

NTT IndyCar Series News Conference

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Indianapolis, Indiana, USA



Alexander Rossi

Andretti Autosport
Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Thank you for joining us for the INDYCAR Harvest GP Race 1 post race video conference. We have been joined by our second-place finisher, Alexander Rossi.

Alex, thanks for joining us. A couple quick facts for everybody. This is Alex's third podium in a row, his fourth of the season.

Go ahead and let us know how your race went today.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Yeah, I mean, the good news is we on the 27 side have always really struggled around here. We made a really big step yesterday. Qualifying was a bit interrupted just because of the red flag there. We didn't get a lap on reds like everyone. I think the true pace of the car was a little bit in the gray area. To be able to go out there today and get a podium is a good thing.

There were some things that went against us today that we'll get to the bottom of later. Ultimately it's a good day for the 27 NAPA Auto Nation Andretti boys. Honda has done a great job. This is another big power track. Happy to be powered by them. We'll try to go tomorrow and get one better.

THE MODERATOR: We'll take questions.

Q. Tell me about the conditions out there. Seemed a little bit tricky in terms of when you went offline with marbles and stuff. How did you find that?

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Yeah, I mean, fortunately I didn't have to go offline a whole lot. I could definitely see them building up. It was going to make overtaking difficult, for sure. I think you always have that a little bit.

Condition-wise it was beautiful. For the first time all year it's actually been pretty comfortable in the car. So, yeah, I mean, I'm looking forward to tomorrow. It will be another cool day. I think that works well for us. Like I said,

hopefully we can go one better tomorrow.

Q. In terms of tomorrow, you can build from today's performance. Also you can lean on your teammates in qualifying. That's probably the benefit of having another qualifying tomorrow.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Yeah, I mean, unfortunately we haven't really got to do red tires in a Q sim yet. We'll have to kind of lean on Colton, who was almost on pole yesterday. We'll rely on him a little bit. But I think we're happy with our race car. Obviously there's always improvements you can make. The baseline package is pretty good.

Q. Do you think you would have had a chance at the win today without the track limits penalty?

ALEXANDER ROSSI: I think we would have been close. Here is the thing. The penalty cost us a lot of time, track position, then also we were stuck behind lap cars there. I think that was really where Josef was able to do the big gap on us. He ended on blacks, we were on reds.

I'm not saying we would have won, but we at least could have given it a fight. We need to discuss that, get to the bottom of it. It's a shame that happened. I'm happy we were able to recover to second. Definitely if we look back at the race, there was a lot that was taken away from us and left on the table.

Q. A shorter race tomorrow. What do you think is going to happen with tire strategy tomorrow?

ALEXANDER ROSSI: I don't know. With the way the tire allotments went, guys could put all their eggs into today, use a lot of reds. I haven't looked and seen what people have done.

Obviously the red tire is going to be the preferred tire. It was a little bit jumbled today because you had the guys in group one of qualifying that didn't get to use the red tires. They had two reds. Guys in group two had used reds. I think it will be a little bit more consistent tomorrow than it was today.

I can't tell you what it will be quite yet because I haven't had time to look at anything.

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Q. There was a lot of really good close racing today and no cautions. Everybody seemed to stay on course. Were you a little surprised by that?

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Not at all. I mean, I think a lot of people equate cooler temperatures to a more slippery track because it's cold or whatever. It actually is a little bit easier than what it's hot.

Yeah, I mean, I wasn't surprised to see it at all, to be honest with you. The level of driving is so good in INDYCAR now, we have races that are without cautions more often than not. So, no, I wasn't entirely surprised by it.

Q. Shorter race tomorrow. Pretty much going to be a two-stopper. Do you like it when everybody is kind of on the same strategy? Kind of pure racing out there.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: No, I mean, I like the opportunities to have different strategies. It mixes it up, puts on good show. I think tomorrow is a little bit more cut and dry than today was.

Yeah, I mean, it is what it is. I think it's interesting that INDYCAR is kind of doing two different lengths on the same weekend. We'll be able to see which puts on the better show and use that as a direction going forward.

Q. You were a little upset when you got out of the car today about the penalty. Have you had a chance to review it? What is your take on it?

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Came straight here, so... Have the same opinion and need to go talk to people.

Q. From your point of view, you did nothing wrong? That's your point of view?

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Yeah, yeah. I didn't go beyond the timeline. I put two wheels over the white line. You're not allowed to go forward.

Q. Indy 500, same situation, very close call. How do you recompose yourself in the cockpit, get on with business?

ALEXANDER ROSSI: You don't have a choice. It's something we need to look at. There's no room to assess. Other series assess time penalties at the end of a race which gives you time to discuss it, argue it. Giving penalties in race for very minor things...

If it's contact, we were taking someone out of the race, if

you're hitting people in pit lane, personnel, major issues, I understand it.

But for little ticky-tack type of things, like time penalties that can be assessed afterwards, would be more forthcoming. I don't know. We have to talk about it.

At the end of the day maybe that's not written in the rule book, so the steward's hands are tied in terms of how they can dish out penalties. I don't know all of that. I'm going off other series.

Like I said, we need to talk about it, learn from it, understand why that happened and make sure it doesn't happen again.

THE MODERATOR: We'll let Alex go. Congratulations and we'll see you tomorrow.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Thank you.

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