

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

Sunday, September 26, 2021

### Josef Newgarden

### Scott Dixon

#### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Joining us obviously two of the three off the podium from today, Josef Newgarden comes home second, his sixth podium of the season, seventh straight top 10 this year in 2021. Scott Dixon with his fifth podium of the season, make that 127 now for his career, still second place all time.

We'll begin with Josef. Starting with pole, you hung with it at the top, then what happened?

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: It was a pretty good day overall. I think Scott and me were pretty balanced. He was stronger at the beginning of the stint, I was maybe a touch better at the end.

The yellows, inopportune yellow for us. Timed pretty well for Colton. He was fast, made use of it. He was on the right tire at the right time. Once he got the lead, even us closing up with the yellow at the end, he had position on us when we weren't fuel saving any more. I was basically able to hold position.

Pretty good day overall, but disappointed to not convert the pole to a win. Just coming up short in this race, coming up short in the championship is definitely disappointing. I think for us overall, we got to be proud of our fight, be proud of the effort we put in all year with our partners in Hitachi and Team Chevy. We'll come back next year.

A lot of great competitors. Congrats to Alex, too. He did an amazing job all year with the championship, so he should be very proud with his group. We'll congratulate them and come back next year and try to do one better.

THE MODERATOR: Scott, third-place finish. Obviously also watched your teammate Alex Palou win the championship. What does all that mean for this team now and heading into 2022?

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, it's huge. That was the only real goal today. Obviously on our side, it was to try to win the

race. Super proud of everybody at Chip Ganassi Racing. Having seen what happened to the 8 car, obviously the tires. I think even Jimmie got the leader's circle at the end with passing a couple cars, which is big for the 48 as well.

All in all, just to see I think the stress off of Alex at the end there. Of course he was smiling, he's always smiling, so that wasn't a change. But just to see I think everybody on the 10 car side have that relief of capturing the championship is very special. So big off-season for everybody at Ganassi to be very happy about.

As Josef touched on today was a bit blah. We were definitely stronger than Josef on the start of the stints for the first five or 10 laps, then it plateaued. They were stronger the last sort of five, which made it difficult for that one sort of pit sequence.

Yeah, I don't know, wasn't that much going on. We tried a couple time, but they were definitely very strong out of five and out of eight, also out of 11, which makes it tough to pass. So, yeah, just trying to stay out of trouble and make it to the end. Obviously disappointed we didn't have a little bit more today.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. Josef, in a nutshell, what do you think about a guy like Alex Palou who at the age of 24 wins the series championship in just his second full season in INDYCAR?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Yeah, I think he's done a good job about maximizing his opportunity, right? Coming up, we all dream of having that type of team around you. Certainly within your second year, that's a dream opportunity. So he's certainly got all the resources and people around him to make it happen.

He's done the job clearly. He's been solid all year. Been well within the fight. I said earlier in the year I think from the young crop of drivers he looks the most complete. Maybe that's just because he has a couple more years on a lot of the other younger guys. He's definitely been very complete all year. Seems to be very Dixon-esque in a lot of ways. Scott has been sort of the measure over the last couple decades of how you be a champion. Alex seems to



embody that pretty well.

He could have a very good run over the course of his career. We don't know. We'll see. I'm sure he'll have a lot of time to stick around and see what he can do.

**Q. Can you give us some insight what you will do for the off-season.**

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, it's a long off-season. I think we only have one test I think, which will probably be pretty close to St. Pete. So, yeah, a lot of not doing INDYCAR.

Luckily I still do some other programs, especially with the IMSA program, which definitely I think we've got maybe five test days before Christmas, then plus we have Petit Le Mans, that kind of keeps you going. Obviously we kick off with Daytona, the Roar, then obviously the race, so on.

Lucky that I'm part of that program, at least I hope I'm part of that program. Haven't been told by Chip yet. For us it's a lot of training, but a lot of analyzing in the off-season, trying to figure out where you went wrong. Lots of video. The problem these days is there's so much information, it's trying to get through it. Yeah, the team and everybody sort of on the engineering side will go through a bunch of that.

**Q. Scott, how does it feel having a teammate (no microphone) as Alex had?**

SCOTT DIXON: Honestly, it's great. It's great for the team. Obviously it has raised the bar, but I think it's raised the bar for all of us this year to keep pushing.

It definitely feels like kind of the 2009 through sort of '12, '13 period with Dario, which is great. Obviously it was really only two cars at that point. We had G2 for a brief period there. But excited. Excited for team morale. That's the big thing. Obviously when you get beat, when it's not just the drivers but the crews as well, it pushes everybody a lot harder. Hopefully we can come out of the gate very strong.

Super proud of what the 10 car has done. Super proud of Alex. Man, he's done a tremendous job this year.

**Q. Aside from today's runner-up finish, what would you say would be the highlight of your season?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: I don't know. Probably the two wins. I guess those are the highlights. Mid-Ohio and Gateway. I would say those two.

**Q. Scott, what is the progress that you have seen for Alex this year coming as almost a rookie for Ganassi**

**and now being a champion? What was the progression like, the evolution of him this year?**

SCOTT DIXON: The progression was strong from the get-go. I think he definitely took a lot in with the previous season at Coyne. Having Cannon and a few of the engineers that have known Alex from the previous years, they knew he was quick. He was definitely I think out of the shortlist of drivers they had the possibility of filling that seat. That was the guy I said, You got to go for, too. His progression has been, again, veteran-like, which has been really interesting.

He definitely asks a lot of questions. He's not shy to ask questions. But he processes it very well. I think as we've seen throughout the season, just the kind of lows that they've had maybe, not many lows, but the way that they've reacted to it as a group, he's had a lot of help obviously from the whole group of Ganassi, especially on the engineering side, but then also with Dario, with the other drivers.

He soaks it up and he processes it very well. The progression has been quick and fast. I think his natural talent, that's the biggest thing you look for, right? It's the easiest. The speed is what you need most. Sometimes you need to contain that and make sure it turns into results and not crashes. He does that very well anyway.

The process was quick and fast. You could even see that through the westbound, if it was a new track, a track he didn't know that well, he would methodically go through it from session to session. That was definitely very impressive.

**Q. Scott, you've been in this situation many times yourself. You were the youngest winner in the championship prior to today. Can you explain to me what it really means to people back in New Zealand?**

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, it's definitely again, even throughout the season, but even the off-season, just seeing Ricky, I don't know, I think I won my championship when I was 23. I don't know. Ricky was my crew chief. It's pretty cool he's in that situation.

Again, it's just that whole team morale is fantastic. So fun to see. I don't know, for me that's been kind of the biggest thing this year, is just walking in the truck and seeing all groups really excited to be there, really happy, which most days they are. I think this year has been a standout getting a lot of wins across the board for a lot of the teams, obviously seeing Jimmie's progression as well.

It's huge for Ricky. A hell of a nice guy, a hard worker,



very good at being a champion.

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations, Scott and Josef.  
Josef by the way also wins and clinches the season-long  
NTT P1 Award. A nice boost heading into 2022.

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