

# SPORTS

## Famed auto racer to christen Byers track

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Staff Writer

DENVER — Two-time Indianapolis 500 champion Arie Luyendyk Sr. will be the first to drive the new High Plains Raceway.

The Colorado Region of the Sports Car Club of America has announced that Luyendyk will take laps around the track Jan. 9.

“He’ll be driving a new Corvette ZR1 and may be traveling as fast as anyone ever hopes to on the unique road course, weather permitting,” said SCCA representative Denise Longwell in a press release.

The track, 17 miles east of Byers on Highway 36, will officially open in March. It is 2.5 miles in length and has 15 turns.

“Add the rolling terrain and up to 70 feet of elevation changes and HPR will be one of the most exciting race tracks in the country,” the HPR Web site boasts.

The road racing motorsports facility was financed, designed and built by several amateur road racing clubs and their members.

Luyendyk, a Dutch auto racer, started racing in the early 1970s. He moved to the United States in 1984. He ran his first full Champ Car season in 1985 and won the rookie of the year title for both the season and the Indianapolis 500.

He and co-drivers Geoff Brabham and Chip Robinson won the 12 Hours of Sebring endurance race in a Nissan GTP in 1989. He and three other team drivers also won the 24 Hours of Daytona in 1998 in a MOMO Ferrari 333SP.

Luyendyk won the 1990 Indianapolis 500 with a record average speed of 185.901 mph. He won again in 1997. He currently manages his son Arie Luyendyk Jr. in the Indy Car and A1GP race series.

“We’re very excited to have such a celebrated driver be the first to test our track,” said Bill Kephart, HPR representative and SCCR racer via the press release. “We really can’t wait for his reactions to the unexpected elevation changes and technical aspects of the new track. We’re sure it’s going to be one of the

most exciting and popular circuits for amateur racing in the country.”

Longwell said area residents are welcome to go to the track Jan. 9 to see Luyendyk in action.

“We’d love to have the local folks come out,” she told *The I-70 Scout* Jan. 3, adding that tire bundling will be going on at the track that morning as well. Approximately 14,000 tires are currently being bundled and distributed around the circuit by volunteers.

Luyendyk Sr. will meet with reporters between on-track sessions from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. He will attend several other events while in Colorado, including an evening fund-raiser and the SCCA Rocky Mountain Division Convention Jan. 10 in Colorado Springs, at which he will be the keynote speaker.

The Colorado Region SCCA fund-raiser is 6-9 p.m., Friday, Jan. 9, at the Mathews Collection, 5889 Lamar St., Arvada. This “Evening with Arie Luyendyk Sr.” is open to club members and the public. Luyendyk will give his impressions of the new track, answer questions from fans and sign autographs. Visit [www.highplainsraceway.com](http://www.highplainsraceway.com) for details and to make reservations.



Luyendyk Sr.