

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

Saturday, July 16, 2022

**Colton Herta**

**Scott Dixon**

**David Malukas**

**Devlin DeFrancesco**

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Devlin deFrancesco. Thank you for joining us, Devlin. You qualified 12th for tomorrow's race. Tell us how exciting that is to have such a great result in your hometown.

DEVLIN DeFRANCESCO: Definitely nice to get that monkey off our back, something that has been prying at me for a little while.

Nice to transfer in a tough group that we had. A little bit bittersweet because I think there was definitely more in it, lockup on cold reds like that. There was no light there, no marshal to wave through. It's very hard to see if anyone was coming or not. The team can only tell me so much.

Overall a good job for today. Good result. Looking forward to going out to achieve more tomorrow and building on this for the next round in Iowa and Nashville and many more to come.

THE MODERATOR: We've been joined by our NTT INDYCAR SERIES P1 pole award winner, Colton Herta.

Talk to us about your day and your run.

COLTON HERTA: Yeah, couldn't have been much better. We had a great race car in the morning time. Kind of did a little bit to it to adjust it. Ended up being very fast this afternoon.

I think overall on the new reds we lacked a little bit of pace. We were fourth, fifth, sixth. On the used reds, the car came alive which is intriguing and interesting for tomorrow. We'll have to wait and see.

I'm really happy with the team's performance today.

THE MODERATOR: We've also been joined by David Malukas.

David, fifth for you today. Awesome result. Tell us about your qualifying.

DAVID MALUKAS: It was very good overall to the Fast Six. I think the team did such an incredible job to get the car to where it needed to be after my feedback. It was everything we really wanted.

As soon as we made the Fast Six, I feel like it was mission accomplished from there. From that point on, it was trying to get as much information as we can with the second time being in the Fast Six, to learn about the rerun reds, which set to use, et cetera. We learned a bit more and are going to use it for the next time.

THE MODERATOR: We're also joined by our P2 qualifier Scott Dixon, joining Colton on the front row.

Great start for you this weekend.

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, it's been a good weekend for us. I think all the cars rolled off really well. It was just trying to keep up with the track was a little bit of it.

Q3 was good. Probably over-attacked on the last lap there, lost quite a bit of time in six. There's always things you can improve.

Congrats to Colton, it was a great lap. Looking forward to starting close up to the front and hopefully have a clean day.

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

**Q. Scott, are you amazed at all the youngsters adapting so quickly to such a difficult track that they haven't raced in two years or ever?**

SCOTT DIXON: No. I think anybody that makes it to this level is very accomplished and a lot of talent.

I think being comfortable with the car is key, especially at places like this. I think today it's always tough to get it perfectly right.



Sometimes it's better not knowing. I think that helps a lot of places, especially the first time I go to places. You don't know anything bad, don't have any memories of crashing in certain spots. That maybe helps.

Yeah, a good job by them all.

**Q. Devlin, obviously you grew up watching races on this track. It's your first appearance on your hometown track. How do you feel having such a solid qualifying time here in Toronto?**

DEVLIN DeFRANCESCO: It was amazing. This was actually my first INDYCAR race that I came to when I was 12 years old with Tony Kanaan when he was racing for KV. I was standing right above the last corner in the suites watching.

To be here 10 years later, have my career-best qualifying my first time out here is amazing. I think it shows we're making progress slowly but surely.

Also a bit of bittersweet feeling. I definitely think we had more. But happy to come away with this and focus forward for a good result tomorrow.

**Q. David, what has changed from the beginning of the season to now? You've really come on here.**

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, I think it was just being a rookie, young, stupid mistakes at the start of the season. But it's also getting a feel for everything. Brand-new car, brand-new team, trying to learn how everything is and what to do. There's a lot to it.

Indy Lights, yes, it's a very good series. I think they do a very good job to get drivers ready into INDYCAR. There's still a lot that is very new and fresh for me.

I think it was just learning all of that, kind of getting a rhythm going. I know what the team wants, the team knows what I want. All around we're doing very well.

**Q. Dix, you won here three times, turned more laps at this place than anybody else sitting up here. A couple of words on how the track is different today compared to the other times when you've won.**

SCOTT DIXON: Actually I thought the track was in pretty good shape. There were some repairs they did. Every year it changes, right, it's a street course. The difference this time is that it's been two or three years since we've been here.

But I think the major cleanups here were the front straight and the back straight. They're still in great shape. They get a little more character as they age.

There's always stuff like walls and placements. I think some concrete patches, like in turn five. Also turn eight was quite tricky this year compared to normal years.

Yeah, I think what's great about street course racing and INDYCARs, it's never particularly the same. I like the tires we bring here, you can attack the tire. The road course tire is pretty sensitive and pretty tough to attack.

I think these tracks are a lot of fun because you can get aggressive, get after it. I think it's how it should be.

**Q. Colton, five days ago you were testing an F1 car. Was it hard to get back into the INDYCAR mode or was it pretty easy, like riding a bike?**

COLTON HERTA: I was a little bit worried about maybe taking a session to get back into it. But as soon as I got in the car, the seating position and everything is so different that it was almost kind of like a light switch just flicked in my head that this was the INDYCAR. It took maybe one or two laps.

The actual driving style isn't incredibly different, so it was pretty seamless to kind of go back and forth.

**Q. Colton, you said the used red tires really came to life for you. Is that going to change strategy for tomorrow at all?**

COLTON HERTA: No. I think what was surprising is in a lot of street course qualifying in INDYCAR, and the last few years, I've seen that guys can usually match their time in the third round of qualifying to the new red set. It's very rare when guys can go faster. It wasn't just me, it's a lot of guy. Most of the field went faster than their new tire run. It was something that was interesting.

As far as strategy, I don't think that really changes much for what people are planning to do or not planning to do with the red tires.

**Q. David, you're coming off your best finish. Now you have a great qualifying session. Do you feel like you're on an upward trajectory?**

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, definitely. I mean, I feel like since the month of May we've kind of been, every race, taking a chunk, taking a step out of it. Everything seems to be getting along more. We're just keeping this momentum.

Going into a new race weekend is kind of like, Let's keep going, keep this momentum. Overall I think the team all around just pushes that much more to make sure we can keep going there and making it, doing these good results.

**Q. Devlin, what happened in turn three?**

DEVLIN DeFRANCESCO: Just a front lockup. Was able to get away from it unscathed. The one that was a bit more annoying was the lockup in one and having to rejoin.

Yeah, just a lockup into three.

**Q. What can be done to alleviate what happened exiting the runoff there into turn two? And Colton, what was your view of what happened there?**

DEVLIN DeFRANCESCO: It's something we brought up in the driver's meeting. When you're entering back on track like that, for us, we can't see anything, it's blind. There needs to be a light entry flashing blue to let us know there's cars coming or open up the walls so we can see. A bunch of different things we can do coming back next year. I couldn't see anything.

COLTON HERTA: Obviously like a car flies out in front of you. It's one of those things, it's just going to happen. I did it in practice two. It's impossible to know. You just have to go out and exit as far left as you can, unfortunately.

I think it's something that INDYCAR is looking at for next year to alleviate some of the pain of that. Yeah, for sure it could be a killer in a qualifying session if you just go into a runoff that has an outlet and you get a penalty because you don't know who's coming. I don't know if that's what happened to you.

DEVLIN DeFRANCESCO: Yeah, that's exactly what happened.

COLTON HERTA: It's not too far, especially when they haven't put anything in place to help you now.

DEVLIN DeFRANCESCO: At least a marshal or something.

**Q. Scott, this is the first time that the series has been back to the Toronto race with the windscreen, halo device. Is it any different to how it used to be with the older car?**

SCOTT DIXON: I think luckily the conditions here this weekend weather-wise are quite nice. It's not as humid as some of the races we've had. Yeah, definitely some of the tracks like maybe Indy, Indy has been extremely hot the

last three weeks. Maybe the race here later in the season could be tough. I think it's the humidity combined with the general heat, it's pretty tough.

This weekend has been fine. The track has been pretty quick. I thought we were going to be a fair bit slower than what we had been running just with the added weights, the deficiencies that it adds to it. It's actually been pretty good.

Yeah, should be fine.

**Q. I take it it hasn't made any difference in terms of the weight when you come over the bumps?**

SCOTT DIXON: In some ways, yeah, I would say it hasn't really affected it at all. Maybe all of us have gotten used to it now because we're a few years into using it.

Again, that's what I was saying about speed-wise, just the car is, to drive it, pretty similar to when we were here a couple years ago.

**Q. Colton, are you able to take any of sort of adrenaline or enjoyment or sense of achievement of getting in a Formula 1 car for the first time and channel that into positive energy for this weekend?**

COLTON HERTA: No, not really. It was nice to drive. Yeah, you kind of want to hit the reset coming into a weekend like this. It's five INDYCAR races in four weeks, which is really important for the championship, to get back up there, which we've been lacking.

Really just needed to be focused on that. Got here nice and early, got here Wednesday. I was kind of able to keep my mind off of what I was doing the last few days before that. An amazing experience, one I'll never forget.

**Q. Colton, your street performances, racking up pole positions, anything you're doing particularly well on street course qualifying?**

COLTON HERTA: I think the team's doing an amazing job. It's one place where damping is so important. All the bumps and bits of a place like Toronto where it's incredibly bumpy and smooth, so you kind of get a mixture of both the balance and the damping.

Team is doing an amazing job with that, and they continue to.

**Q. Devlin, last time we spoke on Thursday, this week was theoretical for you in terms of making your hometown debut. How has the week been for you?**

DEVLIN DeFRANCESCO: It's honestly been amazing. I've had so much support from so many fans, so much family. My sponsors, going up to see them after qualifying. It was amazing to get a good result for us.

Honestly just taking it all in and looking forward to having a clean, solid day tomorrow and some good points.

**Q. What are you going to do tonight, given it is your hometown?**

DEVLIN DeFRANCESCO: I'm going to relax, relax before the race. After a good day tomorrow, maybe it will more of an energetic night for sure.

**Q. Colton, as a team, after what happened in Mid-Ohio two weeks ago, leading the three sessions thus far this weekend, is it important as a result for the team?**

COLTON HERTA: Yeah, for sure. Last weekend was a bit of a nightmare for us as an organization, pretty embarrassing. But good to kind of get it behind us. Nice that everybody's kind of made up and no longer are in that mindset.

Yeah, it's a good way to kind of regroup. We had a great test in Iowa last week, then came here and obviously are having really good sessions. Everyone is very fast. All the Andretti cars in the top 12. I'm sure we're all happy.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, everyone.

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