



Daytona Beach is where NASCAR (National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing) got its start. It began in late 1947 at a hotel in Daytona Beach. Its development is attributed to William Henry Getty France Sr. (AKA Bill France and Big Bill) and his wife Anne Bledsoe France. France was the son of an Irish immigrant, born in Washington DC in 1909. He showed interest in automobiles and racing during his teen age years. He later owned his own service station after holding other jobs.

Bill France knew of Daytona's racing on the sands and land speed records that had been set there. In 1935, during the Great Depression he moved his family to Daytona. He started as a house painter, later working for a car dealership. Eventually he started a car repair business in a building that still exists in Daytona. During that time land speed events were moving to the Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah due to the rutting in the Daytona sandy beaches.

He participated in the racing on the sandy beaches, but also saw that racers were at times cheated out of their winnings by promoters who took the money collected and left before paying the drivers. This gave France the desire to form and promote a sanctioned organization that would have rules, regular events and develop championships. On February 21, 1948 NASCAR was formed and Daytona Beach became its headquarters and still is today.



As the sport of racing grew a new place with a pavement away from the beaches was desired. Bill France Sr. with sponsors made that possible. The Daytona Speedway was begun in 1957. The inaugural Daytona 500 was held in February 1959. NASCAR grew into sanctioning other tracks and as an internationally known organization. Founder Bill France Sr. died in 1992 holding the title of CEO.

This photo program takes you on tour of the Daytona Speedway. The tour is a worthwhile experience into the track operations and the history of racing. Go to [nascar.com/gallery](http://nascar.com/gallery) below for a pictorial history of the track.



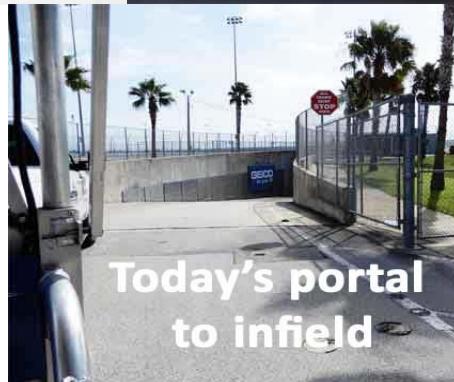
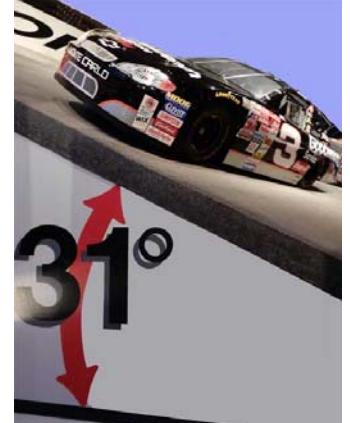
**Population on race day, about 170,000**



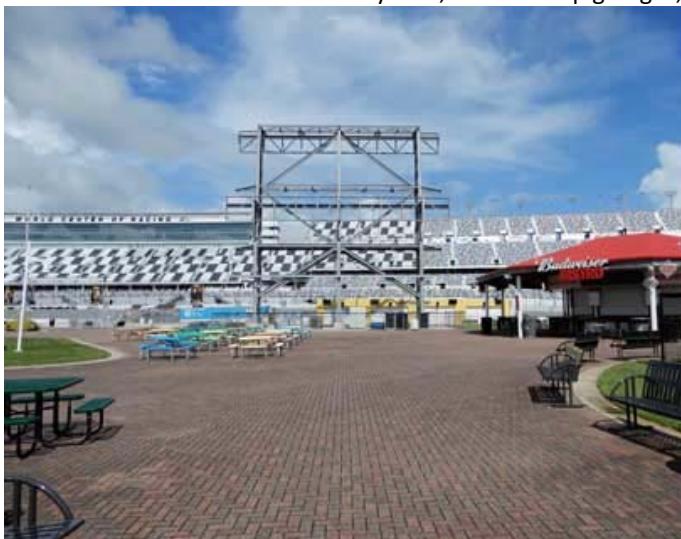


- Took 15 months to build the Speedway.
- Largest outdoor stadium in the USA.
- Measures nearly 1 mile, accounts for curvature of the Earth.
- 17 elevators, 40 escalators.
- A multipurpose stadium from music to other motor sport shows.
- Track features: 2.5-mile high speed tri-oval, a 3.56-mile sports car course, a 2.95-mile motorcycle course and 1,320-foot karting and motorcycle flat track.
- 180-acre infield with 29 -acre Lake Lloyd (powerboat racing)
- The International Speedway Corporation owns and managed NASCAR and Indy Car racetracks.
- The 31% banking permits higher speeds and better view of cars.

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The tour includes victory lane, NASCAR cup garages, media center, stands and Motorsports Hall of Fame of America.





For an added fee and acceptance of rules, you can have a self-drive or ride-along race car experience.



## S P O T T E R S



Watch Daytona Speedway Tour on YouTube. Address: <https://youtu.be/ZzvVP-DFbI4>



Sources: Daytona Speedway Tour, <https://www.nascar.com/>, <https://www.nascar.com/gallery/daytona-international-speedway-through-the-years/>, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NASCAR>, <https://www.volusia.org/residents/history/volusia-stories/legacy-of-speed/sir-malcolm-campbell-and-william-h-g-france.shtml>, <https://www.daytonainternationalspeedway.com/>, <http://blog.itrip.net/13-fast-facts-about-daytona-international-speedway/> and <http://gossipsloth.com/article/daytona-international-speedway>.