualifying or a race. You think about it all the time.</p>
00:55:20	<p>Mario Andretti And, you know, sometimes I will say, maybe the kids, I wish they would discuss it more with me and ask more questions, but I also like the fact that they feel you know, "I'm my own person." "I can-," you know, "I can deal with this," you know, so there's certain pride there, which is good as well, you know? So it goes both ways, you know?</p>
00:55:42	<p>Mario Andretti You know, but we're all in it together, you know, and if I make an observation and it sounds like a criticism, it's not, basically. It's a constructive criticism because I want them to be successful, you know?</p>
00:55:58	<p>Mario Andretti And so, we're all- we're in against- totally always competitive environment that you're just always pushing hard. You're never resting on your laurels, you know? You just want to get more -- more, more, more! Yes! I mean, that's what it's all about! That's the only satisfaction you derive from it.</p>
00:56:20	<p>Mario Andretti And then like I said, it spills over to-, you know, to my daughter who ok, she's usually not brought into the same conversation because she's not in motor racing, but her competitive spirit I think is stronger than all of ours because she gets that feeling, you know? So she says, "Well, what about me?" type of thing, you know?</p>
00:56:44	<p>Mario Andretti</p>

	So even you know, whether we're playing tennis, whatever, you know, she wants to win! I like that, you know?
00:56:50	Mario Andretti There's nothing you know, better than that in my opinion just because there's a sense of pride that goes with it.
00:56:57	Mario Andretti And then the family, you know, we feel, you know, not only from the driving standpoint, which is really, primarily what I'm interested in, but then I see like my son, my both sons, Jeff and Michael continuing, still in the business, but in different direction, and where they can be in it forever, you know?
00:57:23	Mario Andretti The driving is limited to age if you will, but even with Michael, like, you know, he had a brilliant career of his own. He knows, in Indy cars especially, you know?
00:57:34	Mario Andretti And now, as an owner, he looks at the business side of it, and he lives that side of it, which actually guarantees him some longevity.
00:57:40	Mario Andretti All of a sudden, with the win, recent win at Indianapolis with his team, Takuma Sato makes him the second-winningest driver, far behind the winningest I mean, owner... Far behind the winningest, which is Roger Penske, but still, he's at the top, you know?
00:58:04	Mario Andretti So he's getting his revenge as an owner versus a driver, but he is in every aspect, he's in like four or five disciplines of the sport- at the same time, you know?
00:58:19	Mario Andretti So the overall umbrella of the business, the disciplines that this business can offer, you know, Michael embraces that as a business, you know?
00:58:28	Mario Andretti Again, as a family, it seemed like you had people, "Is that all you know? "Yeah, that's all we know, but I think we know a little bit about it too," you know?
00:58:36	Mario Andretti We take pride in that, and we're all in. We're all in.
00:58:40	Mario Andretti You know, at my age for instance, I'm as much part of the sport that I wa- that I want to be as ever because

	that's where my love is, and that's where I feel that I just derive you know, the satisfaction, even today either watching them compete and be successful, or even doing some of the driving myself, which I do and all this just to keep my hand in it.
00:59:09	Mario Andretti And you know, I don't talk past-tense, you know, even when I talk.
00:59:14	Mario Andretti I like to be up to speed on everything, the technology...
00:59:19	Mario Andretti I love technology because throughout my career, that's what I looked forward to every time I didn't want to sit still. "Ok, I'm going to drive the same thing next."
00:59:28	Mario Andretti No, I wanted something new, hopefully for something better; something that, you know, will supersede what I had curiosity, but also I wanted to have something that would potentially go faster.
00:59:41	Mario Andretti It was not always the case. I mean, some of the new cars were like, you know, a baby with crossed eyes, or a shorter leg, or something like that, you know?
00:59:49	Mario Andretti It was not always the best-looking baby, but it was still something to work with and it always gave you, you know, something to look forward to.
00:59:59	Mario Andretti And again, that's been makeup you know, overall as far as always looking forward, you know?
01:00:04	Mario Andretti And-, and again, I'm so grateful that I've had these opportunities, you know, to live in the decades of the 60s, 70s, 80s, and 90s as an active driver, to see this progression, you know, of technology that we enjoyed, and then the computer coming on and giving us absolute information on every aspect of the movement of the car; things that we were just only able to estimate before.
01:00:40	Mario Andretti But I love that you know, a tool, another tool to just go to the next dimension.
01:00:46	Mario Andretti

	And again, I think a lot of that, the technology aspect is really what kept me motivated for so many years quite honestly.
01:00:56	Matt Anderson Well, that's great. Let's do a little sidetracking into technology if that's alright for a moment.
01:01:00	Matt Anderson You know, one of our favorite stories is you mentioned already Jim Clark when he won in '65 in Indianapolis with Colin Chapman, and Lotus, and the first mid-engine car to win at Indy, and you were right there at the ground floor for that.
01:01:11	Matt Anderson But in addition to that, what do you see as some of the most important technologies you've seen over the years in motor racing? What have been some of the most significant?
01:01:19	Mario Andretti I think the most significant is the aerodynamics really was explored not only in a wide-body, big-body cars like the sports prototypes, but single-seaters which you are somewhat limited you know, with body square-inch area.
01:01:38	Mario Andretti And then when the ground effects you know, was first actually exploited and I was part of that and how to really direct the air, not only at the top of the car, but like an airplane use top and bottom, you know, to benefit, you know, the effect that you need.
01:01:57	Mario Andretti I think that was- the aerodynamic was probably the biggest force to contribute in the speed of the cars, mainly because the stability and able to corner, you know, and with G-Forces that were just dre- you know, you could only dream about before the aerodynamic era.
01:02:19	Matt Anderson Terrific, thank you! Well...
01:02:22	Mario Andretti No, let's not, you know? And then the engines. We got to go to the engine aspect of it because look at you know, what was learned, you know, from decade to decade as far as the configuration of engines, you know, to be able to-, the biggest breakthrough obviously was in the late 60s to come up with the turbocharged engines, you know, and to be able to maximize you know, piston

	engines' performances and all that, and to be able to derive that type of horsepower out of engines [which] were restricted in the cubic inch area, you know?
01:03:00	Mario Andretti And it's-, you know, things like that which obviously was from a driver, always horsepower. Horsepower, you know? And that's when we started seeing horsepower up to the thousand-horsepower range which I experienced that, and I just... Oh gosh, I mean this incredible satisfaction you know, to get that jolt, you know, especially qualifying and so forth.
01:03:27	Mario Andretti So, those were incredible times.
01:03:31	Matt Anderson There's never a point where, "Oh, this is too much horsepower?"
01:03:35	Mario Andretti Never too much horsepower for a driver. Never.
01:03:39	Matt Anderson That's fantastic. Well, let's talk a little bit about F-1. You kind of ease into it, right? You start part-time driving for F-1, and then move in by the '70s full-time.
01:03:49	Matt Anderson Now, is that a conscious choice, or did your crew just kind of work out that way?
01:03:55	Mario Andretti Well, the reason that I sort of eased into Formula One is I had- things were going so well for me in Indy cars and otherwise that I just could not really afford to go at that time, even from a financial standpoint quite honestly.
01:04:12	Mario Andretti And I had, and- it's not that I raced because of that you know, that benefit, but I always looked at that side as I needed to have that stability for the family in case something happened, because I had seen that I had lost some of my best friends and so forth, and- and I saw that side of it you know, where maybe the families were maybe not as well off as they could've been.
01:04:40	Mario Andretti So that was only in the back of my mind, and I even used that as an excuse, you know? "I'm taking a lot of risk. I have three kids and so forth."
01:04:49	Mario Andretti

	<p>But you know, I just- somehow, you know, you just try to ok-, but I'm looking after them as well, you know, so the financial side is what really kept me out of it at the beginning.</p>
01:05:02	<p>Mario Andretti But I figured, "I'm going to do it." I had the opportunity to do it part-time. I said, "By the time I'm going to do it full-time when I decide, I want to- I'm not just going to be a rookie. I'm going to know most of the courses, most of the tracks, and then I'll really be able to go for it, go for a championship, which is really what happened.</p>
01:05:21	<p>Mario Andretti But, easing into it I think gave me a taste you know, to drive for a couple different factory, you know? I drove for Ferrari. In fact, I won my very first Formula One race in Ferrari.</p>
01:05:33	<p>Mario Andretti But Lotus, you know, but I had an auspicious start with Lotus, you know, with a pole in my very first race, and I was competitive.</p>
01:05:41	<p>Mario Andretti And so I had you know, some you know, good basis to go by, and by the time again-, but a lot of it was luck to how you wind up, you know? I wound up with Lotus by the time I decided to go full-time. I had a couple years with the US effort with the Parnelli, which, you know, was not really the effort that was going to land me a championship.</p>
01:06:06	<p>Mario Andretti And then the Lotus opportunity came up, and I was lucky to be just on the rise of Colin Chapman's career because you look at Colin Chapman's effort in his racing career was like peaks and valleys because he was such a maverick, you know, just always delving into- you know, just thinking outside the box, and sometimes it works and sometimes it didn't.</p>
01:06:34	<p>Mario Andretti But when it seemed like the period that I joined them was just the right time, and so we came off- came away with the world championship, should have had two easily.</p>
01:06:45	<p>Mario Andretti</p>

	<p>We got, you know, a lot of-, they kept experimenting with the engines, so me- I didn't need to, and we had a lot of failures because of that.</p>
01:06:56	<p>Mario Andretti I didn't need to have experimental engines in my races in '77, and I should've won that championship two years in a row easily because of that's good- as good as the car was.</p>
01:07:09	<p>Mario Andretti But nevertheless, the ultimate was accomplished for me, and you know, I look back and even what's, you know, the feather in the driver's cap, you know, in Formula One is to win even- not just the championship of course, but also to win the Grand Prix in your own home.</p>
01:07:34	<p>Mario Andretti And in- and in '77, I won the USGP at Long beach, but also won the Italian Grand Prix in Monza the same year, which is my home and my birthplace, you know?</p>
01:07:51	<p>Mario Andretti So these are the things that no one knows really, unless you talk about it, and I just started thinking about it lately.</p>
01:07:58	<p>Mario Andretti I said, "How lucky was I," you know what I mean, to pull this off and to have this happen to me really.</p>
01:08:06	<p>Mario Andretti So again, I count, I keep going back to how blessed I've been you know, really to be able to do these things in my career.</p>
01:08:15	<p>Mario Andretti You know, Formula One was really for sure my ultimate goal because that's where I- my, you know, dream really began.</p>
01:08:28	<p>Mario Andretti In 1954 was when I saw the very first Grand Prix in Monza, and that's where the mold was cast. I said, you know, "Dear God, this is-, if there's anything you can bestow on me, let me be a race driver you know, someday," and- and Monza's where I clinched the world championship, you know?</p>
01:08:51	<p>Mario Andretti So many of these things, these events that go on, when you reflect on it, they have just a special meaning. You</p>

	figure, you could've never, ever, ever designed anything like that, but it happened and how sweet it is.
01:09:09	Matt Anderson Absolutely! Well, I wanted to ask that too if you, as a young boy, thought you know, "Someday, I'm going to win the drivers' championship," or if that was a goal that you followed all of your life, or was it just an opportunity that came up as your successes became greater and greater?
01:09:22	Mario Andretti Well, here's the way I look at it, you know, if you're going to dream, might as well dream big, and that's the way it always was.
01:09:29	Mario Andretti When I first went to Indianapolis in 1958, as you know, three years after we came to the States, an uncle of ours took Aldo and I to watch the race, and then after the race, I walked the track. I said, "Someday, I want to win here. I want to be here," but I didn't dare say it loudly. I only said it to myself because otherwise, I would've been laughed at, of course.
01:09:54	Mario Andretti But you dream big. You know, when you're at Monza you say, "Someday, I want to win the world championship," why not? Dream -- dream big.
01:10:02	Mario Andretti And then it happens? Oh my goodness, you know?
01:10:07	Mario Andretti So that's what really is to me, the ultimate in the blessing that you got to have in your life.
01:10:17	Matt Anderson That's an amazing story. And when we think about F-1, of course as there's you and there's Phil Hill, and to date, that's it for American drivers to have won. Why do you think it's so difficult or been so difficult for Americans to break into F-1?
01:10:30	Mario Andretti I don't think it's-, I wouldn't put it that way, that it's difficult for Americans.
01:10:36	Mario Andretti Ours is the only country that can offer any race driver a full career without even having a passport technically, because, you know, you have NASCAR. You have an Indy car for instance, and you could have a full career and be

	satisfied without you know, really, relocating or going into Formula One.
01:11:01	Mario Andretti That's one reason that I can see, and the love that I had was not born here. It was born over there, and that's why even though from my own kids' side obviously, there was a desire, you know, to do Formula One by Michael's standpoint, but nothing like my desire was because that's not the way they were exposed. That's not- you see what I mean?
01:11:34	Mario Andretti Dreams are, you know, formed in different- under different environments. For me, it was when I started, it was the impossible dream.
01:11:46	Mario Andretti I mean, I don't want to know that it's impossible, but you know, deep down, it seemed like the impossible dream, especially you know, the way we were, the family. Even in a refugee camp here, we don't even have a car, and I'm dreaming about becoming a, you know, world-championship race driver.
01:12:05	Mario Andretti You know, with my kids, they're already in the scene. The scene was already there- theirs for the taking.
01:12:12	Mario Andretti So, to their defense, the dream or the desire cannot be as burning as what we had. I mean, wonderful that they- all they had to do was express the desire to go, and I make sure they would have the things at their disposal.
01:12:32	Mario Andretti With me, it was like my- the first problem that I had was even dealing with my own dad you know, to approve it, so it was different, you know?
01:12:46	Mario Andretti And I think the fact that mine seemed like an impossible dream drove me even harder, you know, to try to go-, to accomplish these things.
01:12:56	Mario Andretti And then you know, when it happens, you feel, "Oh my goodness," you know?
01:13:01	Mario Andretti So that's really the way, the only way I can look at it.
01:13:06	Matt Anderson

	So the longer the odds are, the more driven you are to accomplish it. That's a good way to put it, yeah.
01:13:11	Mario Andretti That's really the way it's been.
01:13:13	Matt Anderson Well, we were upstairs in your trophy room the other day, gorgeous up there. And we saw, of course, the trophy from Japan in 1976. You have described that in the past. It's one of your single greatest drives or races, and I wondered if you could tell us about that and why you feel that way.
01:13:27	Mario Andretti Well, Japan, we got to talk about conditions because it was a pure deluge when we were coming down to starting the race.
01:13:40	Mario Andretti And us drivers, we didn't meet together. We were expressing this. "I wonder if they could delay the start maybe half an hour or so," and they were refused. They said, "No, you know, we go."
01:13:52	Mario Andretti And it was an amazing sort of situation to deal with, because normally, you know, even when you're in the car, even if it rains, you know, you got an umbrella, and you can sort of stay halfway dry before you lower.
01:14:08	Mario Andretti This was like a deluge coming down, and you would not believe it!
01:14:12	Mario Andretti And so they started the race under those conditions, and the aquaplaning was just unbelievable, you know? So, we had no chance to even, you know, have any kind of experience with that before, and we didn't know just how much water the straightaway would retrain because the track was quite new, actually Fuji.
01:14:31	Mario Andretti And the most difficult part was going down the straightaway even, because you go "Poh! Pow! Poh," you know, like uh...
00:14:38	Mario Andretti And-, and it was a survival situation especially at first, and, you know, it's just one of those things. You just grit your teeth, and you go, and luckily, stayed on the road!

01:14:50	<p>Mario Andretti And then conditions did started improving, you know, but I got through the worst of it and pretty much controlled the race and, you know, it looked like James Hunt was the one that was my, you know, toughest competitor at the time, and he made a choice as the track was drying, he made a choice to go in and go on slicks, which almost worked for him, you know? A couple more laps, I think he'd have won had I made the choice to stay on- on the wets.</p>
01:15:25	<p>Mario Andretti And my-, as the track was drying, I mean, there was a real, long right-hander coming along to the straightaway we're going uphill, and the left front was really, really suffering through there.</p>
01:15:35	<p>Mario Andretti And I kept going on the wet line as much as I could, as much as I could, but my left front was really coming apart.</p>
01:15:43	<p>Mario Andretti And it wound up that I nursed it home, and actually, I won by a lap I think, you know?</p>
01:15:50	<p>Mario Andretti But, yeah, it was one of those races that again, you look back, "Oh my goodness," you know? So many things happened on the way in different conditions, you know?</p>
01:16:01	<p>Mario Andretti But the start of the race was appalling. I never experienced anything like it. Today, they would never start a race under those conditions.</p>
01:16:10	<p>Mario Andretti But I'm glad they did because at least I can say I experienced it.</p>
01:16:16	<p>Matt Anderson That's terrific. Well, it's got to be something else for the career that's as varied as yours that that still sticks with you.</p>
01:16:21	<p>Mario Andretti Oh, it does! Believe me.</p>
01:16:24	<p>Matt Anderson Well, I think I'd like to just shift gears slightly here and talk a little bit about some of the folks you've worked with, some of the other drivers and teams, and maybe</p>

	I'll just throw out some names and you can share with us some impressions or memories of them.
01:16:36	Matt Anderson We'll start with Holman & Moody
01:16:40	Mario Andretti Well obviously, Holman & Moody being a Ford-, the Ford official team, I drove for them in the sports prototypes, you know, in the Le Mans program and in the stock cars.
01:16:55	Mario Andretti It was not that many races, but we had some good results together. We had you know, all of it happened; ups and downs and whatever, everything that can happen in a sport.
01:17:07	Mario Andretti But overall, you always look at the positive side, and my relationship was absolutely phenomenal, that of not a good business relationship but a good human relationship that I had with the teams there, and that's all you can ask for.
01:17:26	Mario Andretti But honestly, the drivers that were my teammates or even in NASCAR – Freddie Lorenzen I didn't get to know him. I had tremendous respect for him actually. It was daunting to go up against him. He was considered the golden boy of NASCAR at the time and so forth.
01:17:46	Mario Andretti I said, "Oh my goodness," you know, if I can deal with him, I could probably be in pretty good shape and as it turned out, I think I had a better car than he did, you know?
01:17:56	Mario Andretti So, but I again, you know, you look back and I measure the value of success with who you, competition was, and the stronger the competition, the more value of course.
01:18:14	Mario Andretti You know, so, I rate that very high in my career.
01:18:20	Matt Anderson Wonderful. Well, the next fellow we just showed a documentary about him in our theater just come out of New Zealand but Bruce McLaren.
01:18:28	Mario Andretti Well, Bruce, here again, he and I were- became very good friends through the Le Mans program, because that's where we got to work together.

01:18:37	<p>Mario Andretti And also, you know, when we would have time off or go out to dinner or something, then you get to really- to know another, and what I derived from Bruce was learning this was the time when I was really trying to learn as much as the technique of road racing.</p>
01:18:57	<p>Mario Andretti And I would say that I had the high-speed pretty well, you know, at hand because you know, my oval racing and- and experiences, but hairpin rotating techniques and so forth.</p>
01:19:12	<p>Mario Andretti And I learned so much from him because that was his specialty, you know, and being teammates with him and so forth, we could really share a lot of you know, this intimate side of the handling of the car and all that.</p>
01:19:28	<p>Mario Andretti It was golden for me, you know? So again, you know, it's another part that I put so much value to not only the friendship, but also like I said what I learned from Bruce McLaren.</p>
01:19:44	<p>Matt Anderson How about David Pearson?</p>
01:19:45	<p>Mario Andretti Dave Pearson was a tough cookie; I mean, really a tough hombre. He again, he was right at the top you know, of the competitors that uh-,</p>
01:19:55	<p>Mario Andretti I had quite a battle with him in '67, in a race that probably the most back and forth that throughout the race with any of the competitors with him, and we raced each other really clean, which I really appreciated, you know, he obviously not knowing me and so forth.</p>
01:20:17	<p>Mario Andretti But, we had a good, solid you know, competitive race and- and he obviously, he had a blow up in the end, you know?</p>
01:20:25	<p>Mario Andretti But I felt that I measured-, I-, he was the toughest one that particular day, and I was measuring myself against him, and I felt that, all in all, I might be able to handle him, you know, as we went on because we were testing each other, so on and so forth.</p>
01:20:45	<p>Mario Andretti</p>

	And-, but again, you know, to race against somebody as accomplished as him was actually... Huh, was really what I was looking for, and it was a great opportunity.
01:20:59	Matt Anderson How about Clint Brawner?
01:21:01	Mario Andretti Clint Brawner was a grouchy, old man, which was fabulous, you know, to me. He didn't mince with words and he could read me very well when I was just you know, breaking into the top level of Indy cars.
01:21:18	Mario Andretti And he had a way of putting me at ease because he knew that I was-, you know, I was going to try to sometimes do the impossible.
01:21:30	Mario Andretti So he cooled me down, which was, if you know- if you have a rookie that's out there, you know, who's going to be fast but all he needs is to be calmed down, you know, so he doesn't do too much damage, and that's exactly what he did for me.
01:21:45	Mario Andretti And he put the fear of God into me early on because I figured, "Man, if I don't do-, if I don't behave, if I don't bring the car home in one piece, you know, I might get fired."
01:21:57	Mario Andretti All of that was good for me because it also might've kept me alive to be honest with you, in those days.
01:22:02	Mario Andretti So yeah, Clint was very, very valuable to me indeed, and it was just what the doctor ordered at the time for me in my career.
01:22:13	Matt Anderson How about your '67 colleagues and Dan Gurney and A.J. Foyt at Le Mans?
01:22:18	Mario Andretti Oh gosh, I mean, you know, you talk about A.J., you know, he was a yardstick for me when he-, he's five years my senior, so he was already very established in the Indy cars.
01:22:32	Mario Andretti And when I-, you know, when I reached that level, believe me, if you were going to get any results in any race, you had to deal with him, you know?

01:22:44	<p>Mario Andretti So again, he is one of those that almost every decade that's got somebody that's yardsticks; somebody that stands out, and he certainly stood out when I broke into Indy cars, and Dan Gurney, he was also my idol because he was in Formula One already.</p>
01:23:04	<p>Mario Andretti And so, I remember I was in the midget in 1963, and that's when he first got his first ride with Ferrari -- Formula One, and I'm getting ready to start and I won the third of three race I won that day on Labor Day, and I'm thinking I'm on the cockpit getting ready to push off. I'm thinking of Dan Gurney and Formula One. Can you imagine that?</p>
01:23:29	<p>Mario Andretti And then, seeing him as versatile as he was, you know, winning in the Ford with, you know, with the Wood Brothers, winning so many races at Riverside and so forth, and then you know, being in Formula One and successful, and then racing against him, you know, even at Indy, when he finished second to me in, you know, '69.</p>
01:23:50	<p>Mario Andretti But, the road races when he was doing some Indy car races also.</p>
01:23:57	<p>Mario Andretti You know, the road race was basically a fight between Dan and I. It was either he's winning or my winning.</p>
01:24:03	<p>Mario Andretti He was so valuable because he was the ultimate yardstick for that too, you know, so you'll never know how important he was in my career and a good friend on top of it, you know, just- he was just a great guy. He is a great guy.</p>
01:24:21	<p>Matt Anderson How about Roger Penske?</p>
01:24:22	<p>Mario Andretti Well, Roger, the captain. Obviously he means excellence, you know?</p>
01:24:30	<p>Mario Andretti It's when you look at this man's entire career even as a driver, he was a winner and as an owner, winning in multiple disciplines.</p>

01:24:42	Mario Andretti Everything that he touches you know, has been-, obviously you know, brings results.
01:24:48	Mario Andretti His career as an owner's probably unmatched - period. And I just value tremendously his friendship and you know, the interesting thing about that is that I got to ride in the Clint Brawner- the Dean Van Lines car back in '64, when I was asked to test for him because Roger Penske couldn't do it. He was asked first because it was an injury in, you know, the team with Chuck Hulse -- and Roger couldn't do it.
01:25:27	Mario Andretti So I got the ride because Roger couldn't do it, and then you know, I kept the ride, and that was the break in my career.
01:25:36	Mario Andretti I mean, again, it's one of those things you cannot even design, hope for, but it happened, and we kid about- he tells the story even nowadays, but uh...
01:25:46	Mario Andretti But yeah, he's- , Roger's always remained a friend, you know, over the years and one that I certainly admire.
01:25:54	Matt Anderson How about Parnelli Jones?
01:25:56	Mario Andretti Good ol' Parnelli, you know? He likes the fact that I praise him so much, you know, because here's a guy that I think definitely retired before his time, and I think it was- it was well-thought out, and I think from the standpoint of staying alive if you will, at the time.
01:26:22	Mario Andretti But he had so much more to give, you know, in Indy cars especially. He retired and he went Trans-Am you know, quite a bit, and in Baja...
01:26:30	Mario Andretti But as a driver, here's a guy who could just drive anything and win with it.
01:26:34	Mario Andretti He was really-, he showed in Can-Am to be a very accomplished road-racer as well; bit rough you know, but I'll tell you he could get it done.
01:26:47	Mario Andretti He was- Parnelli had pure talent – pure talent.

01:26:51	Mario Andretti If you watch him handle a car, a stock car, and I've run behind him in USAC stock cars, you know? Actually, I was a teammate... several times.
01:27:02	Mario Andretti And the guy would just-, his style and his ability was just second to none, you know?
01:27:10	Mario Andretti He was really-, he's one again that if he would've stayed in the business longer, he would've accomplished so much - so much more.
01:27:20	Mario Andretti But certainly one to be appreciated, and he's another good friend.
01:27:26	Matt Anderson How about Ronnie Peterson?
01:27:28	Mario Andretti Well, Ronnie-, I consider Ronnie one of the best teammates I ever had because we not only were fierce mates you know in the race car, but we were really good friends, and the families just spent time together. We used to socialize and even before we were teammates, we were good friends in Formula One because we used to pal around.
01:27:55	Mario Andretti I had you know, another Swede that was a teammate, so we became- you know, there was that sort of that relationship and there was a dark- darkest moment for me when he lost his life when I had-, when it should've been the greatest moment of my career, my life as a race driver.
01:28:19	Mario Andretti It was so unfair that, you know, he had that accident you know, the same day.
01:28:26	Mario Andretti And it's- I look back, and Phil Hill had the same issue happen when he won the world championship and lost his teammate. I said, "Why?" "Why?" But these are things we cannot explain. You know?
01:28:39	Mario Andretti But again, he-, because of what happened, obviously, I never could celebrate the world championship the way that I was hoping for, but his void will always be there, you know?

01:28:54	Mario Andretti But he was again, a good friend, a good man, and one that is in my heart -- Always.
01:29:04	Matt Anderson Well, I'll ask one final name here - Paul Newman.
01:29:07	Mario Andretti Paul was, again, an interesting individual in every aspect.
01:29:14	Mario Andretti I met Paul in '67 in Bridgehampton, Long Island where he a- ... and I was driving in the Ford--the Honker powered by Ford. And Ford invited him to the race, and the morning of the race, I saw Paul Newman on the front of the car.
01:29:38	Mario Andretti I said, "Oh my god." That'd really intimidated me, you know?
01:29:42	Mario Andretti I said, "Oh," and the car was not the best car I'd ever driven either. I mean, that- history tells you that for that Honker.
01:29:48	Mario Andretti But-, and I remember that day, I took him for a ride in a pace car, which was one of Shelby's Cobras -- Mustangs, and I think I impressed him enough because he was a very curious individual, about the sport.
01:30:06	Mario Andretti At that time, Bridgehampton's elevations, blind corners, and I think he was-, he was white knuckling a little bit, and I liked that part.
01:30:15	Mario Andretti And, but he seemed like- seemed like after that, he started really, really delving into the sport. For some reason, he did a movie just a year later, you know, two years later actually, called " <i>Winning</i> ," just talking about a race driver in Indianapolis.
01:30:38	Mario Andretti And then he just, he got a national license, starting driving SCA. And I think he won a couple amateur championships, and then he became an owner in Can-Am, and then we got together you know, in Indy cars.
01:30:54	Mario Andretti I helped put that partnership together with Carl Haas because we stayed in touch throughout the years, you know? We, you know, just- we're leading two different

	lives but whenever you know, I would see him, I saw him at Monte Carlo for instance, and then we talk for some reason, you know? We had something in common to talk about.
01:31:18	Mario Andretti And then when he-, when he was honing this Can-Am team that was right at the end of the Can-Am series basically, and I came out of Formula One, and I just felt that I wanted to be with a team in Indy cars again, to resume my career here; a team that I would have something to say about.
01:31:43	Mario Andretti And that's what really I was attracted to – the Carl Haas and then Paul Newman, I said, "what about trying to put the two of them together." And it really worked out that it turned out to be a marriage made in heaven with Carl.
01:31:54	Mario Andretti And I won 18 Indy car races with them, you know, before. That's the longest, I think, stint that I had with any team you know, in my career before- and I retired from open-wheel with them, you know?
01:32:10	Mario Andretti So Paul was a big part of my life also, especially toward the end of my career – well, the latter part of my career. But, good friend, wonderful man, wonderful man; just so somewhat misunderstood in some ways, you know, great sense of humor – great sense of humor.
01:32:34	Mario Andretti And, also what I detected always was his sense of curiosity, you know, and he loved- in earnest, he loved the sport of motor racing, you know?
01:32:46	Mario Andretti He said, because you know, he said, "When you get a trophy that means you win. It's not that somebody's judging you on one way or another," you know, he says."
01:32:55	Mario Andretti So he saw the differentiation between the business he was in, entertainment, and also the motor racing. He said, "Here, when you get a trophy, you won the race. It's indisputable."
01:33:09	Matt Anderson That's great. That's a nice way to put it.
01:33:11	Matt Anderson

	<p>It's almost incomprehensible to say, but you've raced in six different decades, from the 1950s up until the 2000s, saw a tremendous change.</p>
01:33:18	<p>Matt Anderson And I'm wondering if at any point along the way, you thought about retirement earlier than you did retire and how you knew it was time to retire from driving.</p>
01:33:28	<p>Mario Andretti Well, this is a very good question as far as the retirement aspect.</p>
01:33:33	<p>Mario Andretti Quite honestly, from my very first day in a race car in '59 to my last day, or say in between, I never. I've gone through difficult periods especially,</p>
01:33:53	<p>Mario Andretti I've gone through difficult periods especially -- 60s and 70s -- by losing so many, my best friends. You know, motor racing in those decades was like- we were like going to war at the beginning of the season, you know? You'd be at the drivers' meeting, and you couldn't help but look around and say, "I wonder," you know, "who's not going to be here at the end." Because we used to lose four or five guys a year.</p>
01:34:18	<p>Mario Andretti And so it was tough in that respect, but did that ever deter me from potentially, you know, moving on? No, it didn't, because I just-, if they-, if we had- if we had someone you know, being killed, if we had a fatality, it didn't always surprise me unfortunately, you know, I knew that it was part of the business, and you had to accept it.</p>
01:34:58	<p>Mario Andretti And so because of that, it's not that "Ok, because I lost a friend all of a sudden. Oh my gosh, this is dangerous!" It's not that I just learned it was dangerous. That's what I'm trying to say.</p>
01:35:10	<p>Mario Andretti It just- it was part of it, and you had to accept it if you were going to do it.</p>
01:35:16	<p>Mario Andretti So to answer the question, did I ever think about retirement, getting out of it? No. But how do you determine when you've had enough? Well, that's another</p>

	<p>good question too, and I think it's something- it's very personal. A lot has to do with a lot of things, you know? It's just physically how you feel, and then on and on.</p>
01:35:42	<p>Mario Andretti I could only speak for myself. I seemed like I could never get enough of driving. I just love- still do, I love my driving, and I pressed that envelope as long as I could.</p>
01:35:54	<p>Mario Andretti The one thing I kept in mind, and I've seen some of obviously my colleagues, my counterparts that some had overstayed, champions that overstayed. I and- I didn't want to- I was hoping I would not do that because I wanted to have a positive memory of my last races, and so it was really tough.</p>
01:36:18	<p>Mario Andretti But at one point, I just made a decision. I think I'm still com- I feel I'm still competitive, and I think it's time. I was fifty four years of age, you know? For single-seaters, I think it's time.</p>
01:36:30	<p>Mario Andretti And actually, my wife had an issue with that because, she said, "You never even discussed it with me."</p>
01:36:44	<p>Mario Andretti And I says, "Yeah, I wanted to make that decision myself," not to take anything-, I always value obviously her opinion because she was always a part of my life for sure, but I wanted to make that decision myself.</p>
01:36:59	<p>Mario Andretti And I think I accomplished what I wanted because I was competitive you know, to the last race. I felt that I was competitive. I didn't finish the last race. I worked my way up to third from last. We had an issue at the beginning with, you know, tire- flat tire, and it was Laguna Seca, so my memory was good, you know?</p>
01:37:21	<p>Mario Andretti And I always felt that maybe I could've gone another couple of years, but do I have any regrets? No, no regrets.</p>
01:37:32	<p>Mario Andretti I felt that I came out of it at the right time, and I satisfied myself by doing a few more, three more Le Mans races, and the fact that I got a first in-class and second overall in '95, which actually at least I can claim</p>

	a win at Le Mans, even though it was class, but it was a win still.
01:37:56	Mario Andretti A lot of people say, "You never won Le Mans." Well, I did actually. It was a class win, but I won it, and so I was able to satisfy that after I was officially out of the cockpit.
01:38:07	Mario Andretti And, so again, I couldn't ask for anything more out of my career, just the way everything happened.
01:38:15	Matt Anderson Athletes aren't just athletes anymore. They're brands unto themselves, and you, if you'll excuse my saying so, are a brand for speed. People associate you with speed perhaps more than any other driver, certainly in the United States and probably around the world too.
01:38:29	Matt Anderson I wondered if you have some thoughts about the business of sports.
01:38:33	Mario Andretti There's certainly a business, you know? The sport is a business in every way, and I can see that with my own son, Michael, who actually embraces every discipline that makes sense, for him at the time.
01:38:52	Mario Andretti And again, but on the personal side, I never had the ambition to really become- and I had several opportunity to become a team owner, you know, which is totally a very complex- totally a different aspect, and I just didn't. I just love my driving.
01:39:13	Mario Andretti I owned a team one year in 1968, and it's just a circumstance that I could not pass up.
01:39:20	Mario Andretti But even then I realized that's not what I wanted to do, because I always wanted the opportunity to drive for potentially the best possible team that I could, and maybe... I thought maybe, I could not give that to myself.
01:39:35	Mario Andretti

	So yeah, but as sport as you know, it's a business. Yes, indeed. I mean, it's a very complex business, you know, no question, and volatile as can be.
01:39:50	Mario Andretti And you know, you will not exist in this business unless you have that vocation, unless you have the desire to really be in it and the love for it, because it can be brutal, but it can also be just the best thing you could have possibly think. It could be...
01:40:12	Matt Anderson Wonderful. Our museum, The Henry Ford, we're devoted to this idea of innovation, particularly American innovation and the idea that many innovations are born out of failure. In fact, Henry Ford himself – the first Henry Ford – failed twice in the auto industry before he finally founded Ford Motor Company, went on from there.
01:40:30	Matt Anderson He was fond of saying that you know, he welcomed failure because it was an opportunity to learn and apply those lessons to the next project.
01:40:38	Matt Anderson And I wonder if you had any sort of failures or setbacks in your career that you were able to learn from and apply.
01:40:43	Mario Andretti Well, I- I feel yeah, I have-, in my life I have examples of negatives becoming positives, and then not just in the racing.
01:40:58	Mario Andretti I mean, I even look back from what happened to the family after the war, displaced. I mean, all of a sudden, you know, you have nothing, and you got- you have ambitious dreams, and then only coming to America is what you know, I'm the perfect example of living the American dream, you know?
01:41:21	Mario Andretti So a negative becoming a positive, I've had that you know, throughout my life, and that's what keeps you- you know, I think that's what keeps you on the positive side, you know? Your glass is always half-full.

01:41:32	<p>Mario Andretti And again, you know, there are many things happening throughout you know, the development in our- I was a part of a lot of that in tire- you know, tire development, you know, where you got failures you have. And then obviously, you know, you got a catastrophic failure that you got away with, but you learned something and you were almost the victim, but then all of a sudden, you're the victor, you know?</p>
01:42:01	<p>Mario Andretti And it's happened to me, you know, the testing for Firestone where we always gained the ultimate performance well we have failures, and I was you know, it was not because of me, but I was a victim of some of those failures. But I was willing to do it because you always again, keep looking forward to the end result.</p>
01:42:24	<p>Mario Andretti And again, like- if you- if you don't have failures, you're not really trying hard enough, you know?</p>
01:42:33	<p>Mario Andretti It-, in a competitive business, if you're going to play it safe, you're never going to achieve the ultimate, no question about it.</p>
01:42:42	<p>Mario Andretti And so you have to have that mindset. You have to have, you know, the idea "I'm willing to explore." Again, curious, willing to explore.</p>
01:42:53	<p>Mario Andretti But living on the edge, there's a sensation about that. But what are you looking for? You're looking for the ultimate reward, and sometimes, that comes at a cost, but you know what? But you're willing to take that risk.</p>
01:43:12	<p>Mario Andretti And without a risk, you don't really accomplish the ultimate - you never will.</p>
01:43:18	<p>Matt Anderson Wonderful. We talked a little bit about Japan in '76 and that race, but I wondered if you have other accomplishments looking back, one or two of which you're most proud now.</p>
01:43:27	<p>Mario Andretti Well, yeah. I mean, I have-, I have stories and so forth that-, events. I mean, you know, looking back, you know, it's just, you know, ok, we're dating ourselves...</p>

01:43:44	<p>Mario Andretti We've got Father's Day just behind us, and I was just telling this story about what's my ultimate Father's Day gift. It was in Portland in 1986.</p>
01:43:56	<p>Mario Andretti I will show you the photo, the photo finish that I had with Michael, my son Michael, he was winning the race, and I had no way I could catch him. I was running second. Three laps from the end, I just get this screaming in my ear from my engineers saying, "Michael's having some fuel pickup problems."</p>
01:44:13	<p>Mario Andretti And so I really stood on that seat you know, and we come down last lap, drag race to the finish line, and I beat him by two inches, seven one thousandths of a second.</p>
01:44:28	<p>Mario Andretti And we're on the podium, and Michael is not looking at me, not very happy, and somebody says, "Mike, it's Father's Day." He said, "Oh!" He said, "Happy Father's Day," you know? And I said, "That's it?" you know?</p>
01:44:44	<p>Mario Andretti So some people say, "Why didn't you let him win?" You kidding? Are you kidding? Let him win? No. We don't give each other anything, you know?</p>
01:44:52	<p>Mario Andretti So and, but events like this, you know, like I said, when I start reflecting, I have so many of these stories you know, the- that kind of cute that happened in your life. This fills the void.</p>
01:45:07	<p>Matt Anderson It's definitely better than a neck tie for a Father's Day gift. I love that.</p>
01:45:13	<p>Matt Anderson Well, I wanted to talk a little bit about sanctioning bodies and their role in racing, and we've talked to a lot of drivers about this and whether it's kind of curbed innovation, whether it's helped it, and how those changes have taken place over the years.</p>
01:45:28	<p>Mario Andretti Well, I think you know from the standpoint of sanctioning bodies, it's really difficult to always you know, to balance things, you know?</p>
01:45:39	<p>Mario Andretti</p>

	<p>What are your objectives? I mean, there's so many aspects of it that have to be taken- considered: the cost factor, the spectacle factor, the- you know, there's so many of these things. What is the most important part?</p>
01:45:54	<p>Mario Andretti And that's why you have, you know, you have NASCAR primarily. Obviously, they- it's the spectacle that-, you know, that obviously want to give to their public. The technical side takes-, it's not a priority if you will.</p>
01:46:12	<p>Mario Andretti Then you take Formula One, technical is priority. And is that something that everybody appreciates? Probably not really, but they want to maintain obviously, that's what they're known for, and then Indy cars are somewhere in between, you know? Some people like diversity you know, within the teams, you know, which I think-, I think the technical mind always appreciates that the most.</p>
01:46:41	<p>Mario Andretti But then when you have a spec series like Indy cars, then at least it's a level playing field, and it probably has the best way to really showcase the talent of the drivers and the potential of the teams for putting you know, all of those ingredients together.</p>
01:47:00	<p>Mario Andretti So I don't think anybody has the ultimate answer. Nobody has utopia, but we got sports prototypes obviously you know, that they showed the ultimate in diversity with different classes and so on and so forth.</p>
01:47:18	<p>Mario Andretti But in general, you know, motor racing has so much to offer a fan, really and you can argue it in many different ways. The important thing is, however, that in modern times, this- all the sanctioning bodies become very responsible in putting safety on the forefront and giving the drivers the best opportunity to retire on their own terms.</p>
01:47:43	<p>Mario Andretti And this is something that I don't think our sport quite honestly would've survived unless safety would've been dealt with as vigorously as it has been in say from even the 80s on because here's another thing I always say, when the sport has become more and more commercial, you have companies that invest millions of dollars to be</p>

	a part of the team to showcase product and so on and so forth and be proud. They don't want to go to funerals!
01:48:16	Mario Andretti So from the safety aspect, you know, this gives them every opportunity to celebrate. They want to celebrate, and so the sanctioning body in that respect, they've been responsible. They've done the right thing, which is good because it ensures you know, the continuation and the strength of our sport.
01:48:35	Mario Andretti And it will always remain a dangerous sport, no que- because if it didn't it wouldn't be valuable quite honestly, so there's always a limit. There's always an aspect of it which will always remain, but everything humanly possible, however, has been done to try to control the disaster aspect of it.
01:48:56	Mario Andretti And so these are all the things that have happened over the years, and this is what we're enjoying today.
01:49:03	Mario Andretti But again, when you look at the regulations and so forth, I would hate to even be on that technical committee you know, because nobody has really the ultimate answer.
01:49:18	Mario Andretti But as long as you sort of distinguish yourself, you know, one to another you know, from discipline to discipline, you're giving the fan the choice. Do you like to have the ultimate like in technology and so on and so forth?
01:49:36	Mario Andretti Well, you know, like I said, the WEC gives you that, you know, like Le Mans, like ultimate, but in Formula One, it does as well.
01:49:46	Mario Andretti And you want something with more parity, more competitiveness then you get Indy cars or NASCAR.
01:49:54	Mario Andretti You know, so again, as long as the choice is there, motor racing has a strong future.
01:50:03	Matt Anderson Well, I wanted to ask you just briefly about Nazareth here. This is where your family settled after emigrating from Italy. You're still here all these years later. What is it about this community that you love, that keeps you here?

01:50:14	<p>Mario Andretti I found my home! I found my home, and I think early on in my career, obviously because you drive for different teams, I had pressures to be you know, in the west coast primarily, and I always- always resisted that to some degree because my parents were still with us, and I didn't want to leave them.</p>
01:50:42	<p>Mario Andretti And there was always an excuse. I married a local girl also. We raised a family here, my family, and again, I think I'm travelling all over the world anyway, you know, so this is my base.</p>
01:50:56	<p>Mario Andretti And then you know, I had the opportunity to buy a property about 70 miles from here, I have like 600 acres. I have a lake and so forth. I have everything I want, you know?</p>
01:51:07	<p>Mario Andretti I said, "I don't want to go anywhere else, you know?" And so it's home-, it's home.</p>
01:51:13	<p>Mario Andretti The proximity to the cities here, to Philadelphia, to New York, I mean, we can go to dinner you know, Philadelphia, New York, drive there, you know, and-, an hour away, hour and fifteen minutes.</p>
01:51:26	<p>Mario Andretti Yet it's nice and quiet here, you know, it's a rural community. I think I have the best of both worlds, and so I'm happy.</p>
01:51:37	<p>Mario Andretti You know, we do have a condo in Florida, so we go to spend- my wife spends time in Florida, but this is home. I come back home. I always come back home.</p>
01:51:47	<p>Mario Andretti So, I'm happy with my base.</p>
01:51:50	<p>Matt Anderson Makes perfect sense. Finally, I have to ask you about that two-seater car, where that idea came from, what kind of fun you have with that.</p>
01:51:59	<p>Mario Andretti Well, the two-seater car, actually has a way of, you know, keeping me "young," if you will. It's really interesting. About 6, 7 years ago, I was approached by</p>

	IZOD who was then the title sponsor of the Indy car series.
01:52:16	Mario Andretti He said, "Mario, I was wondering if you'd be interested in starting-, be the first car to go in an Indy race, like at Indianapolis, start Indianapolis with a celebrity behind and so on so forth.
01:52:30	Mario Andretti And I liked the idea. I said, "Yeah, yeah, I'll do that, you know?" So that's how this thing started.
01:52:36	Mario Andretti But then I said, "I'm not going to just be at Indy. I want to drive all the time. I want to be really familiar with the car and everything," and the fact is you know, with the Indy experience, they have six two-seaters. I said, "I got to have the fastest one."
01:52:56	Mario Andretti (laughter) So you know, it's always you know, something like that that keeps you- keeps you going, and so this thing just grew up into you know, right now, I'm making a career out of it.
01:53:12	Mario Andretti And so I start, you know? Most of the Indy car races I go to, I started every Indy 500 since you know, about 6, 7 years ago, and I- I just love it because I think it's no better way to showcase our sport quite honestly because our sport is such a non-participant sport if you will.
01:53:34	Mario Andretti It's difficult to really explain what it's really like, and you can go up to driving school and so forth and you know, and drive yourself, but you will never do the speeds we're doing you know, to sit behind, you know, sometime, they even inflate the speeds, you know, so you're doing 95 and they tell you, "160," you know, type of thing.
01:53:57	Mario Andretti But with us, you know, we go, and I think I give a pretty realistic feel for what it's about – go as fast as that car will go, and the car is all the latest aspect, you know? It's a fully-, well-equipped Dallara, you know, with all of the, you know, the systems that all the latest cars have, and it's fast. I mean, you know, on an oval it'll reach speeds of 200 mile an hour range, and- And on the road course,

	it's got great braking and all that, so, I just love doing it, you know?
01:54:31	Mario Andretti And who knows? I'll just keep going.
01:54:40	Matt Anderson Keeps you young. That's a great answer.
01:54:42	Matt Anderson Wonderful! I wondered if there was anything else that you wanted to add that we haven't touched on, or...
01:54:48	Mario Andretti Not really.
01:54:51	Matt Anderson Christian? Christian W. Øverland Advice for the future. Matt Anderson Oh, excellent! Yes, yes! So thinking about drivers or maybe not even drivers – just people with dreams, young people starting out, do you have any advice for them?
01:55:01	Mario Andretti Well, my advice has always been that it's so healthy to have an objective, to have a goal early on in your life.
01:55:15	Mario Andretti I'm so encouraged when I speak to young individuals who are still formulating their- their education and the ones that actually have a direction where to go.
01:55:30	Mario Andretti I can only speak for experience because when you channel your thoughts, you know, you can be- you can really accomplish something unusual rather tha-...
01:55:42	Mario Andretti It's really convenient to be mediocre I think, and that's the unfortunate side because you know, a lot of people are just ok with that.
01:55:52	Mario Andretti But if you really want to be a notch above and have you know, a little more satisfaction out of life, channel, focus on what you know, your dreams, what your objectives will be in life, what you'd really be satisfied with and- and dream big. Dream big.

01:56:09	Matt Anderson Dream big. Don't quit. That's one of our mottoes back at the museum, so that's wonderful.
01:56:20	CHRISTIAN W. ØVERLAND It would be great if you just- if there are some of your favorite wins here, just point to a couple of trophies or...
01:56:26	Mario Andretti Favorite wins? Every win is favorite!
01:56:33	Mario Andretti But like I said, basically, by choice, you know, I have a collage. I don't have, "Uh, ok, this is favorite." They're all favorite when it comes to wins, of course!!
01:56:45	Mario Andretti But the world championship is one that, as we said, it's sort of raises the bar for me to some degree.
01:56:58	Mario Andretti But again, I've been fortunate. As I've said, I have, you know, wins in Argentina, wins somewhere in Trenton, or, or, Du Quoin, Illinois or somewhere, and I keep them together.
01:57:14	Mario Andretti The-, that's the world championship cup there or tray. Again, it's um, uh, um...
01:57:31	Mario Andretti This- this is a medal from the Library of Congress, you know, I got, representing motor sports.
01:57:39	Mario Andretti Uh, but um, you know...
01:57:40	CHRISTIAN W. ØVERLAND You know, most of the Canadian trophies are made out of sandstone.
01:57:44	Mario Andretti Yeah, this is one. Look at that Canadian trophy made out of wood! Hmm! Yeah, all different things.
01:57:54	Mario Andretti But it's-, it's all the events you know, that receive or reap the rewards, you know?
01:58:02	Mario Andretti This-, what's this... I mean, they all have, the Vince Lombardi award, there, that I received. They all have a special meaning of sorts, you know, just the- it's recognition that you never expect, you know, but it's something that you treasure of course, you know?

01:58:21	Mario Andretti It at least it shows that I've been around a while.
01:58:32	Matt Anderson I like the way you mixed them, because he shows, like you said, there's no one...
01:58:36	Mario Andretti Yeah, exactly. I think that was- I did that on purpose quite honestly.
01:58:41	Mario Andretti And again, we go right down to the-, I'll show you my very first trophy – very first trophy that I got, because when we were running midget or sprint cars early on, you know, there was so many they didn't give trophies, but uh...
01:59:00	Mario Andretti I got this at the banquet. Christian W. Øverland That's awesome. Mario Andretti Read that.
01:59:05	CHRISTIAN W. ØVERLAND Mario Andretti, for ability under adverse conditions.
01:59:08	Mario Andretti That means driving some shit boxes.
01:59:09	CHRISTIAN W. ØVERLAND (Laughter) That's great. (laughter) It's marble, though.
01:59:18	Mario Andretti Yeah, it's marble, and it's heavy. (laughter)
01:59:27	Mario Andretti So that's my first Grand Prix – South Africa. Look at that. Significant of the area, gold mines and petrified wood.
01:59:41	Mario Andretti This-, that's Daytona- that's Daytona, but we also have for Daytona, we have the Governor's Cup for the Daytona 500.
01:59:58	Mario Andretti See the Daytona 500. You got the Grand Prix right there. You know what I mean, it's just- it's always a mix in there, but you know, everyone has a little bit of a story to it, you know?
02:00:15	Mario Andretti

	So, it's all about the work that I love.
02:00:27	Mario Andretti Let's see some of the midget races and things, but...
02:00:40	CHRISTIAN W. ØVERLAND This quilt. Is that the woman...
02:00:42	Mario Andretti The woman! Yeah!
02:00:43	CHRISTIAN W. ØVERLAND Can you tell us about that?
02:00:45	Mario Andretti I have- I have three of them at different times, and she made this one when I retired in 1994. The, it's the, the Arrivederci Tour it was called, and she has all the different cars that I drove at Indianapolis on here.
02:01:07	Mario Andretti She just- Christian W. Øverland That's awesome. Mario Andretti Yeah, she did it. She- I just- I saw her at Indy again. She looks- she looks- she's still hanging in there quite nicely, and it's amazing, you know?
02:01:18	Mario Andretti These quilts, like I said, this- the third one that I got from her, and they all have just very special meaning obviously, made from the heart I'm sure, you know? She's a darling.
02:01:40	Mario Andretti So yeah, that's it.
	END