

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

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Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Will Power

Pato O'Ward

Alexander Rossi

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Wrapping up Friday here, the Chevrolet Detroit Grand Prix presented by Lear.

Alexander Rossi has joined us, two-time pole winner here at Detroit, finished fifth quickest in the practice session today, the lone practice session.

Was it enough? What did you learn?

ALEXANDER ROSSI: No, it's not enough (smiling). These new schedules are wild.

But for sure it's the same for everyone. We're thrilled to be back here in Detroit. I love this track. It's a wild ride out there. Happy to be back.

Yeah, I think we learned that really the aeroscreen didn't change a whole lot. The car we had been happy with here in previous years kind of translated to today. That was really positive.

I feel like we still have a bit more to come in the car. We need it because we're 4/10ths down or whatever. But I think it was a positive session. Short, though. Went by really fast.

THE MODERATOR: The first six races not exactly the way you drew it up. To start practice like this, how encouraging is that for the weekend?

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Yeah, it's good. It ultimately doesn't mean much. We have to translate tomorrow in different conditions. Like I said, I think our cars have always really been good here in the past. I think Honda gives us a good engine to be able to drive around here the way we want.

Yeah, I feel cautiously optimistic. Will and I have quite a vendetta against the world of motorsports right now. We're

excited to go drive.

WILL POWER: We're going for it, man.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Can't go much worse (laughter).

THE MODERATOR: Obviously joined by Will Power and Pato O'Ward. Will, two-time winner here, Pato is third in points after a fourth-place finish at the Indianapolis 500.

Alex says you guys need some good momentum. Maybe this is it for you, Will?

WILL POWER: Yeah, we do. Anyone wants a go, I'm saying, C'mon, c'mon. I'm ready (laughter).

Seriously, it's massively disappointing. At Indy we had a good run going there, then had some brake issues. Obviously the qualifying thing, which was actually kind of cool to just make it in. I think Alex has been there before.

But, yeah, determined to have a good weekend, good solid weekend. Hopefully qualify up at the front for both races and have a shot at the win. Yep, car is good, in a good window. Chevy's got the engine going well. We'll see how we go tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: P1 right now, you get to choose which group you're going to be in for qualifying. Do you know which group you'll go with yet?

WILL POWER: We'll probably choose the first group. Doesn't matter. You have to flip on the second day anyway.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Really? Whatever.

WILL POWER: Maybe you choose the first one because it's later so there might be more people on track before you. You get second one early in the morning.

THE MODERATOR: That affects all three of you guys.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: First one is later?

WILL POWER: Yeah, 11 something. Sunday is like 9, super early. Quite different.



But still, I mean, you got to get to second round, so it's not as big a deal. You have a shot at pole on both days.

THE MODERATOR: Pato, this is your first time here at Detroit.

PATO O'WARD: No, second time. I was here in '19.

THE MODERATOR: How was your practice today?

PATO O'WARD: Good. I forget how bumpy this place is, but I think it's got a lot of character. It's going to be hot. It's going to be really hot, physical. But, yeah, it was good. We laid down some solid laps. Reds were a little funky. I don't know if you guys felt that.

WILL POWER: It was a big grip game.

PATO O'WARD: It felt weird, for sure.

THE MODERATOR: We'll take questions.

Q. I thought this track wasn't supposed to suit Chevy. You ended up 1-2-3. Has Chevy made big gains or are you three just geniuses?

WILL POWER: Yeah, engine hasn't changed very much. Although, yeah, something did change in the middle of '19 after we'd been here last time. Maybe it is slightly better. Car for me is in a good window, as well. Engine is fantastic. Chevy's track, man (smiling).

Q. Pato, do you agree with that?

PATO O'WARD: So far it's been good. We wait for qualifying.

Q. Rossi, are you hiding what your car is capable of?

WILL POWER: Yes, he is. He's always hiding something.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Sure. I guess we'll see (smiling).

WILL POWER: Sneaky guy, man.

PATO O'WARD: It sounds like a very similar conversation we had on Carb Day. Do you remember?

ALEXANDER ROSSI: How did that work out for all of us? Not well (laughter).

Where did you finish in the 500?

PATO O'WARD: Fourth. No, I mean, qualifying.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: That's what we were saying. You're all right.

WILL POWER: I think I was 30th. I beat you.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: I don't think you did.

WILL POWER: 32nd (laughter).

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Stefan.

WILL POWER: I've been 32nd. Two went out before me.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Who else?

WILL POWER: Graham.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: I was 30th, you were 31st. Good job, bro.

PATO O'WARD: Don't whine, you won it already. They both have won it already.

WILL POWER: Rossi got that out of the way real quick. I'm going to take care of this immediately so I can be relaxed for the month.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Oh, man.

WILL POWER: Much to the dismay of many his age.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: You're getting old, bro.

WILL POWER: I'm still up there, man. C'mon. I'm still there.

Q. Will, what is the secret to driving around here with any sense of confidence, anticipating the bumps, et cetera, especially in the middle of turns? How do you get used to that?

WILL POWER: Yeah, you got to definitely have a car that you feel comfortable attacking with because if you're a bit tentative, you're certainly paying in lap time.

But, yeah, it's just that combination. It's like walking a tightrope: you can overdo it, you can under do it. You just have to find that nice balance.

Feel like we're in that window now. But this track changes dramatically. Once it resets and you go out, it like completely resets. It's really slippery. It's actually quite a difficult track to get your head around to get the car to work in all the conditions.

You know what I love? The fact that you still own one of those cameras, Tom. It's awesome. Yeah, I'm sticking with the '90s, man. It's awesome. I still have one of those. It's fantastic.

PATO O'WARD: What do you use it for?

WILL POWER: I have it from when I was like -- like the early 2000s. I have many tapes. Many of it people shouldn't see.

PATO O'WARD: My mom used to use one of those to videotape me in go-karts.

WILL POWER: It's tape?

Q. No, it's got the little memory card.

WILL POWER: You're not as far back as me. I had the tape.

Q. Will, the way Indy went, was happiness getting Indy in your rearview mirror? How would you explain being here today and being No. 1?

WILL POWER: Yeah, Indy was a massive disappointment. I was a little bit down for a few days. Certainly got back in training. Very determined this weekend to get back on track.

This is kind of the halfway point. If I'm not moving forward here, it just makes it impossible to have a shot at being a championship contender at the end of the year.

It's not a big deal, man. I just want to get out there, be running at the front, have a shot to win. I can't stand the last few races running back there, getting stuck behind wankers through exchanges that shouldn't be even out there. I want to get up the front, man.

Q. Anyone specific?

WILL POWER: Yeah, there was one wanker out there this time that held me up. Lucky I didn't see him when I got out of the car.

PATO O'WARD: That was me.

WILL POWER: It wasn't you. It was another driver. Just kept backing everyone up. If you could punch someone...

PATO O'WARD: Actually when I was going over on the first baseline, I think you were on your first or second lap. I saw him behind, I was like... I had to do the corner, get out

of the way.

WILL POWER: It wasn't Jimmie.

PATO O'WARD: Jimmie is actually really good about it.

WILL POWER: Yeah, Jimmie... This dude, How many times you want to back up? You eventually have to do a lap time.

Don't worry, I'll get him. Not on the track. I don't get people on the track. I'll get him off the track.

PATO O'WARD: Lift up his visor.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Piss in his bus or something?

WILL POWER: No.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Good, all right.

WILL POWER: It's how we do stuff in Toowoomba.

THE MODERATOR: Must be something else.

WILL POWER: Look it up on YouTube.

PATO O'WARD: Didn't you used to fight?

WILL POWER: Yeah, I did get into some fights.

PATO O'WARD: Did you do like karate, boxing?

WILL POWER: No. You're from Oz, right, would have been like that when you grew up, lots of fighting in the pub. Never kick anyone.

Q. I don't know how to follow up on that. The air scoop, did it help or just throwing hot air...

WILL POWER: I never run it.

PATO O'WARD: I did. The problem is it runs very strong air through the top of our visor so all the crap gets into your eyes. That's my take on it.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: I ran it in St. Pete and thought it was good. I'm glad they mandated it.

WILL POWER: I ran it in St. Pete, too.

PATO O'WARD: Even if they didn't mandate it, I would still use it. Was it hot in there today?

WILL POWER: Yeah.

Q. Is there something they can do with filters to keep all the debris out?

PATO O'WARD: I think all the teams can do whatever they want.

Q. A lot of drivers had problems with getting loose, spinning. Did y'all have any problems with that?

WILL POWER: No. Not too bad.

PATO O'WARD: I was sideways a few times.

Q. Alex?

ALEXANDER ROSSI: No.

Q. Pato, you drove here in IMSA in 2017. Anything you can do to help bridge the gap of having fewer laps than these two guys?

PATO O'WARD: No. I mean, it's just like any other track. As much as you know it, then it's just kind of up to you to, like, nail the lap time.

It's really true what Will said. If you can just back it up a little bit, you see the lap time, it's like two seconds off. You really, really have to be pushing in order for your times to stay consistent.

It's a big tire eater, too. I'd expect reds to be pretty savage in the race, as they usually are.

WILL POWER: Weren't too bad. I didn't go too long on them. I guess nobody really knows. Nobody did a long run.

PATO O'WARD: In the past, people were doing like three laps.

WILL POWER: Might be a little better. They're a bit different.

Q. Tire management this weekend is important. Do you think about the tires or do you leave that up to the engineers and other people in the team?

PATO O'WARD: Just try to slide the least possible.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: You have to think about it. Interesting thing, it's a two-stop race on fuel. Whether it is on tires or not is a question mark. I think we're all kind of hemming and hawing. If you look at the past, you've seen guys be successful both ways kind of.

It's hotter than it usually is here. But we only had one practice. Everyone is going to go into the race I think just rolling the dice, hoping it comes out all right.

Q. Seven guys in the field have never raced here before. One of them is Jimmie. He said all the sim work he did did not prepare him in any way. What kind of challenges will they face and might it create for the race?

WILL POWER: Yeah, I mean, it's certainly a hard track. Definitely if you haven't been here, for a rookie... There's no track that you attack as much as this one. It's super low grip. The track continually evolves as the session goes on.

Yeah, definitely a tough track to just rock up with one practice session.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Yeah, I mean, I've never been on the sim here because it's irrelevant, so... I'm not surprised to hear that quite honestly.

Q. Will it affect the race?

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Oh, no. There's always yellows here, always a lot of yellows here. You can expect that, who's here or not.

Q. Did you have something to say?

WILL POWER: No. A very awkward press conference. Even awkward looks between the drivers.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: I think a lot of that is because of you, bro.

WILL POWER: I bring awkwardness with me. I rarely feel awkward, but I certainly am awkward.

PATO O'WARD: Really? I thought we were flowing really nice. Don't you think?

Q. I know Alex watched the F1 race.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: How do you know that?

Q. Because you tweeted.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Oh, yeah, I did (laughter).

Q. What did you guys think of that, the way they restarted, kind of went NASCAR style?

PATO O'WARD: Oh, yeah, I tweeted, too. A lot of people

went crazy. I just had to delete it.

Q. What did you tweet?

PATO O'WARD: Got into an argument with my dad about it. I completely understand that they wanted to finish the race under green. If they would have just safety car'd the race whenever Max crashed, that would have been fine, whatever. But I think them red flagging the race three laps to go to give everybody else the chance to put new tires on, I think that was really unfair.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: For who?

PATO O'WARD: For Max.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: He was already out.

PATO O'WARD: Because of a tire failure.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: They can't redo that.

PATO O'WARD: I know that. But when you red flag a race, stop it there, it goes back one lap. I just felt like if they were going to red flag the race, three laps left, that's more than 75% done. I don't know what the FIA rules are specifically.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: I can tell you one thing, I was texting Scott McLaughlin all morning about the race. He was so upset at the potential that Lewis could win, because it seemed unfair. He was like, I swear to God, if Lewis wins, I'm going to take my TV off the wall and throw it on the ground.

We did TV shopping for the next 20 minutes. Kept firing him new Samsungs. That's all right, we don't have any TV sponsors (laughter).

Then it looked like he was going to win, but then he didn't. It all worked out. I think it was fine. I was happy with the result.

WILL POWER: I didn't realize those restarts, until I saw it, there's actually a restart with a (indiscernible).

ALEXANDER ROSSI: I was confused with a standing start.

WILL POWER: That's awesome. Entertaining. If you're in it, it's totally unfair.

Q. What did you and your dad argue about?

PATO O'WARD: He just said, Why would you end it?

Man, poor guy. Why didn't they end it whenever Lance crashed?

WILL POWER: You're saying if they just red flagged, he would have gone a lap back.

PATO O'WARD: And he would have won it.

WILL POWER: That means if you weren't sure you're going to make it on fuel, you just crash, red flag the race. Well, I won.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: They do that in qualifying already.

WILL POWER: Yeah. They do what we do. Cause the yellow, you're excluded from the series for the rest...

PATO O'WARD: It sucked for him because they did it after Max, rather than when Lance had it. I totally get it from their perspective. Man, maybe it's just one car problem, but then they started exploding. Not the first time we've seen them explode anyway.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: I have a meeting, so are we done?

Q. Is anybody going to watch SRX tomorrow night?

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Hell, yeah. Let's go, Marco. He got boned on the draw, though. He drew last.

WILL POWER: Who drew last?

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Marco.

Q. What are you hoping to see from it?

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Fights. Fights, yeah.

WILL POWER: Fights. All the stuff people watch racing for, nothing to do with the technicality. All the training you do, take someone out, crash and fight, for crying out loud. I just think it would be awesome if we had fights afterwards, no?

Q. Can you go fight that wanker from earlier? Can we all watch?

PATO O'WARD: I think I have a feeling I know who you're talking about.

WILL POWER: I would be down to fight after races. I think it would be awesome. I've been watching really with interest these celebrities, YouTube celebrities, fighting people. Man, I got to get in on this.



PATO O'WARD: And actually got paid for it.

WILL POWER: A couple of drivers, one INDYCAR driver should do it with a NASCAR driver. I'd put my hand up for the INDYCAR driver, to be the one.

PATO O'WARD: I wouldn't do it.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Who do you want to fight in NASCAR?

WILL POWER: I don't know. One of them. Kyle Busch maybe. I don't know.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: That's the wrong choice.

WILL POWER: Probably wouldn't go for Harvick because I think he can fight pretty well.

PATO O'WARD: Larson. I think he's around our size.

WILL POWER: Find someone of your weight. I got work to do, too.

THE MODERATOR: That's it.

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