

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

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Jack Harvey

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Continuing on, great to have Jack Harvey in the No. 30 Honda for Rahal Letterman Lanigan racing this year, now fourth full-time season in the NTT INDYCAR Series.

JACK HARVEY: I think so, yeah.

THE MODERATOR: Great to have you back. Some changes this year for Rahal Letterman Lanigan racing. Your outlook for 2023; what do you think?

JACK HARVEY: I think it's been a really good off-season for us, honestly. When the season finished, went back to the UK for a little bit, and I think that was productive for me. It was just like a two-week trip.

I came back ready to get back to work with a little bit of mental capacity to really dive into what went wrong in '22, and one of the best feelings that I kind of left all of that with was feeling like there's a light at the end of the tunnel and we were aware of what we want to work on and put solutions in place to try and do that, and obviously we'll see how well we've done that come race time.

But one of the best things about the atmosphere of the team was that level of reciprocation of accountability, whether it was with me and what I felt like I needed to improve, from the engineers, to the mechanics.

The thing was in that moment, because everybody was willing to look inward and just honestly try and do their part better -- that's not to lay any more blame at anyone's door. This was a team effort. If we've got something we need to improve, let's go and do it. But that radiated through the building. Suddenly, because it's that reciprocated, it makes you want to do it more, and then you dive in deeper and deeper.

At the end of the day, the common goal between all of us on the team, through all the drivers, all the mechanics, engineers, everybody across commercial, all the sponsors, all the team owners, is how do we go and win, and at its core it's probably the same for all race teams, but after the

season we had I think it would have been easy for everybody to still feel a little down, and that wasn't the case at all.

These are the reasons why I love being a part of RLL, because I was excited that everybody's attitude and outlook was one of really just positivity and I think a really healthy approach to trying to have a better season.

I think the off-season was great, and then in terms of 2023, what we're hoping to achieve, it's probably going out and just getting the results that we know we have the talent to get, whether it's hopefully my talent, the team's talent, then go out there and say we want it to work with each other for these reasons.

So then we looked back at '22 and we go, that was an anomaly year. We don't know what happened -- well, we do know what happened, but it's not going to happen again. Yeah, pretty good.

Q. So what did happen?

JACK HARVEY: Lots. Lots of things happened. In terms of the specifics with the team, I think it's about -- from my side it was being a little more flexible, I think, with the car and really the feeling I was hoping to get from the car.

I think sometimes having the experience of a good car can be great. It also can be not great when you're not able to replicate that feeling, because then you get so -- not stuck perhaps, but I know I felt like how the car should feel and we were struggling to kind of get to that phase, so I think one of the things I wanted to work on in the off-season was remaining flexible.

Every year it's a different challenge, and I think ultimately a lot of the great drivers in the series are able to adapt and grow and evolve and change, and I want to be one of them drivers.

I think really it was more about remembering to be flexible, and also from the team side, are there other ways that we can perhaps meet each other when they're not just trying to go down the same path every time with setups and stuff like that.



Yeah, there's specifics, and ultimately there are things that we have worked on internally and privately just to try and come to the track more prepared, which I feel like I had a good off-season, but I feel like as an organization, Rahal Letterman Lanigan has had a really great one, as well, moving into the new building full time, the new acquisition and hires that we've got.

I think it all will really contribute into something great. I think it's the case now that really I feel like we have turned the page on last year. We can keep rehashing it, but at this point it's time to move on.

The best thing about starting a new year is you get a new opportunity, and there's while there is an opportunity for me to be a driver in this series, I'm going to go out and try and just be better than I was the previous year.

I think one of the frustrating things that was a little frustrating about last year is at times I felt like I was driving well, and when the result doesn't come, then it's a little frustrating. I think really being at peace with all that like I am now just gives us a really great foundation to try and just have a good year.

Q. Was there a vast disparity between what Graham wanted on setup, what Christian wanted on setup, and what you want on setup? Was that part of the issue?

JACK HARVEY: Look, at the end of the day, every time I've driven a fast race car, the other drivers on the team typically like that car. Although there's always going to be driver preferences and subtle changes, I think ultimately we were all looking for something very similar. We think we describe it three different ways, but ultimately we're hinting and asking for similar things.

I think that's one of the nice things actually in the off-season, was we weren't all completely different. I think that would have made our task of improving even worse actually -- not worse, but a bigger mountain to perhaps try and climb and overcome.

I think because the three of us all get on very well, like we truly all like each other, it just makes that atmosphere within the team a positive one because we're all reading off the same sheet just trying to move forward.

Q. Do you think that Christian as a blank canvas in a way because he is a rookie, do you think that that is what kind of like -- that helped him find a direction quicker? There's still drivers out there trying to find out how the car handled before it had the aeroscreen three years ago.

JACK HARVEY: Yeah, I mean, I guess I feel like there's no good answer to that, because in so many ways people say experience is one of the most important things, and then when you have the year that we had, and like I kind of mentioned, really being zoned into the car, wanting it to feel a particular way, and in that moment it kind of felt like some of the experience I had was hindering me, but it's rare that you ever feel like someone has got too much experience.

I think it's more about perhaps for him last year, he didn't know what the car was meant to do other than what he was driving. But I don't know. I kind of feel like that's a -- it's a difficult question to answer because I've never been in a situation where I wish I had less experience.

I just want to remain open minded myself so that within my own driving that I develop or continue to develop good techniques, work on the errors that I need to.

I don't think it was good or bad at the end. I think he just did a good job at adapting to the car that we had.

Q. On the personnel changes, when Graham was in here earlier he said that he felt like you were going to need a change to get back on track this year, that you had to make a change. Do you agree with that?

JACK HARVEY: I mean, no. I mean, I don't know really. I think at the end of the day, we all wanted to improve. Perhaps in some ways having a new engineer and a different set of people can be good, but I was pretty determined to make it work with whoever my engineer was going to be.

I certainly don't feel like the engineering decisions that got made within the team were being reflected of me, like we really need extra help, Jack. I feel like it was just a case of when you look at everybody who's in Indy and the people who travel and kind of just perhaps repairing everybody I felt like was really the intention and the goal, and that was certainly the message that got pushed my way.

Outside of normal moments where you see it throughout a lot of teams really, different pairings, kind of consistently get put together, and yeah, I'm very happy to be working with Allen McDonald this year. We're all based in Indy all the time, and yeah, just kind of excited.

But I certainly don't think that the changes that were made were any more based on me having a good year than him because if you think about it really, Graham is going to want to have a great year no matter what's happening with everybody else, and if I was a driver and someone said we're going to take your engineer away and put him with

someone else who's struggling, I'd be like, no, you're not, that's my engineer, and I want to have great success independently, as well.

I feel like there's a great team atmosphere. I feel like the engineers are all very collaborative with each other. I feel like that's just kind of where we're at.

Q. How pivotal do you feel like this season is to your INDYCAR career? Do you feel like it's a little bit make or break to improve and get big results?

JACK HARVEY: I feel like you summed it up pretty well there really. In a lot of ways -- every year is a big year, and in a lot of ways I feel past that. I've just accepted that. No matter what's happening, every year is a big year, and the mindset or my mindset right now is just the focus is on Thermal, and then once we finish there, we're going to try and take what we've learnt and see how we apply it to St. Pete, and then just one race at a time, one test at a time, and whatever is coming up is going to be our most important session, race, race weekend.

At that point the future will figure itself out. At the end of the day last year I wasn't satisfied team with the results we had. The team weren't happy either, but we shared that mutual desire to have success.

At that point I think we all would be happy if we were able to carry on.

Look, at the end of the day, motorsports, sports is results-based, so we've got to go out and get them. I don't see that as any more pressure. I love what I get to do. I think I'm one of the luckiest people in the world to get to do this and call it a job.

While it's an opportunity to do it, I'm going to keep giving it my all until there isn't one.

Q. Hearing you talk about trying to improve upon your first year with a new team last year, I think back to the struggles and the up and downs that Felix went through in his first year at Arrow McLaren, and I wonder if you look at his 2021 and his big jump to 2022 with more consistency, finishing top 10 in points, do you look at something he achieved in that jump from year one to year two as something that you think is realistic and something you would be targeting from a results standpoint?

JACK HARVEY: I hope so. When you kind of look at the year that he had, and even throughout last year, me and Felix had a couple of conversations about what he went through and perhaps how he felt like he overcame it with

himself and the team, and then I've known Felix for a long, long time now, to be able to have them conversations with him.

Yeah in truth, I feel like being -- with this now being a new factory consistently has added a good level of stability. I know everybody in there, in the building now. It's not like a case of still trying to meet people and build relationships with them. Them relationships are in place.

Yeah, I in a lot of ways do feel more stable within the team, and I guess in some ways the expectations last year were so high, and was that good or bad? I mean, it was what we went there to achieve, and ultimately that's why the expectation coming into this season is for us all just to do what we know we can do.

And not trying to put any more pressure on ourselves or take it off, by the way. Just go to the track with a neutral attitude, keep our emotions in check.

I think a lot of the off-season you haven't heard any huge statements from anybody at RLL really. It's been more of a case of the good old classic cliches, we want to go to the track and do our talking there. I feel like that's been the attitude of work hard, say less, and let's just crack on.

Q. Outside some of the engineering shake-ups, Graham was talking to us earlier about bringing Stefano in as a technical director and how his vision and being quick to say, I don't care if you've been doing this for a long time, it's not working, you need to make some changes in how you approach testing or sim time or going over approaching race weekends, even though we haven't yet been on track, how do you feel like his influence and direction has ultimately been a benefit for what you guys can do this year?

JACK HARVEY: Well, I feel like he's created a huge level of stability within the engineering room, having just -- he's the guy where if I've got a big question, that's who I go and talk to about it.

If we're talking about direction and the methodologies that we want to try and implement as a team, now that falls into his role within the team. He's an incredibly accomplished person, what he's achieved in his career, and I was very excited when Bobby called me and said this is who we're getting to be the technical director of the team.

At that point we've had a lot of really good conversations, and to him just -- we've done it this way just because that's how we do it isn't an acceptable answer. It has to be -- it's very purposeful. He has a lot of intent. He doesn't like to waste time.

Yeah, I think he's really just trying to help steady the ship, create a good direction that we can all go down, and yeah, I would say so far the time that we've shared together has just been a really good one with -- I mean, a word you're going to hear a lot today is going to be "intent" and "purposeful," and we want to go to the track confident at least within our team that we're doing is the right thing because it's been spoken about, it's been challenged. We're doing that because of -- why are we doing that, because of any reasons.

I certainly feel like there's been a shift within the team, feels like. At this point honestly just excited to get on track and just see how those things kind of start to unfold and play out.

A question I got asked earlier was if you could choose between one of these four races to win, which one would it be? The 500 wasn't an option, but I said St. Pete, because let's get our season started in a good place, in a good way.

And like I said earlier, the goal is to just take every race weekend as they come, which so far feels like it's been Stefano's goal, as well. We're not going to get carried away thinking about lots of things ahead. It's just going to be, what are we doing today, what are we doing tomorrow.

Q. You mentioned you don't want to go into a season wanting anything different. You went into last year with high hopes; things didn't go you guys' way. You still approach this year with those same goals. How in any way does entering this year mentally feel different than last year, or do you still feel like you're able to approach this year the same way?

JACK HARVEY: I mean, the expectations I think as a driver and as a competitor is always to go out there and try to win, figure out what that looks like, how can we achieve that. That's why I spend time in the off-season working on myself, trying to work with the team about how we're going to achieve that.

I think the expectations that we have this year may be a little bit more backed up with the personnel that we've hired and things like that, which feels great. And then really I think it's just about being able to harness all these good things, but harness them in a positive way. Another cliché, too much anything is a bad thing.

I would say last year the level that we wanted to win and go out and show everybody that this is what we could do perhaps at times got harnessed in a bad way, and I think spending time in the off-season really looking at them, working on them things and figuring out ultimately just how

we are going to do things better, that being one of them.

It was great, and I'm never going to lower my personal expectations. I come to win, and I want to be in a series and with a team where that's an opportunity, and I feel like it is.

I think right now it's a pretty neutral feeling; not getting too happy, not getting too sad. Like I mentioned earlier, I feel so lucky to get to do this and get to do it for another year. I'm just happy to be here, truthfully.

And I feel like that's another thing is remembering to enjoy it sometimes, because there's going to be a time where it's not happening, and I want to look back and at least know that we gave it our all, and I think we're in a good place.

Q. Speaking with some of the members of Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing before the roll-up to the Rolex 24, they were mentioning how it was a different kind of a transition or team since moving into the new headquarters there in Indianapolis. What has that meant to you and how the team feels and your approach to the season, and what areas do you think it might be beneficial to the overall INDYCAR campaign?

JACK HARVEY: I think the new facility added a lot of stability for everybody. Last year there was times we wanted to do something but perhaps didn't because we needed more space than what we had in Brownsburg. And everyone needs to remember, this isn't a just a -- this isn't just a building. This level of effort, thought, time and care that went into designing and building the new Rahal Letterman Lanigan headquarters was immense, and then suddenly having everybody in one place, there wasn't a moment where things were split up, really has just created a good atmosphere. Like everyone knows exactly where they need to be. Every room right now has a purpose.

It's just been awesome. It's also just an unbelievable building, and it shows you the intent and the desire of David and Bobby and Mike as team owners what they're trying to achieve in motorsports, and I'm proud to be a part of that.

One of the other big factors, and this might sound obvious or even trivial to some people, I think everyone is really excited just to go to work every day because that's an amazing building that you're getting to be a part of that, and this is no disrespect to the Brownsburg shop because it was really cool to see the evolution of the team and where it's grown and whatnot. The new building is just cool. It's a really cool place to be. It's brand new. You just go there, again, feeling like you're really working towards something.

So I think the effect of the new shop shouldn't be underestimated, and I think it's just contributing positive things.

Q. I suspect it'll enhance the cross-pollination of all the talent that's there.

JACK HARVEY: You'd like to hope so, right?

THE MODERATOR: Thanks so much for your patience and all your time.

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