

NTT IndyCar Series News Conference

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Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Scott Dixon

Chip Ganassi Racing

Scott McLaughlin

Pato O'Ward

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Good evening, everyone. Welcome to the Texas Motor Speedway where we just completed the Genesys 300. We are joined right now by our second- and third-place finishers, Scott McLaughlin, who drives car No. 3 PPG for Team Penske. His first oval, career best finish. A Kiwi 1-2 finish. Congrats to you.

We also have Pato O'Ward with us, driver of the No. 5 AMSP Chevy.

We have had eight different podium finishers so far this season. The only person to do it twice is our race winner Scott Dixon.

Scott, great race, great oval debut. How much fun did you have out there today?

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: I had a tremendous amount of fun, about as much fun as I thought I was going to have. The PPG Chevy was great. We also had great strategy calls, pit stops. The crew on pit road were unbelievable. Have to thank them a huge amount.

It's a big thing taking on my first oval race. Just tried to get through the first few laps. I was pretty cautious, probably too cautious in my first stint. Just sort of worked up to it. Managed to dodge the Bourdais wreck, which was pretty close for me. Then the Hinchcliffe one which put us right there.

Pretty proud. Just wish my mum and dad, wife were here. Anyway, next time.

THE MODERATOR: Pato, great race for you. You've had a great start to this season. Tell us about your race tonight.

PATO O'WARD: We had a strong showing tonight. We had a very fast race car. We were kind of stuck in the first stint. It was really, really difficult to pass. Like Scottie said, my guys made a really good strategy call and we made up a lot of track position midway through the race before the last stint. They were great in the pits, especially in the last pit stop that we could get that last position to get to the podium.

From there, we kind of nursed it home. We were having some brake temp issues at the end so I didn't really want to make anything too risky to throw it away. I'm happy. We did a good step forward from where we ended last weekend. We're looking forward to tomorrow. We should have a better starting position as well, so that should make our lives a lot easier.

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

Q. Scott, does this feel like a victory for you?

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: Well, it's definitely the most happy I've ever been finishing second. It's one of those things where a little bit unexpected just because I knew how tough it was going to be sort of getting through the field. But, yeah, things fell our way. For it to happen on an oval is a pretty proud moment.

A lot of preparation. I've worked very hard behind the scenes looking at footage, talking to my teammates about where we can get better. Really proud to have been able to deliver tonight when I needed to. The boys on the team put me in position. I was able to deliver. That's what I'm really proud of.

Q. Where and when did you know you were comfortable on ovals?

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: Still haven't (laughter). I think I've still got a bit of time before I'm comfortable. I don't think you're ever comfortable. Rick Mears told me as well. I said, I'm still nervous every time I go out on the track. I don't know what to sort of feel, quite numb initially. When it's numb, it's quite nerve-wracking.

He said, You'll never get rid of that.



He won the Indy 500 four times. I totally understand that.

Q. Is Scott Dixon just a countryman? Did you look up to him?

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: Look, I've been watching Scott since really 2001 when he first joined PacWest, around that time. Then obviously when he went to Ganassi and won the championship in 2003. '08, the Indy 500. A big fan, a massive fan.

So to follow him and race him towards the end, have genuine pace for him, was pretty cool. I said to the guys in the caution period, This is pretty cool, isn't it? I think they were trying to calm me down a little bit. It was cool. Probably too happy finishing second. Definitely you won't get me like this ever again. I'm sure hopefully we can go one better next time.

Q. Scott, what were the conditions like for you out there tonight?

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: Physically I felt all right. Wasn't too bad. Probably mentally it's quite a draining thing, trying to always concentrate on what is going to happen in front of you in traffic, listening to your spotter. A lot of things going on.

I certainly felt more comfortable as the race went on. Happy I did all the laps and ended in a good spot.

Q. What have you learned from tonight that you can take away for tomorrow?

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: More comfortable in dirty air, how I need to sort of adjust my driving style, what changes inside the car I can do to help me in dirty air, stuff like that. What moves I can do. Like the restarts I felt really strong tonight. I made a couple moves in the early parts at the start, went sort of outside into three, a few others. That worked out good for me. Was a bit of a chance, but you got to try them sometimes.

Q. Pato, obviously you've gotten on the podium this weekend. What can you take away from today's race going into tomorrow?

PATO O'WARD: I think we can learn some things to make the race car better in traffic. Just having a very strong result right now it will really move us up in the championship, which I think that's where we're starting tomorrow based on championship points. So we should be around top five.

Yeah, it should make our race, just the traffic running, it

makes such a big difference if you're behind three cars or you're behind 10 cars.

Yeah, just looking forward to tomorrow. Today was, like I said, a good step. Tomorrow we want to go that much better.

Q. Scott, how difficult was it to do the pit stop sequence on the oval by comparison to the road course?

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: Look, the first pit stop actually caught me by surprise, old tires under caution. Had a lot of like marbles and stuff pick up on the tire. I came in there quite loose. Was very nervous on entry into pit lane.

Yeah, it's surprising. It's very nerve-wracking pitting under green, sort of going through three and four on the apron. Very low grip. You really have to wheel it through there. I was happy we weren't too far away pace-wise. Very different, green flags, caution stops as well. Yeah, it's very cool when you do a big burnout after the pit stop. That's a cool part (smiling).

Q. Comparing driving a road course to driving an oval, how much more of a mental game is it driving on an oval?

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: Yeah, a lot more mentally tiring than physically obviously. The road course, you've got to really wheel it. With the power steering -- no power steering, stuff like that, it hurts at the end of a race. St. Pete was probably one of the hardest, physical races I've done for a very long time.

But the oval is completely different. I don't feel sore, I don't feel anything. I have heaps of padding and stuff like that. The mental game, figuring it all out, reading the track, what it does, it's interesting and very draining mentally.

I got caught out midway through the race, just how fast the track was picking up grip, getting faster and faster. I settled in as I was going, what lines I could run. Kind of nice to follow Scottie there, see what lines he was running, too. That was a nice thing.

Q. Pato, this being your de facto home race, how much does it mean to you to get a podium?

PATO O'WARD: It's cool, man. There was a lot of Pato sombreros and T-shirts. It was really cool to see.

It's great for us that we got the podium, but also to be able to celebrate with them here. But tomorrow we want to go two spots better. I feel like we can do that. But tomorrow

it's going to be a longer race. We need to keep our heads on top of it. We make the race car a little bit better, maybe we can put up the fight to these other guys.

Q. Scott, obviously your teammates have been complimentary about you in the off-season, talked about you potentially winning a race. Will and Simon both said you're going to be a future champion. How much did you need a result like today to prove that to yourself? Do you already have the confidence that you are going to be a future winner?

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: I've got the confidence that I can be there or thereabouts in the future. I got a great team. They work very hard to make me come up to speed. I couldn't ask for a better team to get going. I'm with one of the best. My teammates have been exceptional with me. I couldn't ask for more advice. I rattle their brains a lot. They always come back with answers. Whether they like to or not, it's a different story, but they do it. That's what's really cool.

Look, it's nice to get a result, but you believe you can do it. Very surprising to get a result on the oval. You have the confidence to be able to do it. But there's a lot to learn. We put ourselves in a good spot today with strategy, my in and out laps were good. That was how we have to move forward and we certainly did. Very proud to be there or thereabouts.

Q. Pato, a lot of changes from last year in terms of the tire, the kind of aero configuration that you're able to run. Could you sum up how different you felt the race was today?

PATO O'WARD: I think they made the racing a little bit better, especially from very high deg to low deg tires when guys have many laps on them or brand-new. I think we saw more passing around. It's still really, really tough. Honestly, all around I just feel more confident, this is my second time, second race here in Texas. That makes a big difference.

But, yeah, I think it was a step in the right direction. It's not quite there to be able to make the race as crazy and chaotic like an Iowa. I feel like it was kind of like a Gateway in a way, in a speedway version obviously. There was some passing but not quite two lanes.

THE MODERATOR: We welcome in our race winner who joined us, Scott Dixon, who got his 51st career win this evening. He needs one more to catch Mario Andretti. It's his fifth win at Texas, the most of any driver. He's won three of the last four. He's also the first driver to go back-to-back here at Texas, and passes A.J. Foyt with 19

seasons with a win.

Scott Dixon, welcome to the post race press conference. Congratulations. Tell us what it was like out there for you today.

SCOTT DIXON: (Indiscernible).

THE MODERATOR: Scott, your audio is off. We'll try to get questions for our second- and third-place finishers.

Q. What effect did the PJ1 over in turns one and two and three and four have on the race today?

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: From my perspective, you just can't use the second lane. It's very difficult at three and four, and at one and two. Unfortunately that's just how it is. That's all I've experienced here, so that's all I know. I still think you can get some reasonable runs, but it just makes you probably a little bit nervous to maybe throw down on the high side into one or into two.

I saw firsthand what happened to Hinchcliffe. He got dirty air pushed up, went up onto the PJ1 and he was gone.

PATO O'WARD: From my side, same as Scott. Honestly I didn't really try going up there. I didn't want to make a stupid mistake and hit the wall. But it's still a no go zone in my book.

Q. Dixie, Kiwi 1-2. First time.

SCOTT DIXON: I'm pretty sure that was definitely a first. It was fun. As I commented, it was really cool to look at that monitor on my steering wheel and see that it was the 3 car. I haven't even got to see Scott yet, but definitely a congratulations to him. That was a tremendous run.

Definitely very fast. There wasn't much deg at the end of the race there, especially with the cooler conditions. Exit of two just became a very long straight until you got back to turn one. Definitely didn't want him to get too close to get that big run through three and four, as I think you could definitely pull the pass off as we'd seen earlier in the race.

Huge result for a race for a couple of Kiwis, which is great to see. Commenting pre-season, people are like, How do you feel about having another Kiwi on the grid? I've been waiting 20 years for it. It's great to see him over here. He's a massive talent. He's going to have a lot of victories, man. I have to try to hold him off while I can.

Q. Alex Palou, a strong teammate.

SCOTT DIXON: He's done a tremendous job. He takes



his time, can be kind of cautious out of the box, especially in some of these first practices, but really works hard on understanding and making sure he doesn't overstep the mark. Definitely a smart racer, driver, a huge talent. Definitely pushing all of us on the team, which is what you want.

I think it's really helping in the development side of the team and making sure that we've had some fantastic results, which we have.

I was sad to see under caution there that Marcus got caught up. T.K. jumped in the car and went straight to the fastest position in practice today. It's definitely great to have strong teammates at the moment. Hopefully we can keep working on that and making sure all of us are in the fight come towards the end of the championship.

THE MODERATOR: I'll let our second- and third-place finishers go to prepare for tomorrow's race. Thank you, gentlemen, for joining us.

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: Well done, Scottie. Speak to you after.

SCOTT DIXON: All right, mate. Good job, man.

THE MODERATOR: We'll continue with questions for our race winner, Scott Dixon.

Q. There was a lot of people expecting that you would be favorite for this race. Obviously things change year to year. How close was your setup this year to last year?

SCOTT DIXON: Definitely pretty close. I think there's always off-season kind of developments. I think with the (indiscernible) of the three drivers, including myself, that definitely adds to it, right? Each person can kind of add to the debrief and figure it out.

There was definitely four or five items that all of us needed to get through in that 75-minute practice which helped decide some of the changes on the car. Ultimately fairly close, right? You don't want to step too far out of the box. Our car was very dominant last year. Actually all three of us were very good in the race.

Yeah, pretty close I'd say. A few springs here and there. It depends on the tire all the time. That was the hard thing for us coming to this race, is that we didn't come here and do this test. We were left leaving a lot to kind of the imagination to see how it was going to roll off. Ultimately T.K. went out, went straight to the top of the charts. Obviously the car was pretty good and close to last year's

car.

Q. Were you shocked no one else caught up the 10 months since?

SCOTT DIXON: I think a lot of the field got closer. I think that was due to the ambient conditions. Firestone brought a better tire than last year. Last year with COVID created some problems with them for manufacturing. It was kind of an oddball set they brought last year.

This year I think everybody had a lot more grip. Made it a little bit easier. Qualifying, if we did have it, was going to be easy flat. I kind of preferred the conditions from last year with the less downforce. We had higher amounts of degradation, though I did see some cars falling off pretty hard. When you add these amounts of downforce, it makes it a little bit more trickier in traffic.

I'm sure we'll see what happens here. Ambient conditions played a big part today. Maybe tomorrow's conditions will be a little bit different.

Q. What effect did the PJ1 in turns one and two and three and four have on the race today?

SCOTT DIXON: I don't know. I feel like just everybody tries to steer clear of it, which I think if you're going to use it it needs to be early. The problem is once you keep running on the bottom, then the marbles just build up, that becomes more of a problem.

In practice I made a couple passes round the outside in one, and got maybe half the car on there. But I think there's a lot of us, as we went through these long green-flag runs, I didn't really want to get up there not because of the PJ1, I think it might have been okay, what they've done to the application, running tires over it, taking a bit of it off has definitely helped the difference.

But once you do get these long green runs, there's just a lot of marbles up there. As we saw from some of the accidents, probably most of them were just getting into the dirty part of the track.

Q. Talking to Scott McLaughlin after the race, he always talked about how you were such a hero of his in racing. Who was your hero that you remember the first time you had a great race in INDYCAR and how big a thrill was that for you?

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, I don't know. That's a tough one to answer. I think my heroes in New Zealand were my dad to start with, then Kenny Smith, who is a racing legend, helped me a lot through my career. Then people like Greg

Murphy and that. But more obviously in New Zealand.

In America, I remember the first season in CART I had a massive battle with Michael Andretti at Road America, which was mind-boggling. He ran me off into the grass in the middle straight, I T-boned him in hairpin in five. Those moments were kind of surreal for me.

There was a lot. Obviously Dario Franchitti, Paul Tracy, Michael, the Unsers. Man, the list was incredible. These were people that had amazing stats and people I looked up to for extremely a long time and enjoyed watching them race.

There's definitely not one standout. For me there was just so many at that point and how tough the racing was back then as well.

Q. Last year after seeing how dominant you were in that race, you only led 157 laps last year, tonight you led 206, what is it about your recent domination here?

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, I don't know. Obviously if we knew what that was we'd try to replicate it at a lot of different places.

I think this track is kind of coming to be a bit like Kansas used to be for our team, where we would just go there and it would be somewhat of a pack race typically. The Target car at that point, a Chip Ganassi car would just check out. Dan won there, I won there, T.K. won there. I don't know if Dario did at some point. It's just one of those races we'd turn up, you'd almost guarantee a podium finish.

Here is definitely very different. It's very tense racing here. You never really have a time to settle because the ultimate line is quite tight. The traffic is extremely tough. The pit road in is very tough. They've made it a lot easier on pit road exit because of the two-stage pit limiter. Just getting the pit stops right. The degradation of the tire. When you get to those in and out laps, it becomes very tricky.

For me, this is an extremely tense race. I can't tell you why our team has been so successful here. I just hope that it continues.

Q. You mentioned it was a very tense race. When you lead 206 laps of a race, how long does it feel like? Does it go by really fast or, Oh, my God, this race is never going to end?

SCOTT DIXON: It feels very long, man. It's a tough situation. I think you have kind of these lulls. You can see how you start to pull some gaps. You're like, Okay, the car is good, we're good on the long run, can create a bit of a

buffer here. But then it changes quickly. That car maybe passes that lap traffic, they're on you in no time. That happened with Felix, then with the 3 car late in the race, even with Palou towards the start of it.

There's never really much of a stress-free situation. Even the cautions, you don't know how they fell, did somebody do a lot better because of the pit sequence to maybe having a bad entry to the pit, then getting stuck behind some traffic and things like that.

It does feel extremely long when you lead the race. I think when you're coming through the pack or getting to the front, you want the race to be a lot longer, and it goes by pretty quickly. Yeah, it feels long.

Q. On the passing, we heard about the PJ1 and everything. What else do you think INDYCAR could do to help increase the passing at Texas for next year?

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, I don't know. I think it's something that definitely a lot of us need to look at. It's got to make sense. Maybe we do need to come here and do a two or three or four day test to try to figure it out.

You don't want it to be easy. The direction we went this year, I didn't really enjoy it just because the deg didn't seem as much. It was easier if we had qualifying, like I already said, going to be easy flat for everybody. This is meant to be difficult. It's not meant to be easy.

But the good cars are meant to be fast, and the other cars that maybe haven't got their setups sorted out will struggle. You would like to see a lot more of that.

Last year I think probably 25 laps into a stint you were onto lap traffic and passing through, whereas this year it was almost 40 laps or maybe a little bit more. The pack was a little bit tighter. But still when everybody goes the same speed, it makes it very tough to pull a move off.

I don't know. I don't think there's always an easy answer. I think this has been true for INDYCAR and CART and a lot of different formulas, Formula 1 the same thing. You have to be careful to make sure that it doesn't become like a DRS situation where it's too easy. It's got to be difficult.

I know there's definitely some ideas in the works. Hopefully we can get to a track and actually apply them and test them. It's too hard to show up and try to think they're going to work.

Q. You're one win behind Mario Andretti. You have 19 seasons with at least one win. How important are those numbers for you?

SCOTT DIXON: They sound amazing. For me I never thought I'd be in this position. I had big dreams obviously, would always dream about winning an INDYCAR championship or something along those lines. But obviously between how you dream and reality can be very different many times.

But, yeah, Chip and I spoke just after this race. He was like, Man, congrats on the 19 seasons. I was like, Without you, this wouldn't be possible, so thank you.

That goes for every team member on this team. It's a lot of people. My wife, my family. These moments for me make it feel that much better because of the effort that a lot of people put into my program, even when I was in junior categories, to now.

It feels amazing to be in this position. You just never want it to end. We want to go back-to-back and try to tie Mario tomorrow. I'm sure that's not exactly what he wants to see. We'll keep our heads down. It's extremely tough. This season has been one of the toughest starts I think for a lot of us just with how tight the competition is.

It's never easy, man. You got to keep working at it.

Q. I know you're not looking forward because you have a race tomorrow, how much of tonight's dominating performance can you take obviously into tomorrow's race, then the momentum moving forward in the month of May?

SCOTT DIXON: Obviously that feeling good situation is not just for me, but the whole team. I think it was so great to see the success of the 10 car right out of the box, see a lot of smiling faces that maybe haven't had a smooth roll in the past few years. They had glimpses of it, but to have a strong start, what Palou has done. Marcus deserved much better results than he's had.

I think the moral on the team is very important. Tomorrow is going to be different, the conditions are maybe going to be a little bit tougher just because of the ambient, more of a day race, maybe a little more sunlight on the track, which I think it will be good. Hopefully there's more deg for a lot of cars. It doesn't guarantee you anything.

I think you can see from the race, if you slip up at any point, it can definitely cost you a lot of spots. To try to get back on that, it takes you a little bit of time. Maybe we'll see more variants tomorrow because it's slightly longer, add an extra stop to the race. Just the competition on pit lane is super intense for a lot of people now.

Yeah, you got to take them where you can, man. Tomorrow is going to be super tough, I know that. It doesn't guarantee us anything. We should have a pretty good starting spot, but it doesn't guarantee you anything.

Q. I was talking to your sister this evening. She said she's really proud of you. The whole family are proud of you. Congratulations from them. Secondly, how big of an advantage does this give you going into tomorrow's race?

SCOTT DIXON: Probably not much. It will depend. My sister probably told you I needed to call her, too. I've been telling her I'd call her forever. Maybe I'll give her a call after this press conference.

Yeah, I don't know. I was surprised to see how good some cars were at the end of that stint. Earlier in the race when we went flat and actually turned the engine up, Palou and myself were actually able to pull away quite quickly. That changed a lot I think in that last stint.

It definitely makes for a very interesting -- it's tough here now because as soon as you get to the exit of two, it's a very long straight all the way to one. When you're the leader, you're kind of a sitting duck. You have a lot of drag on the car now, going through three and four, the compression, the car doesn't want to accelerate. That makes it interesting.

For me, that was probably the hardest part of the last stint, making sure I got flat through one and two pretty much the whole race, or the last stint there, to make sure McLaughlin couldn't get close enough to get a big tow. A couple moments he got very close.

I don't know, I think tomorrow's race should be a little bit different. How different, I'm not really sure. As I said earlier, I think if you make one mistake, it can ruin your race pretty quickly.

Q. How good is it to have T.K. back on the team with you guys this season?

SCOTT DIXON: Again, man, the debriefs are pretty comical. It's a lot noisier. Yeah, smellier probably, too. Louder. He's a lot of fun, man. Obviously we're very good friends. We work out most days in Indianapolis. We cycle a lot together.

He's got a busy plate this year between the INDYCAR and the Brazilian stockcars, his Ironman stuff. He's a busy boy. I don't know, he's just a fun person to be around. Nothing is ever too serious with him. We saw today that the guy is still phenomenal. He jumps in the car and goes to the top

of the charts. Obviously it was a tough night for him because of where they started on points. I think a lot of us wish we got qualifying in, but that wasn't the case. We all know the rules. That's how it is. He was probably the person it hurt the most.

Q. You mentioned briefly the tests that happened recently and Ganassi missed. Did you have any sort of worries heading into this race knowing you hadn't done the test? Any sort of trepidation there? Or were you confident from the performance last year it didn't play a role in your thinking?

SCOTT DIXON: There was definitely some choice in that, right? We all get a certain amount of tests. They're obviously very limited now. I think we get three in the off-season, which is kind of mind-boggling. I think we definitely need to get to more of those.

This was our strongest track, right? You kind of learn that it's a doubleheader, then you start second-guessing your choices of what you did. I think what we really needed to focus on was our road course package. We'd been very strong in previous years. I think '19 I had maybe the best qualifying average, then in '20 that was a real problem for all of us on the team. It was definitely an area we needed to work on. I think it was great to see three of us make it through to the Fast Six at Alabama.

Then tonight, you never are really sure. I think it's just always a lot of second-guessing because you're not sure what other teams are able to gain through that whole day, plus I think they got two hours the previous day to try some of the new aero pieces on the car.

Yeah, I guess we were confident, but the tires changed, the ambient changed, the aero changed. There were a lot of different changes that we didn't know how they were going to apply. With an hour and 15 minute practice, it's hard to do big sweeps.

Q. Colton won last week's race, led all laps but three. Today you led all laps here apart from six. We're constantly told how competitive the INDYCAR SERIES is. You only have to look at road course qualifying to see how close things are. What does it say about the level of the competition?

SCOTT DIXON: It's super tight, man. Honestly you kind of make one mistake, you know you're going to be buried in qualifying. It just makes that so much more tense.

For me, race weekends, the qualifying is probably the most stressful part of the race weekend. The race is a little more relaxed in some sense. To see what Colton did, obviously

Andretti has been very strong. We've seen the speed from Rossi and all the guys on that team honestly.

But it just shows I think there are no real small teams in INDYCAR any more. A lot of them are big powerhouses. For the full season, Andretti engineer five or six cars, with Indianapolis they'll be engineering eight cars. There are some big teams now. Us going to four, Penske at four. It definitely makes it extremely tight.

The problem too now is the pit stops and the strategy, everyone is going to try something because they know how to work it. I think that's what makes it tough. I think we have to be careful.

St. Pete for me was not a fun race just because of the shortening of it, made it an easy two-stopper for everybody. You took out that kind of strategy. I think you always have to have a solid two-stopper and solid three-stopper. When they merge through the end, even the middle of the race can be intense, crazy, create the passing you need.

INDYCAR need to be very cognizant of making those decisions on race links. A 10-lap shortened St. Pete made it for a very, very different race.

Q. Was the practice session today the first time you'd been on the new tire or did you run that in 2019?

SCOTT DIXON: No, this was a totally different tire. We hadn't run this one. I think it was what was proposed to be run last year, but because of COVID and the factory being shut down, it just wasn't a possibility. I think last year was a bit of a mix between Indy 500 tire and a tire maybe from St. Louis. I can't remember exactly. There was a different mix there.

The tire is phenomenal. It's too good. We need to have massive deg and get down to those laps under 200 miles an hour. When you get up to speed, you run 216s, can get around people. Maybe that will come a bit tomorrow with conditions.

Q. I asked Tony about the experience that he have on the track. He said it is very important from the race. We all know there's no quallie. Do you start to thinking in your strategy from the race knowing the place that you will take?

SCOTT DIXON: I'm not sure I understand the question. Sorry.

Q. Let me say in a different way. When you know exactly what is the place that you're going to start, do

you start to think your own strategy or do you need to think about it with the team as the race starts?

SCOTT DIXON: I think it's always evolving. That's the toughest part. I think some races you can go in with a clear mind. Barber I think most of the field thought they were going in with a three-stopper. We knew from the warmup that the mileage was possible, just whether the tire could do it. I think maybe the other manufacturer couldn't achieve it.

That's where it shifts quickly. We saw the two guys at the front, Pato, Rossi, got caught out because they had committed a three-stopper, they had no options. I think you have to always play it in your mind.

Today when we started to pull some bigger leads, at that point you're using a lot more fuel, right? We started to bring the pace back down and try to pack the field up a little bit, lean the engine out, try to gain back those laps so we weren't the one that was always just pitting so early, maybe get caught out with a caution, which we saw.

Man, it can go either way. I think with the intensity of the field right now and then also the understanding from all the teams of ways to try and pick up spots or work the system, it's so clever now that you're never guaranteed anything.

The biggest thing you need to make sure you do is you're thinking quickly on your toes because it's constantly changing.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks to all the media that participated. Thanks to our race winner, Scott Dixon, for his time this evening.

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