

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

Thursday, November 17, 2022

**Dennis Reinbold**

**Don Cusick**

**Stefan Wilson**

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Let's get started. It's just after 4:00 on the East Coast. First of all, to say welcome, everyone. Hope you are having a great day. If you are unfamiliar, I'm Dave Furst from the INDYCAR and NTT INDYCAR SERIES. Some housekeeping items.

Rather a large announcement at The Thermal Club out in California today. Dreyer & Reinbold Racing and Cusick Motorsports announcing a partnership to field Stef Wilson for the 107th running of the Indianapolis 500 presented by Gainbridge. Stef will be attempting to qualify for the fifth 500 for Stef.

All three representatives joining us this afternoon. Of course, Stef joins us. Also joining us, he is the owner of Dreyer & Reinbold Racing, a team founded in 1999, say hello to Dennis Reinbold. Also joining us, Don Cusick, founder of Cusick Motorsports.

Let's begin with Don. Again, congratulations. Another shot at the 500. Tell us how this one came about for you, Don?

DON CUSICK: I'll tell you what, it was a lot of hard work and the guys beating the bushes like they always do. Super fortunate to have struck a deal with DRR. We're super excited. Since it's not May, I really don't know what to do with myself. We have all this time leading up to the race. It's super exciting, and it's been a great partnership. We're thrilled.

THE MODERATOR: For sure. Dennis, we'll bring you in. Congratulations on the announcement. Several layers really to this announcement, but just start by talking about how special this opportunity is for you and this race team. It's been around for quite some time now.

DENNIS REINBOLD: Thanks, Dave. Anytime you talk about the Indy 500, whether it's here in November or during the month of May, it's an exciting time. So we're

excited to put our program together and bring Don on board with us as well as Stefan to drive.

We are busy at work preparing for the race coming up and doing a lot of offseason testing and things like that that we've wanted to do and have done in the past years. Just really stepping it up a little bit more this year and trying to be as focused and ready to go.

I was talking to Stefan earlier today about what our plan is in the offseason, and we've got a pretty full agenda. Even though it's not May yet, there's a lot of work to prepare for it.

I feel good about it. I feel good about our preparation and where we're at and the things that we're putting together to make it all happen.

THE MODERATOR: Yeah. We'll bring Stef in as well. Before we open it up for questions, again, Stef, another shot here at the 500 for you, and your association with Cusick continues. Plus, Dreyer & Reinbold now, a fixture at the speedway. Just your thoughts about climbing in the 24 here in a couple of months?

STEFAN WILSON: It's exciting. I'm so thankful for the support and the faith that Don Cusick has shown in me and put in me. At the same time Dennis, Chase, and Brent as well at Dreyer & Reinbold. It's exciting to be working with this team again. It feels like it's again, you know, just because that family history there with Justin racing for them in 2010 and 2011.

Yeah, just the dedication that Dreyer & Reinbold have focused on the Indy 500. Really they were the team that we really wanted to partner with the most coming off of this year's May.

We're just excited that we're able to achieve that and strike this deal and excited for the future.

THE MODERATOR: Certainly I can't help but think about the sentimental side of the story and the fact Justin drove for Dennis a few years and now you're with the team. I think really that's pretty special as well, Stef.

STEFAN WILSON: Yeah, absolutely. I got to spend two

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Mays around the Dreyer & Reinbold Racing team back in 2010-2011 with Justin and getting to know the team already. So, yeah, I'm really -- that's another sentimental piece to it all.

THE MODERATOR: Yeah, it certainly is. Let's go ahead and open it up for questions.

**Q. Stefan, I know they don't celebrate Thanksgiving in England, but you have to feel pretty thankful that you got your Indy 500 deal wrapped up a week before Thanksgiving.**

STEFAN WILSON: Absolutely. Yeah, it's kind of unusual, as Don pointed out earlier. The last two Indy 500s have been very last-minute programs put together in the month of May actually. It just makes it that much harder when you are kind of putting it together last second.

There's so much to take care of and make sure that the program runs at that last second, so getting this done in November, it's good for me. I'm able to now have a timetable to focus leading up to the month of May.

At the same time, the team as well. You know, we can start solidifying the livery, getting the car painted, getting that prepared and start rubbing on it and making sure it's as fast as possible come May.

I think from all aspects, from all the different angles here, we're all thankful we can get this done before Thanksgiving. Now I can enjoy Thanksgiving, and not eat too much (laughing).

**Q. It's also got to help the stress level, I would imagine.**

STEFAN WILSON: Absolutely. My wife will be the most thankful for sure.

**Q. And a question for Indiana's largest and number one Xfinity -- or Lexus dealer, I'm sorry. Lexus and Infinity. Got to get those right. To be able to move in this direction, Dennis, with Stefan, how important is that? You know, we ask you this every year, and for a while there you were going to run more than the Indy 500. COVID year you had a plan to maybe run six races. You know, COVID hit. Where do you stand? Here you have Thermal out there. You're partners at Thermal. It would be a great time to put Stefan loose out there at the end of January, February for spring training. What's some of the other things you want to do INDYCAR-wise?**

DENNIS REINBOLD: We're looking into it. Don and I

spoke about it, and we've talked with Stefan about it as well. It's Infinity, Bruce, by the way. Not Lexus. Don't say that.

**Q. Indiana's number one Infinity dealer.**

DENNIS REINBOLD: There you go. I think we're the only one in Indiana, so it's okay. So we can safely say we're number one.

But we're excited about the opportunity and looking into INDYCAR. INDYCAR has great momentum. You look at some of the things, the announcement yesterday coming out about Hy-Vee in Iowa and the stars they're going to bring out there. There's a lot to look at and a lot to be excited about.

We've been really focused the last couple of years in developing our Nitro Rally Car program, which we're underway now. It's kind of the middle of the season with that series. So it complements INDYCAR really well.

Once the 500 starts, we're looking at other ideas and concepts and potential races in the future. We haven't locked into anything at this point in time. We'll have those conversations, though.

We did take a step back with COVID a little bit. Not on purpose, but it did kind of ruin our plans. We were down in St. Pete ready to race when that event got called due to the pandemic, and we didn't get our momentum back at that point in time.

We've had some good headway in trying to reinvigorate our sponsors and our momentum going forward to do a few more races. To bite off a full season right now, we have all the equipment and people ready to go, but we don't have everything in place to do that quite yet. That's down the road. It's still one of those things that we're considering very seriously.

**Q. How about the second entry?**

DENNIS REINBOLD: Still up in the air on that. Working on it. We're being very selective, to be honest with you, because we're not in a huge hurry to do that. We're already prepping both cars to be ready no matter what for May, and we've been doing that really since the checkered flag fell last May, this past May.

So our preparation doesn't change too much in that regard, but it has been really nice to bring Stefan and Don in to be able to work with those dynamics to set the stage for what we need to do to grow that program. We're excited.



We would rather do it sooner rather than later, but a lot of things have to play out. This offseason in INDYCAR has been a lot of things up in the air, as you know and have reported on. A lot of ways we're waiting for some of the dominoes to fall, but we also have planned on controlling our own destiny, so we're doing that.

**Q. Got some questions for Stefan. Stefan, congratulations, man. This is great news. Can you just run us through how this deal came together on the sponsorship side? Were you out there looking for sponsorship, or did CareKeepers just come out of nowhere and find you?**

STEFAN WILSON: We've been really lucky, actually. A lot of the partners that are on the car this year have been partners of mine on previous Indy 500s. So we've got Sierra Pacific back, 181 Fremont as well. They came back.

CareKeepers was a company that was already involved with us on a much smaller scale, and it was actually the owners own a different company, and that's the company we're representing.

So this year they switched it up. They wanted to go in a much bigger role and wanted to become the care primary, and wanted to use a different brand. They're a company that we've dealt with and worked with for a couple of years now. Just thankful really that a lot of these sponsors have stayed really loyal to me and to Cusick Motorsports and wanted to be involved. That's pushed us to solidify the best program we can get at an early stage as well. That's kind of how it all led to this.

I think when we looked back at it, this year's Indy 500 came together super late, as you all know. We were the 33rd car. Part of the motivation to be that 33rd car, we knew it was going to be a tough month. We knew that the results were going to be impacted because it was such a delayed program, but in our eyes we needed to do that in order to get the opportunity that we have now.

It's sort of if we had not gone through that, I think it would have seriously impacted our ability to get this opportunity with Dreyer & Reinbold. When you look back at it, it was a tough month, but it was worth it to get to where we are now, and I think now we've got a lot of runway to prepare and make the most of this opportunity.

**Q. What's that actually feel like, Stefan? I mean, I'm assuming this is probably one of the earliest you've ever had a deal come together for yourself. It's probably similar question as to what Bruce has asked, but does it feel like it's kind of taken a lot of the weight**

**off the shoulders and you can stop sort of worrying about it and just go full focus on to the preparation?**

STEFAN WILSON: Absolutely. I think 2018, you know, we had it done really nice and early then. Obviously, I kind of knew before the 2017 Indy 500 that we were going to be back -- or I was going to be racing the 2018 one, obviously, with the Alonso deal and all that, how that all fell apart, how it came about.

But you're right. This is the earliest that we've had it done. It allows me to just really move up my training schedule and be in even better shape than I was this May and at the same time be working with the engineers now and getting familiar with each other so we can hit the ground running as soon as we get into May.

The nice thing this has afforded me as well is the opportunity to do the training -- the two-day test in April at Indy, which I have never had the luxury of doing before. So those two days are going to be hugely important to the program just to work through a few things, knock the dust off, and allow us to get into May and just feel a little bit less stressed about how much time we have.

**Q. Is there anything else outside of the Indy 500 that you all have been talking about? I know it's kind of been sort of mentioned, but have you guys discussed running road course program, street course program at all? That's probably a question for Don.**

STEFAN WILSON: That's probably a question for Don, but I'm very interested in doing more races and getting the opportunity to show what I can do on a road course, on a short oval, whatever. I just want to go racing in INDYCAR, and I think the two team owners on the call as well would agree with that, they want to go racing too.

I think a lot of that comes down to partners and getting a few more partners involved to make it possible, but I know there approximate my standpoint, I feel like I've shown what -- I haven't had the opportunity to show what I can do yet. I'm looking forward to potentially getting that challenge.

**Q. Does Dominic Cicero still work out at Thermal?**

DON CUSICK: Different track. He was out here for a while when we first joined, but he is out in Arizona now.

**Q. Yeah, he used to be my teammate in Formula Renault. I thought he was out there still. My bad.**

DON CUSICK: For a long time. He is doing great. I talk to him every now and again. He is doing great at that new



facility they built.

THE MODERATOR: That's a good segue. Stef, I see over your shoulder, that's The Thermal. Which course is that behind you?

STEFAN WILSON: Yeah, we're out at Thermal today. We have a show car on display. Obviously, this is actually where I met Don two years ago to make this all possible really. We're running the track today and did some tracks earlier with the media and showing them around and showing them the track that INDYCAR will be testing out here in February.

So, yeah, it's pretty exciting to know that INDYCAR is going to be coming here. It's such a great venue to host that two-day test.

THE MODERATOR: Open test. February 2nd and 3rd. Don, part of a huge press conference today, and tell us how excited you are that the series is going to be there for that open test.

DON CUSICK: It's super exciting. Yeah, we're really looking forward to it, show off the facility. And I think everybody is going to be very surprised when they come out here just how nice this place is. I think the wives are going to be like it because it will be 80 degrees in February, and that's always nice.

Yeah, it's a world-class facility. The team here, Tim Rogers, Nick Rhoades, John Rogers, they're working really hard to get this place ready.

They're bringing in 6,000 tires for new tire barriers, but we've already got the FIA certification. So, yeah, it's going to be great.

THE MODERATOR: That's the rub. It's a resort. There's pools. There's spas. There's all that. By the way, if you are a driver, you still have to get back to work and figure stuff out for the rest of the season.

DON CUSICK: A lot of golf courses in the area too.

THE MODERATOR: That's right. There's golf. There's all kinds of distractions out there, but it's going to be a really good start to the 2023 NTT INDYCAR SERIES season, no question about it.

Let's continue on.

**Q. You're making me really jealous. I would love to be over there for the test in February. Don, for yourself, how beneficial is it for you to go in as a partner with**

**Dreyer & Reinbold racing? I know when we first caught up in May, you were kind of hoping there might be a couple of races that you would be able to do next season other than the Indy 500.**

DON CUSICK: Well, to answer your first part of the question, DRR has been great. They've treated us like family. While it's early in the dating process, I think I'm already falling in love. It's really great to be with people that appreciate you and what you are doing, and the way they've treated Stefan is also excellent. We're excited.

As far as other races go, yeah, we would love to do that. I think we'll have to see how that all pans out. If we can run more races, that's certainly something we want to do. The plan has always kind of been to get into more races or even into full season eventually.

But the good teams that you want to really jump in full-time with are few and far between. I think for me, anyway, DRR is a very positive development.

**Q. For yourself, Stefan, in terms of your preparation, obviously, testing days are quite limited in INDYCAR at the moment. Are you going to be working on simulator work with Chevy and stuff like that, then obviously working at the workshop with the team and stuff, right?**

STEFAN WILSON: Yeah. I think that's the plan. You know, I think those Chevy days on the simulator are pretty hard to come by, but I think the plan now is we've got this program done so early, hopefully we're able to get some time in there and slot it in and fit it into the schedule.

That would be a huge boost, and I know Dreyer & Reinbold have got wind tunnel testing coming up as well in the early part of the year. It's just really exciting to see the development of the team and how dedicated Dreyer & Reinbold have been to making this a potential winning program. That kind of level of dedication I think sometimes doesn't get the notoriety that it deserves. I think this team is coming with an ambition to fight for the win, and I think they can.

**Q. For yourself Dennis, having run Justin a couple of years ago, how excited are you to now have Stefan on the team and to be running the Indy 500 with him?**

DENNIS REINBOLD: I'm really excited. I have known Stefan for a long time now, obviously, because of Justin. I know he is a good person and fits in well, as Justin did, with us. To carry that on, even though Stefan hasn't raced with us, we know what we're getting with him. I feel like he has a lot of upside, a lot of good untapped potential.

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Really impressed me several years ago when he led the Indy 500. It was off sequence, but all the things that have to come into play to get to the front of that race and lead that race is really a rare quality, and it's impressive to be able to do that.

So the fact that he got himself in that position, I mean, you start from, like, right now today until race day in May, and everything you do matters up to that, leading up to it.

We're taking that very seriously and with our offseason testing and with picking Stefan to be our driver and wanting him to be our driver. We know that he can deliver, and he has the potential to be in the mix.

We're not just going there to participate. We're going there to try to win the race. There are a lot of things that are stacked against you to do that, but they're stacked against the other 32 cars as well.

We feel like we have as good a shot as anyone. We specialize in the 500. So to kind of go back to the earlier question that Bruce asked about doing additional races, we don't specialize on those other tracks. We specialize at the Indy 500. We're confident in our ability to get out there and prepare and do what it takes to be in the mix.

We were in the mix last year, fortunately, with Santino and Sage as well running in the top five to six cars with Santino and around the 12th place car for much of the race last year.

So we know what it takes and the preparation, dedication, offseason testing to get to that level, and it's not inconsequential. There's a lot that goes into it. You have to have the driver that can deliver on that once you get in that position. We feel good about it.

So I'm just excited about going into the month of May and starting our testing. And we've already started our testing, but continuing our testing. And it's like the old saying, is it May yet? We're ready to go.

**Q. Just a quick follow-up as well. You know, you guys have run two cars kind of traditionally in previous years. You have partnered with Cusick, where you just put your eggs in one basket with Stefan. I know obviously having a second car, it's good because you can kind of compare data and stuff, but Stefan has run the Indy 500 previously. He is experienced at the track. If you felt that just having the one car would be ideal, is that something that you would look into instead of running the two cars?**

DENNIS REINBOLD: The answer to that is yes. We would consider that if we can't find the right fit. It has to be a really good fit. We've run two cars in the past, and it didn't help to run the second car. We've run one car and been pretty successful in doing that.

So I've seen it both ways. I've seen it where two cars are definitely beneficial, but that's on us as a team. We have to coordinate those two cars and make sure we're getting all the data transfer back and forth and really taking advantage of that.

But we have gone there before where we've run two cars and not taken advantage of it. I wouldn't call it necessarily a detriment, but it waters down your effort, so we're not going to do that.

We're going to make sure that if and when we do put someone else in our other car, which we do plan on doing, we're going to do it the right way to make sure that data flows freely and it's a benefit, not a hindrance.

**Q. A couple of questions. First one for Stef and Don. I'm just curious, being The Thermal Club, you mentioned a couple of years ago that's where you guys met. What's the backstory of what led you there, Stef, to meet with Don, or Don, vice versa, meeting Stef that day?**

STEFAN WILSON: I'll start, Don, and then I'll hand it over to you. Yeah, essentially at the time I've been out of the Indy 500 for two years, and I was starting to look at other racing opportunities. I was looking at potentially doing some NASCAR road races. I had asked around to see if anyone owned an old NASCAR that I could do some laps in and figure out a stock car. It just so happened that someone I know knew Don and knew that he owned a NASCAR and asked him if I could come out, and that's basically what I did.

I came out there. I drove Don's NASCAR. We developed a friendship. About two or three weeks later, Don texted me. I got a text from Don that says, hey (indiscernible), do you know where I could get some good tickets? I was like, Yeah, sure. I gave him my contact to get some sweet tickets. He said, I'm going to buy extra. Would you like to go? I was, like, Man, last time I was there, I was leading laps, and it would be hard for me to come back and sit in the stands. He said, Well, let's fix that. Let's get you in a car. I was like, Okay, Don. I get it. I appreciate it. But no worries.

And, no, Don was serious (laughing). So that's what led to 2021. Yeah, I can't thank Don enough really for the support, the faith, and the trust in me that he has shown in

me. It's more than any other person in my career that's believed in me.

I feel an immense amount of -- I wouldn't say pressure, but I want to repay that faith that Don has put in me and obviously get a result. I'm hungry for that this year, to get a good result for Don and Dennis, two people that have shown faith and trust in me.

**Q. I guess Stef just answered it, Don. What did you see in him that day to lead from NASCAR car test to an Indy 500 opportunity?**

DON CUSICK: I'm just an old INDYCAR groupie. You know, fortunately, I guess, or financially, probably, unfortunately, but fortunately for the friendship and all the fun, Stef and I just hit it off. We had breakfast and talked through it. I was pretty star-struck to be sitting with an INDYCAR driver.

He is just a great guy, I guess, is the best way to describe it. I sold my company. Indy was always a dream of mine when I was racing quarter midgets and beyond. Just kind of a cool deal. I thought, well, if he can get a ride, that's going to be the full immersion experience for me.

And I think at that time we both contemplated probably it being a one and done, but I just fell in love once I saw Indy for the first time and was hanging out there. Honestly, I didn't know what I was going to do on Memorial Day Weekend if we didn't get back in the race last year.

So that was pretty wicked. We got it done, and now here we find ourselves with a little bit of credibility and a really good race team, and I couldn't be more excited for what's coming up.

**Q. I'm curious, between you and Dennis, Don, what led you two together? What led the combo to start between you two and the dialogue to team up for next year's race?**

DON CUSICK: We had always hoped we could get a relationship with someone like DRR. They were number one on our list of potential partners for 2023. Anders and Stefan did the majority of the legwork and put together proposal and sent it out and had the conversations that needed to be had.

I didn't actually talk to Dennis until after the deal was signed. I had an opportunity to get on the phone with him several times and talk it all through.

For me the faith that the entire DRR team put in Stefan and the way they talked and treated him was super

heartwarming. I mean, it's probably an overused analogy, but they made us feel like we're part of the family. That's pretty unique, especially in what we're doing.

Yeah, that's been great. Like I said, my analogy is kind of like we've been dating for a little while now, and now we're going to go to the next step. I feel really, really good about it, and I really like those guys, and I think we're going to make some good things happen and surprise a few people in the process.

**Q. Your perspective on how this got started?**

DENNIS REINBOLD: I think Don did a good job of explaining exactly how it came about. We've talked to Stefan before, and I really appreciate his persistence and his hunger. And all the attributes you want in a driver he comes with. He is ready and excited to get going more so than -- his excitement level really is contagious.

And so him really, as well as Anders, putting Don and I together to have the conversation and then get to the point we are, it's like, yeah, I couldn't be happier with the way things are going.

We've done a lot of kind of partnerships in the past that haven't worked out very well. There have been a lot of factors involved because of different agendas and different ideas on how to go about things.

We're on the same page, and that's the only way you can do it and be successful. I feel like we're positioning ourselves and this program to be a really good program that could continue on for sure.

**Q. Then I would be remiss if I didn't ask. You mentioned you have been selective with that second car. I know there's not a lot of Chevy engines left, and a lot of chatter has been around a couple NASCAR boys wanting to come run that happen to be Chevy drivers too. Would you entertain any talks with them, or would that be a veteran driver you would prefer to have in that second car?**

DENNIS REINBOLD: The only way I can answer that question right now is to say that we talk to everybody. We've gathered a lot of information and haven't made a decision.

Like I said earlier, it's got to be the right fit, and I don't know who it will be or if we'll do it or not.

At this point in time we plan to run two cars, but if it's not the right fit, we won't.

**Q. One more for Stefan. I know you obviously ran a couple of years with Andretti. That was kind of the part-time Indy-only car. As Dennis said, this specialized car has ran really well these last few years at Indy especially. Do you feel like this might be a best opportunity for you to win this race?**

STEFAN WILSON: Yes, I do. I can't thank Andretti enough for what they did for me in the years that I ran with them, but this time it has a little different feeling to it. I can't thank Team Chevy enough as well. I'm excited to work with team Chevrolet again.

As we've all said, this effort, there is so much focus on the 24 car and from internally and the team that it feels like we're all pulling in the same direction, and we've got a lot of runway to plan and get prepared for May.

So, yeah, I'm really excited. What they showed last year, and the previous year, really, the race cars they have, the race setup, is really strong, and their qualifying form this year was really strong as well.

So with all that stuff we're working on in the offseason, we're only going to make that better. Yeah, I think, like I said before, this team really needs to get a lot more credit for what they've achieved in the last couple of years.

**Q. Stef, do you already know who you have as an engineer for the race, or is that yet to be determined?**

STEFAN WILSON: I'm not sure if there was a part of the question I missed. It blanked out there for a second. Can you repeat the question?

**Q. I was wondering if you had figured out who your engineer is going to be just yet?**

STEFAN WILSON: Yes. Yeah, we already have the engineer set. Been communicating with him and getting things planned for May. So that's Jeff Britton. We've already been in communication and already talking about some of the tests that they have coming up in January and February.

It's a nice start, but we're working on that relationship now, and it's not last-minute to start developing a relationship to try and go and race in the Indy 500. That's a huge bonus over the last year.

**Q. Then just a quick follow-up. Everybody has kind of covered everything when it comes to this announcement, but the question I had is about that track behind you at Thermal. Kind of hit off Dave's stuff, what is INDYCAR in store for whenever they go**

**to Thermal and pound some laps? Because as far as I know, I think you've probably logged the most laps of anybody there. What in particular can you delve into as to what we can expect?**

STEFAN WILSON: Well, I'll answer a little bit, and then I'll hand it over to Don because he is probably the number one salesman for Thermal. Don loves this place as much as he does Indy.

It is an incredible facility. You come in here, and the words I've used to describe it is Disneyworld for people that love race cars and racetracks. You enter the facility, and it feels like you've been transported to Dubai or Abu Dhabi, somewhere out of this country.

It's just incredible to see these homes right on the racetrack just like you would see a home on a golf course. This is what these people love. They love race cars, they love the racetrack, and they love driving. That's a great combination for INDYCAR to be getting involved with.

Obviously, hugely successful businessowners and entrepreneurs that have done really well in life to be able to get this situation for themselves.

Yeah, it's immaculate. The whole facility is just absolutely pristine. World class. Don, please feel free to add to that.

DON CUSICK: Obviously, I agree. I think Tim and John Rogers have done an amazing job building this facility, and Nick Rhoades, who manages the whole racing program out here, is really top drawer. I don't think he has had much sleep in the last few months. Kind of a 24/7 job for him.

But, yeah, they're super excited about it. It's a great racetrack. It's going to be great for the INDYCAR drivers, and I think that they're going to have a super top-notch experience.

I mean, this is what Augusta is to the golfers, this is to race car drivers. I think a lot of people are going to be surprised at how fabulous this facility really is.

THE MODERATOR: Maybe a quick question for Don and then for Dennis. Don, your thoughts as you look back at your first 500 as a car owner? To look at a race car and to see your name on the side of it before the Indy 500, what was that like?

DON CUSICK: Oh, my gosh. It's pretty surreal. The first time I think it was like drinking from a firehose. There was so much going on that it didn't really fully sink in. Last year with our name on the pit wall and all the stuff that went on and just having a little bit more experience, I mean, Anders

and I were on the side of the pit wall when he first went out. We both got a little lump in our throat, a little tear in our eye. It's pretty exciting.

I mean, there's just nothing like it. It's really hard to put into words other than it's the best experience imaginable. But this year is going to be even better because we just have so much more time to prep and think and get it ready to go. I think we have a genuine shot to win the race, so that's always super exciting as well.

THE MODERATOR: Dennis, just to juxtapose that a little bit. Your family's name has been on the car for a long, long time now. But a team that started back in '99. Now, to help out a fellow businessman like Don, these are memories that you just can't get anywhere else, right?

DENNIS REINBOLD: They really are. It brings me back to my first 500 when I was on the pit stand calling the race for Steve Knapp, doing the strategy for him. We're on the grid, and my radio went out. I should say his radio went out to where he could talk to me, but we could not hear him, but he could hear me talk to him, I should say.

All of a sudden I was worried about being overcome with the emotion of Jim Nabors singing "Back Home Again in Indiana" at the time and getting goose bumps like I always did with Paps and that sort of thing and the nervousness.

Once I realized that I was the only one talking to him and he is out there alone by himself, which I didn't tell race control that, by the way (laughing) in retrospect, but I realized he was the only one that -- I was the only link to him. Then my nervousness went away because we have work to do. It's put your head down and get the job done and do the best you can.

So once race day hits, all the nervousness and things like that go away because there's a lot of work to do, and you have to focus and give it your all to do what you can to win that race.

A lot of the things I remember about my first race and being concerned and things like that, I'm excited for Don to go through that. He has been around the racetrack a lot more than I had at that point in time, so he knows the deal way more than that, but he will be busy enough.

I know once race day comes there won't be any time for nerves or that sort of thing, but it's always good to try to soak it in and understand the privilege you have to be at that place and what special kind of people were there before you and soak all that in and take it in stride and realize, yeah, you're there to do work, but it's still really, really cool.

DON CUSICK: Yeah, exactly.

THE MODERATOR: So many memories that have been made at that famous facility, and then so many more to come in 2023. We'll leave it there. Our thanks to all three here this afternoon on the West Coast. Live from The Thermal Club, Don Cusick, Dennis in Indianapolis, Dennis Reinbold. Thank you so much. Driver of the No. 24 Chevy during the month of May, Stef Wilson. Thank you, guys, for all your time here today. Thanks, guys.

DON CUSICK: We appreciate you, thanks.

THE MODERATOR: Have a great rest of the day.

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