

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

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Matthew Brabham

Linus Lundqvist

Benjamin Pedersen

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Wrapping up today's Indy Lights presented by Cooper Tires race. We are joined now by the drivers who finished second and third. Linus Lundqvist, his eighth podium of the season. Remarkably enough first runner-up finish of 2022. He's now up 108 points on Brabham with roughly 162 max points left. There's a good chance he could clinch the championship at Portland. See how that plays out.

Benjamin Pedersen, fourth podium of the season, 10th of his career.

Let's start, Linus, with you. Your thoughts on the race and the battle that you had with Matthew with four laps to go?

LINUS LUNDQVIST: Yeah, obviously a little disappointed to lose the race with so few laps to go. You always want to win one of those, especially when you feel like you're up in the lead for such a long time.

But we'll take a second. I think it was just a little bit too fast for us today. Happy that we actually held on to second because it was super tricky with the wind conditions. The car I think was maybe a little bit outside our window.

So, yeah, happy to get away with second. Good points. Extended the lead. Yeah, like you said, three races to go, let's see what we can make of that.

THE MODERATOR: This race was all about managing tires. Did you feel like you did well enough in the end or no?

LINUS LUNDQVIST: It was a manage of tires, both yes and no, because I was pretty much flat out since lap one. My only concern was that right front. I got some PTSD from last year, so obviously kept checking that right front every lap now and again. But it managed to hold together.

I knew that it was going to be close. I tried to run different lines, whatever I could do in one and two, three and four. Nothing really seemed to work at the end of the race. Just too fast for us.

THE MODERATOR: Benjamin, fourth podium of the season, 10th of your career. Your race was really towards the very beginning when you were battling with Brabham there for P2.

BENJAMIN PEDERSEN: Yeah, I mean, obviously very happy with the podium. We had a little bit of some just difficulty getting back onto the podium for a bit. Nice to be back up here.

Happy, but also a little disappointed because I felt like during testing and practice we had a bit better of a car for race runs. For some reason today, it didn't just quite go our way. We'll kind of dig deep into that. But obviously super happy with the podium.

I would be lying if I wasn't saying that I was trying to win the race.

THE MODERATOR: Once Brabham got around you, how disappointing was that moment? Did you think it's still a long race, 74 laps to go, you had time to make it up?

BENJAMIN PEDERSEN: Yeah, I wasn't disappointed to start. A hunger to get back. I had a big moment on the first corner when the race started. That's where Brabham got the run. From there it was kind of just follow the leader. It was mainly just because of the big moment.

THE MODERATOR: Bittersweet thinking this is the final oval, but the championship is still ahead with some big races on the West Coast.

LINUS LUNDQVIST: Yeah, I would like to see more oval races. Personally I think it is good practice for us in the series below INDYCAR to get some good runs on it. It's a lot of fun, a lot of different type of racing. It's good to mix it up.

But Portland and Laguna should be fun as well. Portland we were really strong as a team last year. Looking forward to that. Hope to go to Laguna a little bit more comfortable.



THE MODERATOR: Your thoughts, too, Benjamin, about the final oval of the season?

BENJAMIN PEDERSEN: Yeah, very excited to head to the West Coast. That's where I grew up. Love Portland, love Laguna. It's an awesome atmosphere there. It's just a different atmosphere there. Super cool vibe.

Yeah, give it everything.

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations to Matthew Brabham, picking up his second win of the season, third of his career, first one coming back to the season opener. Seems it's been a while.

Just your thoughts, four to go, you're closing in on Linus.

MATTHEW BRABHAM: Yeah, I was just hungry. I wanted to win so bad because it was kind of the same scenario in Iowa. Iowa, really fast at Iowa, I could feel it coming on again in a same, similar scenario. I was a little bit more patient.

I think I was just trying to really not show too much because at Iowa, I was showing everybody the high line. My teammates are trying to do the same thing for this race. I really didn't run that high line, like, all weekend, trying not to show anyone what I was doing.

When it came down to the last couple laps, I found it. My spotter was telling me, Hey, you got to do something, it's counting down.

I finally brought my car up in that high lane. It seemed to really work. Obviously super happy that I came away with a win.

THE MODERATOR: How much of it was saving your Cooper Tires versus not showing your hand too soon versus being able to get it done in the end?

MATTHEW BRABHAM: Me personally, I didn't have any problem with the tires. The tires held on through for me all through the race running we did and testing. In the race I felt just as strong at the end as I did at the start.

I think it was just more not showing my hand, showing everyone the line. I'm obviously quite experienced at ovals. I think everyone kind of watches. I don't know, maybe I showed too much at Iowa. I just felt like I needed to fly under the radar for this weekend and really try and push hard the last couple laps that really counted.

THE MODERATOR: I know Iowa was disappointing. To

come back to another oval like this, get the job done, how satisfying?

MATTHEW BRABHAM: Super satisfying. It just makes you hungry when you're off the podium or off getting race wins. I was super hungry to get a race win again, get back on this top step, show what I can do.

Yeah, the team did a great job. Every time I've driven an Andretti car on an oval, it's been fantastic. Been a dream. That slate has always continued. Super happy with the team, they gave me a great car. Just happy everyone that came out this weekend, my family, my girlfriend, my dad. It was an awesome end to some oval racing.

Obviously, as Linus said, I wish we had some more because it seems I'm really strong on the ovals. Definitely my strength this season.

THE MODERATOR: Open up for questions.

Q. What ovals would you like to see added to the Indy Lights calendar for next year?

MATTHEW BRABHAM: I think obviously the first one is Indianapolis Motor Speedway. I'm not sure if that's ever going to happen again. I think Texas would be... I think every oval we could race on.

LINUS LUNDQVIST: Yeah, I agree.

BENJAMIN PEDERSEN: All of them.

THE MODERATOR: It's a developmental series.

MATTHEW BRABHAM: How many races does INDYCAR do on ovals? We add Indy and Texas, we're right there.

THE MODERATOR: Linus, not much experience on ovals. As you look ahead to the championship, you're going to have likely the three guaranteed spots. It's crucial certainly for you, isn't it?

LINUS LUNDQVIST: Yeah, no, like I said, I think the more ovals, the better. Like you said, when you move up to the big series, there are more ovals. Obviously the racing is very different.

And, like I said, they're a lot of fun to drive on. I think Brabham showed it today. You can really make it work if you focus on the race car, work different lines, et cetera. The more we can run on them, the better it will be, especially in the lower series.

Q. You beat him today. In terms of the championship



is there any catching Linus?

MATTHEW BRABHAM: I don't think so, personally (smiling). I'll be honest.

Q. What would it take?

MATTHEW BRABHAM: A DNF almost every race. I'd have to win every one, which is tough with my teammates, too.

When I came into this weekend, I was fourth. I was the last guy that could win the championship. So if you, like, didn't show up (smiling).

I think I'm second now.

Q. You're second.

THE MODERATOR: 108 points out.

MATTHEW BRABHAM: I'm just focusing on race wins personally. Anything can happen, but I seriously doubt it.

What are you doing next year? I'm sure they're all talking to you.

LINUS LUNDQVIST: I wish my phone was blowing up right now.

Q. Linus, is the championship yours, in your mind?

LINUS LUNDQVIST: It's not yet. Obviously, like Brabham said, we have a good advantage. Also for myself, like, I do this because I love winning. I'm here to get a couple more race wins by the end of the year hopefully. I know it's going to be a tough fight. It always is between us and Andretti. We'll see who comes out at the top at Portland and Laguna.

We want to finish the year strong. Hopefully we'll have a championship by the end of it.

Q. Your phone is not ringing?

LINUS LUNDQVIST: I'm calling people. Not the other way around, unfortunately (laughter).

Q. Are they taking your calls?

LINUS LUNDQVIST: About 50% ratio. I would say decent. I just call them 10 times. They're bound to pick up sometimes.

THE MODERATOR: Your thoughts on going to Portland,

the West Coast? Linus, you could be looking at clinching the championship out there.

LINUS LUNDQVIST: Yeah, excited for Portland, like I mentioned earlier. HMD were super strong there last year. Hopefully we'll be strong there this year again. We're hungry for more wins. That's it.

THE MODERATOR: Matthew?

MATTHEW BRABHAM: From Andretti, HMD point of view, Andretti weren't super strong at Portland, but then were at Laguna. We'll try to prove at Portland, put on the fight to try to keep up with these guys.

Laguna, I think we're pretty confident heading to Laguna. It's the same deal: anyone can win. It's super tough. It's really competitive this year.

Yeah, I don't know. As Linus said, try to get as many race wins, finish up as far as I can and have fun towards the end of the year.

THE MODERATOR: HMD is pretty good at Portland.

BENJAMIN PEDERSEN: Very strong. Laguna, Linus and I both finished on the podium as well. Looking forward to heading back to that coast.

THE MODERATOR: In two weeks' time. Congratulations. Thank you.

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