

NTT IndyCar Series News Conference

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Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Scott Dixon

Chip Ganassi Racing

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Scott Dixon, second-place finisher in today's Indianapolis 500 presented by Gainbridge.

Scott, go ahead and tell us about your day.

SCOTT DIXON: It was definitely a good day. Everything we did, strategy, was on point. We definitely had a pretty fast car. We knew it was always going to get tricky at this point of the day. We thought we kind of made the right call.

When we ran the first couple laps after the last restart, we couldn't get the fuel mileage we needed to finish the race. We went to a leaner mixture, just kind of sat there. We didn't think they were going to make it on fuel.

Seemed like there was a hesitation maybe about 15 to go or 12 to go where I got beside him on the straight. It's like they started to go to a lean mixture, then they decided it was just too slow, so they kind of went back at it.

I probably should have been a little more aggressive on that high side there. I think he would have just run me up anyway, which maybe would have put both of us in the fence, or maybe just me.

Maybe we should have gone harder. Maybe we would have run out of fuel and been in the same position. I don't know what was the right call. Just shows you, when I was asked if I wanted to be leading with five laps to go yesterday, absolutely, especially with a scenario like this.

Definitely hard to swallow for the team. Massive thank you to the 9 car crew. They did a tremendous job on pit road today, strategy, everything we could. Got to say congrats to Sato, too. He drove a hell of a race. They were victorious. He's drinking the milk, and that's what counts.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Scott.

Q. Everyone here in New Zealand, we just want to say we're really proud of you, great job. What I noticed in the race was you were very close when you were dicing with Rossi, seemed to cope with the traffic better than you did later in the race when you were around Sato.

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, I think the speeds are kind of all you have to look at. I think even when Rossi and I were actually trying to work together because I think we were trying to do it on two stops or three stops, whatever the remainder was, at that point. We were just trying to run in a lean mixture and kind of swap every other lap or every lap, whatever it was.

The problem is when you lead, you start to lean out, nobody else wants to pass, it gets the pack in a real big, angry, squashed-up pack. We were trying to avoid that. We tried to spread it out a little bit, worked together well for a period there.

Again, really comes down to this last scenario with pit stops and that kind of exchange. When you're going I think running 220s at the end, when Rossi and I were swapping for the lead, we were running 215 and 216.

We definitely could have changed or chased the car a little bit more in that scenario. I felt like I tried to use the tools. I would get loose on entry. Yeah, I don't know. The track changes a little bit, as well, with ambient. Once we started to chase or catch that pack ahead of us, there was about six cars maybe about 15 to 20 laps to go, the speeds jump up a lot. You also get a lot more disturbed air, so it becomes harder to pass that person in front or get a run.

Car could have been a little bit better at the end. Yeah, I don't know. Again, I don't think they would have made it on fuel. It's unfortunate that's the situation I chased.

Q. Upset there wasn't a red flag at the end? You were talking about Takuma being a bit short on fuel. Were you a little bit upset you didn't get a chance to race there or was it the right call under the circumstances?

SCOTT DIXON: I definitely thought with five to go, I thought they were going to immediately because, one, the size of the crash, and two, where it was, it wasn't going to be a quick cleanup. I was kind of surprised they didn't. I



kind of heard they said, Normally we don't do that. History would tell you that's not true either.

For us it would have been really good because I think the leader would have been a sitting duck. That's kind of harsh on Sato. If they got out there and had a dash with three laps to go, I think all is fair in a situation like that.

I can't change that. It is what it is. I think it would have been interesting to see how that played out. It would have been much better for us rather than Sato.

Q. Your pit stops were pretty good for most of the race. You seemed to be managing pretty well all the way through. Is there a way you mentally deal with this kind of thing? Nothing you can point to that went massively wrong for you. Something you can do mentally to make sure you can bounce back quickly or is it something that is natural, you have to deal with it?

SCOTT DIXON: I think finishing second like this helps you big-time. Makes you pretty angry. You definitely want some redemption.

As you said, I think everybody did a fantastic job. Maybe I could have changed some of the things I did at the end of the race. But it's easy to second-guess yourself, also second-guess the situation.

Ultimately they did a fantastic job. It's a bit funky like this sometimes. You can't rely on being strong all day. You can't rely on past races or anything like that. It is what it is. It's definitely tough when you come up short in a situation like that.

That's just what it is.

Q. The red flag, you said they don't do that but know it's not unprecedented. Did you think you had a shot at them throwing the red?

SCOTT DIXON: I think if they had thrown a red, the restart, the car in second in a scenario like that where you're not trying to save fuel, going flat out, the leader would have been a bit of a sitting duck unless he did something very weird or strange that caused a bit of a chain reaction or an accordion effect. If there was a three-lap shootout, that would have been pretty fair.

I don't know how or why or how they do it in the past. Last few times it was maybe more laps to go in the race. I think if they called it pretty quickly like they typically do, you still could have had at least three laps to fight it out.

Q. Do you feel like you lost this race?

SCOTT DIXON: I don't know. I think there's always many turning points that you could have done a little bit different. Ultimately if it had gone green all the way maybe he would have run out of fuel. It seems like from our point of view that was definitely possible.

I definitely thought where they did lean out for a period, like maybe about a lap or three-quarters of a lap, that's where we got the big run on them, that's the pace they would have had to run till the end. I don't know.

I'm going to be bummed, I can tell you that. That's a given.

THE MODERATOR: We'll let Scott go.

SCOTT DIXON: Appreciate it. Everybody be safe.

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