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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Annual 'Winners Drink Milk' Award toasts 500-Mile Race champion

INDIANAPOLIS – One of the most popular and recognized traditions at the Indianapolis 500-Mile Race is showcased annually through presentation of the Winners Drink Milk Award by the American Dairy Association of Indiana.

The award was created by the Hoosier dairy organization to honor both the reigning champion of the 500-Mile Race as well as the legacy of the great **Louis Meyer**, the first three-time winner (1928, '33, '36). The legendary Meyer, who passed away in 1995, is acknowledged as the driver who started the Victory Circle Bottle of Milk Tradition when he asked for a glass of buttermilk to quench his thirst after a grueling 500 miles in 1933. Three years later, Meyer was photographed drinking milk in Victory Lane. Milk was presented off and on during the next several years until, in 1956, the Bottle of Milk was made a permanent part of the post-race celebration by Indianapolis Motor Speedway owner **Anton "Tony" Hulman**.

2011 marks the 56th consecutive year for the Bottle of Milk Tradition, and 75 years since that photo of Meyer and his beloved buttermilk was snapped in Victory Lane.

The Winners Drink Milk commemorative plaque features an illustration of Indy's first three-time winner, along with an inscription crediting Meyer as the tradition's originator. The plaque will be presented to 2010 Indy 500 champ **Dario Franchitti** during the Public Drivers' Meeting at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway on Saturday, May 28. Making the presentation will be **Deb Osza**, general manager of the American Dairy Association of Indiana.

"We want people always to remember the significant role Louis Meyer played in establishing one of the most beloved traditions at Indianapolis," said Osza. "The Winners Drink Milk Award, we believe, is a fitting and lasting tribute to Louie's legacy."

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