



REIMERT SET TO RACE AS ONLY FEMALE IN USGP WEEKEND

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Indy Racing League driver Sarah Fisher had just taken two demonstration laps in a Formula One car around the Indianapolis Motor Speedway's road course Sept. 28, and another female driver was being teased about it.

"Are you going to follow Sarah?" someone asked.

Mandy Reimert laughed.

"A) I couldn't keep up with her, and B) I have to prepare for a race," Reimert said.

Reimert, 45, of Houston, is in her third year of racing and first in the Ferrari Challenge Trofeo Pirelli series, a support event to Sunday's SAP United States Grand Prix. She's the only woman on any entry list during the event, which consists of the Formula One race, two Porsche Michelin Supercup races and one Ferrari Challenge race.

"I didn't think I'd be the only woman running, but I don't care," Reimert said. "We all put our helmets on the same."

She launched her racing career unexpectedly.

"I bought a Porsche street car, and the dealer suggested I take it out to a track to see how good it was," Reimert said. "On our first anniversary, my husband (Larry) bought me a Porsche 996, and we started racing it for the Make-A-Wish Foundation. I've raised \$350,000 for Make-A-Wish through racing. Over 30 percent of the drivers have contributed to Make-A-Wish and asked for stickers for their cars."

She had no early goals of reaching the legendary speedway at Indianapolis.

"Five years ago, if you'd asked me if I'd be racing at all, I'd say you were nuts," Reimert said. "Now, it's pretty exciting to be here. It's the only time in my life I've had to focus on something 110 percent. I feel much safer on the racetrack than I do on the freeway. At least nobody's shaving, drinking coffee or putting on mascara out there."

And the Make-A-Wish experience has been rewarding. She serves on the board of directors of the organization's Texas Gulf Coast chapter.

"When you're in a position to race Ferraris, you need some reality checks," she said. "I feel like I have to do something for someone else. I've been fortunate that I've gotten to take some kids out for rides. For me, that's the highlight of my racing career, the ultimate victory lap."

