

The invisible fire at the 1981 Indy 500

Do you know what the Indy 500 is?

Vocabulary

1. extinguisher 2. invisibly 3. methanol 4. refueling 5. surgery 6. procedures

True Story

In the 1981 Indy 500, Rick Mears, a race car driver, had a dangerous accident. When he was _____ his car during a race, the fuel, _____, caught fire.

Methanol burns _____, so many people didn't see the fire and ran away. Mears was on fire for 35 seconds before his father used a fire _____ to put it out. Mears was badly burned and had to have _____.

He said, "If I were in the place of the volunteer firefighter who did not wear a fireproof suit, I would have run away too." After this accident, race officials made changes to make racing safer. They changed the refueling equipment and _____, and also provided more education about safety.

Quiz

1. When did the methanol catch fire?
2. Who put out the fire?
3. What happened to Mears?
4. What changes did race officials make after the accident?

True or False

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| 1. In the 1981 film, Indy 500, Indiana Jones had a dangerous accident. | True | | False |
| 2. People didn't see the fire because methanol burns invisibly. | True | | False |
| 3. Mears said he would have run away, too, if he were the volunteer firefighter. | True | | False |

Conversation

- A: Dad, I was on fire and nobody saw it!
- B: I know, son. Methanol burns invisibly.
- A: I can't believe I had to wait 35 seconds for help!
- B: I'm sorry, Rick. I grabbed the extinguisher as soon as I realised.
- A: They need to make changes, Dad. This can't happen again.
- B: I agree, son. We'll push for better safety measures.

Discussion

1. Have you ever watched a car race?
2. Would you like to be a race car driver? Why or why not?
3. Have you ever been in a dangerous situation? What happened?
4. Think of six risky jobs or activities and rank them in order of danger.