

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

Sunday, September 4, 2022

Benjamin Pedersen

Matthew Brabham

Linus Lundqvist

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We're coming to you from Portland International Raceway, wrapping up the Indy Lights Grand Prix of Portland. Congratulations to Benjamin Pedersen, career win number one, fifth podium of the season, 11th of his career.

On the far right, Linus Lundqvist. Linus continues to lead the championship, now up 103 points. Picks up his ninth podium of the season and the 20th of his career.

Benjamin, congratulations. Nipping away at this thing for a while, but finally win number one.

BENJAMIN PEDERSEN: Yeah, it feels so good, especially at what feels like a home event. Grew up in Seattle, living in Indy now.

But yeah, I mean, led every session of this week. Fast lap every session. It was a dream come true. Just going to take all this energy to Laguna, the whole West Coast swing.

Yeah, just super, super happy.

THE MODERATOR: Starting up front is one thing, but staying up front is key as well. How did you do it today?

BENJAMIN PEDERSEN: With the help of my team, my driver coach J.J. They kept me informed with push to pass with the guys behind me. We were just managing the whole time. Big, big help from the team as well.

Yeah, just stayed focused on my own race. Yeah, it was a very good day.

THE MODERATOR: Everybody made it through turn one pretty nicely.

BENJAMIN PEDERSEN: Yeah, you never know what's

going to happen here. It's always a fear when you've seen what happened in the past for INDYCAR, et cetera, any event. I haven't seen the replay or anything, so I don't know if anything happened behind me. On my part, it was pretty textbook.

THE MODERATOR: Stingray got some damage, but that was about it.

Congratulations to Linus Lundqvist, ninth podium of the season, 20th of his career, now leading the championship by 103. Looking back at the race, you made a couple spots up obviously, but not enough. What do you make of your race today?

LINUS LUNDQVIST: It's all right. You always want a little bit more. You want to win every race if you can. We didn't have the pace this weekend. Obviously Benjamin has been on it. Obviously congratulations to him. It's always a good feeling to get that first win under your belt.

From our side, it was all right. Happy to get away with a podium. Glad to see Daniel walk away from that. A pretty high-speed (indiscernible). A little scary to watch.

Yeah, we'll take the points. It would have been nice to finish ahead of Brabham and sort of be finished with it. Let's see. We still have a good gap, going to Laguna with some good energy.

THE MODERATOR: The incident on lap six, then the restart happened, I believe it was lap 16, trying to reel in Matthew. What did you have? What didn't you have?

LINUS LUNDQVIST: Yeah, I don't know. We're weren't fast enough, simple as that to be honest. I tried to put a bit of pressure on him in the beginning, used a little bit of my push to pass. Sort of ran away with it. I didn't have anything to match. We were pulling away behind.

It was a lonely race for me the last 15 laps or so, but happy to bring it back on the podium.

THE MODERATOR: Great to be joined by Matthew Brabham with his second runner-up finish of the season, sixth podium this season, 10th of his career.



Matthew, tell us about your day. Moved up a little bit. Hard to stop Benjamin's big weekend here in Portland.

MATTHEW BRABHAM: First things first. Congrats to Benjamin. He was fast all weekend. He's been fast all weekend, just not able to convert. Today he's super happy. That was awesome. I couldn't catch him. Congrats to him.

Yeah, I'm super thrilled with my day, to be honest, because we were fast on the first day, then yesterday we were just terrible. Mostly my driving. But we just didn't have the pace compared to HMD yesterday. We made some big changes for the race today, and it paid off.

I was super surprised at the speed I had. Honestly I thought once we started the race, all those incidents happened, that I was just going to be trying to block Linus the whole race. Man, they've been fastest all weekend. Luckily that wasn't the case.

My car gripped up. It was really fast. The Andretti guys did a great job of turning it around. I mean, it was a struggle for us. Yeah, big hats off to the team for giving me a great car in the race.

THE MODERATOR: I asked Linus about the restart on lap 16. You had the opposite view, trying to keep him behind. How did you do that today?

MATTHEW BRABHAM: On the restart? To be honest, I knew he was close. I was, like, I didn't even look in my mirrors, I just went straight for the apex. Were you there?

LINUS LUNDQVIST: No. I kind of realized that. I was like, yeah, no, I'm not putting my nose in there.

MATTHEW BRABHAM: To be honest, I didn't look in the mirror, I'm just going for the apex. He has a championship, too.

I don't know. Yeah, honestly he probably could have been 20 car lengths back and I would have done the same thing. I didn't know what happened, to be honest. I didn't even look in the mirror.

THE MODERATOR: Linus, leading the championship, maybe thinking to yourself, we're not going to clinch here, let's worry about it at Laguna, points racing?

LINUS LUNDQVIST: Honestly, when you're out there, you're just so focused on wanting to go forward and go faster that it doesn't really come to mind until the last 15 laps when I was by myself. This is what I have. But you always want to move on.

Obviously when Brabham got by, I know the situation before the race I realized, Dammit, I'm going to have to pass him. He was too fast for us.

THE MODERATOR: How did Matthew get around you?

LINUS LUNDQVIST: It was a start. Got a good start. I was up to third. Then Rasmussen came a little bit in the chicane. Brabham came by in turn two.

THE MODERATOR: For all three, this is the sixth different winner we've had in the Indy Lights presented by Cooper Tires season this year, fourth first-time winner. What does it say about how competitive this season has been?

BENJAMIN PEDERSEN: Super competitive. Every week it feels a little bit different of who has pace. It's been super fun to drive this year with that in mind. It's definitely made everyone better, I think. Everyone has to be on their toes and push each other.

Yeah, I found it very enjoyable. I think from a driving perspective, I have just improved a lot with it. It's really good for the sport. Really good since the INDYCAR takeover of Indy Lights. Good for the future generations.

THE MODERATOR: Matthew?

MATTHEW BRABHAM: I could go on forever and say some controversial stuff.

But, I mean, it's super competitive. I just hate -- I'm not going to say it.

The field, it's so difficult. It's so competitive. It's different every weekend. I think it's definitely the level has been getting better and better every year.

I think compared to Europe, it's a top-level series. Everyone that comes out of Lights that does well does well everywhere around the world, whether it's INDYCAR or...

I think people overlook Indy Lights a lot and it's a shame because it's one of the most competitive series in the world. I think people don't realize a lot of the families that race and the kids are sacrificing everything, putting all their money on the line, going into huge debt to try to get their kids and themselves in INDYCAR. I think people just kind of overlook that I think.

Yeah, as I said, I think it's one of the most competitive series in the world.

THE MODERATOR: Linus, your thoughts?



LINUS LUNDQVIST: Yeah, I would tend to agree. I'd say it's not enjoyable, but it's competitive. I would like it to be less. It would be a lot nicer.

A little bit the same as Benjamin said: it forces you to push yourself to the next level and it does make it a little bit more rewarding when you do get the wins and the poles. Obviously you know the other guys have been pushing just as much.

You can put in the lap of your life and still be P4 or P3, whatever it might be, because it's so close. Just got to be on it every session, every weekend.

Yeah, it's cool and it's been fun.

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations. Great weekend. The championship goes onto Laguna Seca.

MATTHEW BRABHAM: She goes on. 32 cars have to show up or something (laughter)?

LINUS LUNDQVIST: Yeah, pretty much.

THE MODERATOR: If you have a practice lap, that pretty much clinches the championship.

LINUS LUNDQVIST: Depending on how many show up at practice. If the number we're at right now, yeah.

THE MODERATOR: We'll worry about crowning you champion next week.

LINUS LUNDQVIST: I like the sound of that.

MATTHEW BRABHAM: Where do you want to celebrate, here or there?

LINUS LUNDQVIST: Laguna is a little bit nicer than Portland.

BENJAMIN PEDERSEN: Easy for you to say. This is my hometown.

THE MODERATOR: Benjamin, Linus and Matthew, congratulations to all three.

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