

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

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Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

**Marcus Ericsson**

**Tony Kanaan**

**Santino Ferrucci**

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Wrapping up the 107th running of the Indianapolis 500 presented by Gainbridge. Currently joined by Marcus Ericsson, driver of the No. 8 Huski Ice Spritz Chip Ganassi Racing Honda who led 30 laps today before finishing second on a crazy finish.

You've had a chance to maybe catch your breath a little bit. Just your thoughts about today?

MARCUS ERICSSON: Yeah, first of all, congrats to Josef and Team Penske on the win. I know how he feels, so congrats to them.

I'm very happy with my performance, with our performance. I think we did an awesome race. I had a great car, great strategy, pit stops. Tough restarts and good restarts. Had a lot of fun out there.

I think it was a tough way to end the race. I don't really agree with how we did that. I don't think that was a fair way to end the race. But I'm proud of our effort.

### Q. What is it about the end that you didn't like?

MARCUS ERICSSON: I think it wasn't enough laps to go to do what we did. I don't think it's safe to go out of the pits on cold tires for a restart when half the field is sort of still trying to get out on track when we go green.

I don't think it's a fair way to end the race. I don't think it's a right way to end the race. So I can't agree with that.

### Q. Have you talked to INDYCAR or do you want to plan to INDYCAR about it?

MARCUS ERICSSON: No, it is what it is. I just have to deal with it. I think I did everything I could. I did an awesome last restart. I caught Josef by surprise and kept

the lead into 1, but it wasn't enough, so for sure it's hard to swallow.

### Q. Marcus, you kind of answered it with the last one, but what should INDYCAR have done with that finish there?

MARCUS ERICSSON: I don't think it was enough laps to go when the yellow came, so I think it should have finished under yellow.

### Q. Josef kind of used the move that you used last year to win the race on the last lap. Can you talk about what it was like being on the other side of that?

MARCUS ERICSSON: Yeah, I mean, you've got to do what you've got to do to win this race. I knew he was going to do it. Still tried to get a run on him, but it was not enough, unfortunately.

He did it well, yeah.

### Q. Was there any reason why it didn't work for you this time when you were in the lead, that he was able to get around you the way Pato didn't last year?

MARCUS ERICSSON: I think the cars with the aero spec we had this week or this month was a bit harder to lead. We've seen it all month, it's hard to lead.

I think last year was just a little bit less drag and I think with the ambient and everything, it was a little bit easier to be in the lead than today.

I knew for that last restart it was going to be almost impossible to keep the lead. Like I said, I think I did a great job there on the restart of catching him by surprise and get a jump and not get overtaken into 1, because every restart it felt like P1 was going to P5 on every restart.

I think I aced that restart, but unfortunately it wasn't enough.

### Q. Again, you guys were like way below the white line coming off of 4. Is that something INDYCAR maybe should address from a safety perspective do you

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think?

MARCUS ERICSSON: I don't know. I don't think it was too bad. For me, it's fine to keep doing what we're doing. It's okay for me, I think.

**Q. Marcus, there was one lap where y'all went between Pedersen and Carpenter's cars on the main straightaway. Had INDYCAR brought you all into the pits and done a red flag at that moment, a whole lap sooner, would the last restart -- would you have been more content with the last restart?**

MARCUS ERICSSON: Yeah, I think it was just not enough laps. They should have called it earlier. If they wanted red they should have called red earlier. I think when they kept it going, then I think they should have called it.

But I'm sure Josef doesn't agree with that and thinks that way, but that's just the way I thought. I thought it was too tight to do the last red, yeah.

THE MODERATOR: One of the things that INDYCAR talks a lot about is doing everything it can to finish under green, so that's one of the things that is talked a lot about in drivers' meetings and so on and so forth.

Also joined by Tony Kanaan who finished 16th in his 22nd and final Indianapolis 500. TK, thanks for coming up.

And Santino Ferrucci, obviously with a big day today, driving the No. 14 Homes For Our Troops Chevrolet for AJ Foyt Racing; career best finish of third.

Santino, go ahead and talk about your day today and what could have been.

SANTINO FERRUCCI: Yeah, just emotional, bittersweet. It was emotional getting in the car, which was kind of strange because you feel like there's a lot of people that really want this, the team really wants this.

We worked so hard to be where we were. We ran out front all day long. It's definitely one of the more difficult races that I've probably ever run, and just we also knew that we had a really good car.

We got really close with Felix when he was wrecking so very thankful we were able to avoid that. And then yeah, coming to the end, I think on the second to final restart, me and Marcus battling it into 1, and obviously it going red when it did, it's part of this place, it's part of racing, it's part of the speedway.

Just bummed because I think -- I'm sure Marcus thinks the

same thing I do. We definitely, all three of us could have won it at any point in time. Yeah, it's bittersweet.

THE MODERATOR: TK, 22nd and final Indianapolis 500. You went four wheeling there in the grass on the backstretch at one point, but how would you wrap up your final chapter here at Indy.

TONY KANAAN: Props to Doug Boles. Grass was spot on. (Laughter.) Whoever cuts that is pretty good.

I told the guys before we started, right, it was either going to be a win or anything apart from the win we were going to celebrate regardless.

I think I would do a disgrace to almost 400,000 people that were there that made me feel the way they did to say I'm sad. I had a laugh. Helio and I battling for 15th and 16th on the last lap like we're going for the lead. It was like, who's playing pranks with us.

We both went side by side on the backstretch after the checker and we saluted with each other, and I just told him actually I dropped a tear because of that, and he said, I did, too.

It was a good day for me, man. What can I say? We cried on the grid.

Yeah, not the result that we wanted. I went really aggressive on the downforce to start the race. It was wrong. Then I added downforce towards the end of the race and it was wrong. So it was just one of those days.

THE MODERATOR: Three, four decades later you and Helio wheel to wheel.

TONY KANAAN: That's what's ironic. We started it in '87, and the last lap of the race we're actually battling -- my last race in INDYCAR and we're battling like it was for the lead.

But I wouldn't have it any different, neither to him.

**Q. Marcus, do you think anything could have been different if you were not leading? If the roles had switched would you have been able to get Josef back into Turn 3, I guess?**

MARCUS ERICSSON: Yeah, the way it played out, I had a plan to try and keep the lead into 1, so I tried to catch him by surprise on the restart by going really early, and I think I did that really, really well.

But yeah, he just had too much of a tow on the back there, so I just couldn't keep him behind. It's hard when you get

overtaken into 3. It's sort of really hard to recover and get a run out of 4.

I tried, sliding too much in 4; I just couldn't really get enough there on the checkered.

**Q. Marcus, what are your feelings kind of emotionally after the race today?**

MARCUS ERICSSON: I feel disappointed because I think we did everything right. Like I said, I think when that red came so late, I thought I was a bit too late, so I thought when the yellow came out with three laps to go, whatever, in my world we don't restart that race.

But no, it is what it is. You have to play with the cards you're given, and I think we nailed it today. We did everything right. I did everything right.

You can't do more than that. Again, I think Josef is a worthy champion, and I congratulate him on that.

But I just think it's a bit tough to sort of accept how it ended. That's my feeling after. But I'm very proud of our efforts and our performance today.

THE MODERATOR: You've been an incredible champion of the Indianapolis 500 these last 365 days. You're now second in the NTT INDYCAR Series points standings, 20 behind Alex Palou. See you in Detroit in a couple days.

MARCUS ERICSSON: Thanks, everyone.

**Q. Tony, you obviously have had a lot of finishes here at the 500. What did you make of the late red flag there and what was your opinion on it?**

TONY KANAAN: You know, it's funny because obviously like you have guys like Santino and Marcus that are mad, and you have Josef that's happy. But we need to think about the show.

The biggest complaint we have every year was we shouldn't finish a race under the yellow. That's going to hurt someone. Actually 33 guys are pissed right now and one guy is happy. That's the reality.

Could have they called it earlier? Yes. Could have, should have, would have, but we ended under green, and that's what the fans kept asking us every time.

I won under yellow, and everybody hated it at some point. Easy for me to say because I'm not in his shoes --

SANTINO FERRUCCI: I don't mind what INDYCAR did. I

think they did a great job. I agree with you, to the fans, and I said that earlier when someone asked me what I thought of the reds. It's just I think Marcus has a slightly different opinion which is totally cool because he finished second.

Sitting there third is tough because I'm sure you've sat in that position before --

TONY KANAAN: Few times.

SANTINO FERRUCCI: -- there is nothing you can do other than watch. We had such a great day. That's where the bittersweet is. I'm very happy for the boys.

TONY KANAAN: I mean, look at this place. Do we really want to finish under yellow with all those people out there? For me, it was the right call.

**Q. Can you give us an idea of your emotions? I guess you feel like you're probably finishing one chapter and maybe starting the next one; how are you feeling now?**

TONY KANAAN: Grateful, relieved, happy, sad at the same time. There are so many emotions right now.

But one thing is for certain. I think I sat here three years ago and I said I'm not retiring because I don't want to race in an empty stand, and what they did for me today puts an end of me coming back here. Because that experience right there, I don't think I will have it ever again.

In a way, finishing 16th will take everybody's idea out, oh, you finished third, you should do it again. Kyle Larson is driving that car next year. Hopefully I will be around. There are some things that --

SANTINO FERRUCCI: You better be around, man.

TONY KANAAN: I will be around. And he's going to hire me. I'm going to be his helmet handler.

This is it. And the emotions are just there. I cried 400 times. This guy came to hug me, and I made Rocket cry. I mean, that is something.

Yeah, it was emotional.

THE MODERATOR: Keeping numbers like this, this is the first Indianapolis 500 with more than one competition-related red flag. We had three today.

A little bit of history made when it comes to that.

**Q. For both of you, how hard is it to know for darned near half the race, going as smooth as you guys did,**



**and then to have it constantly start, stop, start, stop, how hard is it kind of just -- I know you want to build consistency out there on the track. How hard was it to...**

SANTINO FERRUCCI: It was weird. We were green for a long time --

TONY KANAAN: I was like, man, this is going to be quick. We're going to be done quick.

SANTINO FERRUCCI: I was thinking the same thing. Like all right, we're running in the first top 5. We haven't lost the lead yet. We haven't lost the lead pack. We were just kind of rolling. It was kind of fun.

There was a point where I was thinking about fuel because obviously when you run green that long, you're like, well, there's got to be a yellow at some point because they're going to run out of gas and we're going to have to make six stops.

But the coolest thing about the red flags was I could hear the announcer, and one of the things that kind of kept me sane and really part of the reason why I was also so emotional every time they called the 14 car to win, it was incredibly loud around this place, more so than anything else I've ever heard.

I just think the fan support behind the 14 Homes For Troops today, dude, even for you, it's been unbelievable. I don't know, it's amazing to see 400,000 people cheer like they did. I'm just very grateful to be in this position.

Yeah, I'll be very happy. It's my fifth top 10 in five starts --

TONY KANAAN: Welcome. Welcome to the club.

SANTINO FERRUCCI: -- second top 5. I'll win this thing one day. I'm sure of that. But right now I'll be very happy with what we've done and accomplished.

TONY KANAAN: Yellows bring yellows and reds bring reds. That's always been a thing.

**Q. Tony, for many years you had to answer the question how come you've never won the 500, and then you won. Do you have a sense of what it's like right now for Josef Newgarden?**

TONY KANAAN: Oh, yeah. Trust me, I got stats from everybody actually that year, 10 years ago, that a guy at my age hadn't won yet or -- there were so many, so many statistics, and I hate them all.

For Josef, he's been with the Captain; that's enough pressure right there. I think up until a couple years ago all his teammates had won the 500 and he hadn't. Well, that's it. He made it. He's going to enjoy it.

I think he's a well-deserved champion. He represents the new generation of this series. He has amazing abs. Yeah, there's a lot of pressure.

SANTINO FERRUCCI: I had to think about that one.

TONY KANAAN: You've got to watch him. It's impressive. I thought I was fit, but I have time now.

SANTINO FERRUCCI: You are so -- I watch you bike. You make me nervous because I don't bike or run. I sit there like -- I did a half marathon for fun last year and I are barely made it across the line.

So I give you mad props for what you do as an athlete, not just a race car driver.

**Q. For both of you, wild race, three red flags. Are drivers being too risky? Are they being too aggressive? Do they need to change?**

TONY KANAAN: It's the Indy 500. Come on. We've got to leave it out there. Every red flag, everybody goes, I'm going to pass everybody. It's tough to pass. It's the toughest field, the tightest field we ever had here. It was going to happen. We knew it was going to happen.

I wouldn't want it any different. We left it all out there. Everybody that was out left it out.

SANTINO FERRUCCI: Oh, dude, I made a three-wide pass into 1 twice. I definitely hung it all out there. I'm very happy with how we drove.

Dude, that pass is insane. I'm watching it right now.

TONY KANAAN: The grass?

SANTINO FERRUCCI: Hell yeah. Nice!

TONY KANAAN: Got to make it exciting, right?

SANTINO FERRUCCI: Yeah, I've been through the grass here before. It's nice.

**Q. Santino, great run today, first of all. You talked about being emotional in the car a little bit. What were some of the emotions going through your mind? You're driving the 14 car and you're out front, up front at Indy. What are some of those emotions going**

### **through your mind when you're doing that?**

SANTINO FERRUCCI: Yeah, it was kind of weird. Normally for this race there's a bit of nervousness and you're just kind of like amped up, ready to go. I was almost like in tears getting into the car because I think this race meant so much to so many of us today, specifically obviously with the passing of AJ's wife and Larry's mom, with Marie and Ann's father, husband.

Obviously my friend back home Kristi (phonetic) is really sick, who watched everything. It's been a very emotional month people-wise for us.

We've been so good this entire month that you get to race day and it's actually a relief because you know you've been up front, you know you've qualified well, and it was honestly -- I had so much fun driving the car today just because I know that -- I'm sure the 14 got its fair amount of TV time.

I'm sure Homes For Troops, which is a fantastic cause, we had so many vets here, we had so many people that have served and currently are serving in our pit box.

We raised an exuberant amount of money for everybody and we get to build so many houses just based off what we were able to accomplish this month. Definitely you get emotional, and plus I have a lot of friends and family here.

Yeah, when you finish third, knowing that you led into 1 with three or four to go, it's tough. But at the end of the day, I'm really happy with the way that things played out.

This place does pick you as a winner. It's very true. But I just really wanted to win this race like everybody else.

We'll come back next year probably a little stronger.

**Q. Tony, I understand that you and Helio have been racing each other since you were eight year old go-karters in Belo Horizonte. I don't know if that thought occurred to you this weekend or when the two of you were racing together today.**

TONY KANAAN: Yeah, we were battling on the last lap, the last restart. We went side by side like twice. A lot of memories came to my mind, and I even said how ironic it is that we started it together and I get to battle him on the last lap of my last race.

It's pretty neat. It's a pretty cool story. He's a great friend. My reference, a guy that I love and hate a lot throughout my career, and like he just told me -- I was coming up here and he just said, who am I going to look on the time sheet

when I come into the pits now, because we always said that it didn't matter if I was -- if I was 22nd and he was 23rd, my day was okay. And vice versa.

Yeah, it was pretty cool.

**Q. Tony, I know you have a very busy racing schedule with the stock car deal in Brazil and also the SRX series, but would you like to have a role in the future in a non-driving capacity with an INDYCAR Series team or with INDYCAR in general?**

TONY KANAAN: Yeah, I mean, I think you guys saw me at every race this year already with Arrow McLaren. That was something that we're talking. That is a plan. I kind of talked with Zak and Gavin and I said, let's go through this first. I'm going to be in Detroit next week so I'm not going to a beach to drink margaritas and you're never going to see me again.

Yeah, the desire is there. I think there is a place in the team, so hopefully we'll talk and you guys won't get rid of me.

SANTINO FERRUCCI: You're sure no beach, no margarita?

TONY KANAAN: No, I have four kids. I don't have time for that.

SANTINO FERRUCCI: There's babysitters.

TONY KANAAN: No, there's not.

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