

NTT IndyCar Series News Conference

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Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Josef Newgarden

Team Penske
Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Thank you for joining us. We are at the Firestone Grand Prix of St. Petersburg post qualifying video conference. We are joined by Josef Newgarden.

Josef, qualifying didn't work out the way you wanted, but you'll start eighth, three spaces ahead of Scott Dixon, who you're chasing in the championship chase tomorrow. Tell us how your qualifying went and what your expectations are for tomorrow.

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Certainly not what we wanted on our side. I felt like we took a swing for Q2. Our Q1 run was pretty good. I was pretty happy with it for the most part. Felt like we chipped away on the next couple runs, a couple things to get us more competitive. Felt like we were there, but we just wanted to probably be aggressive and try to get even further up. I think we ended up probably going the wrong way with our adjustments.

Kind of a scrappy qualifying in Q2. Unfortunately that puts us eighth. Not a terrible spot to start, but not where we wanted. We wanted to be closer to the front, top three, top five group.

A little more work to do for tomorrow, but feel positive about our Hitachi car, think Team Chevy has done a good job this weekend. Good confidence that we have something to attack with.

THE MODERATOR: We'll take questions for Josef.

Q. How happy are you to have Will Power up front? Being a bit of a rear gunner for you as you make your way to the front of the field.

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Yeah, I don't know that it's really relevant for us. I mean, we needed to be up front on a day like today. He did a great job. I felt like we were capable of being up there, too. Not sure I feel really one way or the other about him being up there. It was more about we needed to be up there.

I don't think he can help us from that position, nothing like that. We just got to put our work in for tomorrow now.

Q. Case of every man for himself tomorrow?

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: I don't know that Will is going to be able to help us do anything when we're sitting eighth. That's just the way it goes.

Q. In terms of the race tomorrow, is it going flat out, see what happens?

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Yeah, we need to look at everything. I'm not sure yet what our plan will be. I think it will be a pretty aggressive race for most people as far as running pretty hard on fuel. I don't think you'll see a ton of fuel save. But there's options there, big options. We'll see what everyone decides to do at the end of the day.

Q. How do you think Scott McLaughlin got on?

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Really good. Obviously first qualifying session for him. Not a lot of track time. I thought he was really good in the first session, seemed to adapt quick. I don't know, I haven't seen his run. I don't even know what happened in qualifying. Could have been a lot of different things that pushed him back.

He's going to be just fine. Just him getting going today.

Q. In regards to what happened out there today, was it a direction that you went in with the team that went the wrong way or do you feel maybe a lack of running on Fridays may have contributed today?

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: No, we had a really poor Q2 right from the jump of Q2. On the black tires I was half a second slower than I was in Q1. The adjustments that we did in between didn't seem to really pan out.

It's disappointing. I think if we just had our form for Q1, we would have been okay. We took a swing at it and it was the wrong way to go. It's one of those deals. You try sometimes, sometimes you try the wrong way.

Q. In regards to the whole weekend, do you like the



two-day weekend or would you want something longer?

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: I love the three-day weekends personally. I've always enjoyed that. For me, I do enjoy more days. Also for the process of how you work, your kind of workflow of sifting through information, the way you prepare to roll into a weekend, how you kind of manage an event, I've always liked the three-day format.

If we don't ever go back to that, it's not a big deal. We'll adapt, run this way. I think we've been okay on this format this year for the most part. If I had a preference, I like the three day, but we'll see what ends up getting decided for the future.

Q. I want to know what is the mindset that you will use now? You have to reset everything? How do you focus on your goal?

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Same as always. If this was any other weekend, we'd be doing the same thing. It's disappointing we qualified eighth, but it's not the worst position. We have a little more work to do. We're going to focus on what strategy we can implement, being good at the start, manage a really good race that hopefully can produce a win. It's as simple as that. We're going to treat the as any other.

Q. Do you think it's something about the yellow flags always happens in the race could help you?

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: It would be beautiful if it helped us for once. We have not had help from yellows this year. But it is possible. You can have a yellow ruin your race, you can a yellow really help your race. Tomorrow if a yellow flag decides to help us, I'm not going to complain about it. I think it would be good for some payback for the year.

Q. Do you go in with an aggressive strategy? Do you expect Scott to go with a very conservative strategy?

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Hard to say with Dixon what they'll do. For us, I think we'll treat it as normal when we're trying to win a race. We try to win every race. I don't know how to spin it differently. We do the same thing every time.

We're going to focus on what's the best strategy for us with where we're sitting in eighth. How can we manage the race better than the people around us with the fuel usage, all that. When is the right time to push and not push.

I don't think it will be more aggressive or less aggressive than what we normally are. We're just going to try to

charge the front. It would have been nice to be in the top three, top five. Top eight, we're not too far back. It just makes it a little bit harder.

Q. What were you thinking during the lengthy delay while they sorted out the scoring?

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: It was painful. It was hard to understand what was going on. Yeah, we were just sitting there waiting. I still don't know a lot of details. I know they were kind of working through yellow flags and penalties, all that stuff. It was a long wait, that's all it was for everybody.

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