

# NTT IndyCar Series News Conference

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## Marco Andretti

Andretti Autosport  
Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Marco Andretti joins us here today. He is the driver of the No. 98 U.S. Concrete/Curb Honda.

Marco, great run for you today first day out. Tell us how it was out there today.

MARCO ANDRETTI: It was all good. Funny enough really I was more focused on the racecar. I was trying to bury myself in traffic on older tires a lot today. We didn't really focus on fast times. It was kind of nice that materialized as well. Well, second fastest time.

It's good that the car rolled off with some pace. That's always kind of like the first hurdle you have to get over. From there it's just working on the car balance. That's what we were able to do. We were one of the better ones in the pack today. It just seems kind of hard to pass where things are at right now.

So far so good. It was a good start.

THE MODERATOR: Was there any difference you noticed with the Aeroscreen being on the car? Here at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, was there any difference that you felt?

MARCO ANDRETTI: It's a little bit calmer ride just because you don't have 240 mile-an-hour winds coming at you. Your head is a little bit more relaxed and you're able to sort of see a little bit better. I don't want to say it seems slow because it doesn't seem slow, but it seems you can see a bit better.

THE MODERATOR: We'll open it up for questions.

**Q. You mentioned you weren't quite as focused on the specific pace today. You come off a track with the second best speed. Not only did you show a lot of pace, but a lot of your teammates are up there really high. When we're seeing so many of those Andretti cars up towards the top, what does that show on how**

**you guys unloaded?**

MARCO ANDRETTI: I think it says a lot about Honda. I think it says a lot about off-season preparation, the way our team is rubbing on the cars, spending a lot of time.

However, it's not my first dance and this is day one. Who knows where the opposition has their power and stuff like that. We'll see things start to shake out Friday-ish when we turn the boost up.

**Q. For you in particular this season has had some twists and turns on the track, frustrating probably at times. What do you feel like you need to see out of these next 12 days or so to get back on track, feel you're going in the right direction?**

MARCO ANDRETTI: More days like this. I'm not just talking about the speed. Just the way the car felt, really putting ourselves in really tough situations like the race is going to be. That's going to be my focus, is to try to get comfortable with being uncomfortable and put myself in really tough spots, make the car as good as we can make it.

Really, really focused on the race. I've been quickest here a lot, I've been on the front row, I've been in the top 10 the majority in qualifying, but it hasn't gotten me a Borg-Warner. That's my focus right now.

**Q. Is your success you've had at this track throughout your career, does that kind of bring an air of positivity?**

MARCO ANDRETTI: Yeah, I mean, I think if I look at the beginning of the season, there's been literally five out of six races out of my control. Where we're at has nothing to do with our pace or anything like that.

This is a championship in itself. It's almost like a big reset button. We're lucky for that.

**Q. Obviously a little bit different tire with the Aeroscreen. How was that today? Any falloff once you got in traffic? Is that going to be an issue if it gets hot?**

MARCO ANDRETTI: No, no. I think to start you're seeing the usual day one wear, right? Then the first set. Second



set was a little bit better wear, third set... It's a typical day one progression. I think by the time there's enough rubber down, it shouldn't be an issue at all.

We were running up there on laps already on day one, which is good. That's kind of been my game plan coming in here.

**Q. Obviously tough start to the season. Have you gone to anybody to talk to them about how to reset? Has someone come to you and said you need to reset and take each event as it comes?**

MARCO ANDRETTI: Yeah, I mean, when stuff is out of my control, there's not much I can do, right? Just got to keep going. Yeah, that's basically my answer. A lot of it's been circumstantial, DNF's here, a fire in Iowa, stuff like that.

I think we just came off one of my worst tracks, is Iowa. We top 10'd it. That was our first normal race of the season and we were in the top 10.

We started at Texas, we should have finished fourth through sixth. We had some stuff go wrong there.

It's not really pace this year. That's kind of what is keeping me upbeat and positive. This place, I feel good around here regardless.

**Q. What do you think about the times? On the first day last year we 229s. Got a bit more weight in the car this year. Where do you think the times will get to? What is going to be normal by the end of this week?**

MARCO ANDRETTI: I think come Fast Friday, we'll be right back where we were last year if not a little bit faster. That's the plan.

Right now in race trim, I never even hardly look at the times. I look at basically how the car feels. Fast Friday, we'll try to get alone to see what the cars can do alone. It's always a little bit of a reset on Fast Friday when we turn the boost up. That will be when we start to look more at that.

I think we'll be right there come Friday.

**Q. How many cars you guys have in the stable within Andretti Autosport, six at this race, plus the technical partnership with Meyer Shank Racing. On a day like this when you are just trying to get started, how might that have been an advantage?**

MARCO ANDRETTI: I don't know if it's an advantage or a

disadvantage. I think there's pluses and minuses to it. I don't know.

Yeah, I mean, it's tough. It's tough. When we find one damper, we have to produce seven and stuff like that. It's a lot of work for the guys to keep up with, a lot of housekeeping items. But we're working through it, trying to use it as an advantage, as you say.

The good and bad thing is our meeting will probably go till 9 p.m. every night. There's a lot to learn.

**Q. Has it been tough when you have so many folks talking in these meetings, so much data? Has it been hard to find that right spot to be on race day?**

MARCO ANDRETTI: No. I just think you have to look at who's good and who's happy, who's smiling. I kind of hone in on that. You just pick and choose your battles.

I've always done my best throughout my 15-year career focusing on my entry and my entry only. You find yourself dragging the whole train with you when you focus on yourself. There's always stuff to learn off the other cars. We'll go through the meeting. The way we shorten it is, Say what your good changes were. We sit down and can see if we want to implement it to our package or not.

**Q. In the past drivers have had so much time to prepare at IMS, the whole month of May. What is the psychological mindset, if there's any difference, from this year compared to past years?**

MARCO ANDRETTI: Man, for guys like myself I almost wish it was a one-day event sometimes because we roll off so strong every year on opening day. We have been quickest more often than not I think, or at least up there.

My plan now is to just not derail it and keep just fine-tuning it, slowly improving it, not go backwards throughout the month.

THE MODERATOR: Marco, thank you so much for coming in. Good luck the rest of the way. We hope to see you again on the Zoom.

MARCO ANDRETTI: Thanks, guys. See you.

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