

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

Sunday, June 4, 2023

**Bud Denker**

**Michael Montri**

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We are joined now by Bud Denker and Michael Montri.

Gentlemen, I know it's been an eventful and whirlwind three days. First off, your impressions of the event overall. I know there's a lot of people who worked very hard to pull this event off, a lot to be proud of, a lot to comment on.

Bud, we'll ask you your thoughts.

BUD DENKER: I mentioned this a few times, Michael and I had the idea following Nashville in 2021 to create something for downtown Detroit, if possible. It hasn't been very long ago, right? August of 2021.

To think about putting an event downtown within that period of time, for approvals and construction and road repairs and engineering studies, the fact that there are three entities that had to fix the road. Jefferson Avenue is owned by the state of Michigan, Atwater is owned by General Motors, the rest of it is owned by the city. The complexity could take you a year plus. We did it in a matter of months because of the cooperation we had with all these entities, organizations.

Then you wonder, how is the place going to race, right? Based upon the fact you have less than a 1.7 mile track, a straightaway that's seven-eighths of a mile. All the characteristics of the criteria. You can't disrupt business. In the middle of our racetrack, you have an international crossing. Find me a place in the world with that. You have a world headquarters of General Motors. You're not going to find that.

You have to continue commerce. We didn't disrupt any businesses. No businesses were closed down because of our event. Think about that in a city like Detroit.

The other thing was we had to put on a good show for the city and state. Anybody that was downtown this weekend saw three things: a clean city, a safe city and a very

beautiful city. This riverfront is just amazing.

I think we changed a lot of perceptions for our city. 200 countries watching this place potentially. Put on a great show. This guy here and his team of 15 people put the ideas together for what happened today. I couldn't be more proud of Michael and his entire team.

THE MODERATOR: Michael.

MICHAEL MONTRI: Well, Bud likes to pass the kudos, but I got to give it right back to him, which I don't often do only because, I don't know, I don't know why I don't.

But I can tell you for a fact that this thing does not come off without Bud leading the charge. I don't mean from a desk somewhere, I mean, moving tables on Thursday night at 2 in the morning, whatever time it was.

With every sponsor conversation, with every city stakeholder, in every conversation Bud was there leading the way. I was happy to ride his coattails, to be quite frank.

But we do have a good team here. I'm thrilled that it came off like Bud said for the city. We had a lot of goals going into this thing. Nostalgia is a high bar. Everyone in this city had a lot of nostalgia when it was downtown in the '80s and '90s. Happy to say we met most of those. A lot of things that we've ticked off for improvements for next year. Man, I couldn't be happier with the way this thing came off.

BUD DENKER: Your ideas are just amazing. The idea of having our drivers go to introductions in Hart Plaza. We had Steve Aoki for free. Jefferson Avenue is free. Riverfront is free. The fact we had people out there, thousands of 'em, that were lining up along that area to have the drivers and cheer for the drivers, was just a great idea.

Then to bring them back into pit lane so that the fans enjoy it, not just the corporate sponsors, I was out there watching it, it was just a great idea. The party porch on turn five, six and seven, his idea, the team's idea.

How about the parking decks that were all lined with people? My only question is, did they all pay to get up

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there? I don't know, was that free also (laughter)?

We learned a lot of lessons. One thing I'll face right up front is the track. It's interesting because the drivers provided us information from their simulation. They all did sim. We gave them the study, then ground eight, into turn eight. We ground going into turn one. We ground going into turn nine a lot. So we did a lot of grinding based upon the drivers' feedback.

Interestingly enough, the driver feedback was we need new pavement in turn three. Drivers are right. So we took out 100 feet by 40 feet of pavement from the 300 mark to the 425 mark. They all used the left side for the braking, right? We're like, Okay, we should have done the left side for that braking. We could have done it, but you asphalt has to cure. You have a slime overnight.

It was really interesting for us to watch the lines, Michael and I. That wasn't the information they gave us. Anyway, now we know and we'll fix those braking areas to make it smoother as you come into the braking zone.

Just the numbers, looking at the numbers here in front of me. We had the quality of racing, 189 on-track passes, 142 were for position, which equals Long Beach. Long Beach had a hell of a race this year, right? We had the same number of for position passes. St. Pete, which is a pretty good race, they had 170 on-track passes, we had 189. They had 128 for position, we had 142. Pretty good race.

THE MODERATOR: I want to build off of what you had said a minute ago. Different business model for this event, something I don't think has been done before, really kind of resets the bar a little bit. From listening to the community, from the research, the listening tour that was hosted, the idea for bringing this event back downtown again, it became very clear that you need to involve the community from all districts across Detroit. Why was that so important? Do you feel that was one of the goals that was met, that engagement across the community?

BUD DENKER: Michael, you take that.

MICHAEL MONTRI: It was. I mean, when we started with this idea, and the mayor gave it a pretty quick thumbs up, we started immediately talking to the businesses and the neighborhoods, the citizens of Detroit. We talked to thousands of them literally in a very short time, four, six weeks.

What I was amazed by was how excited they all were about us coming back downtown. It was all positive. There was no hesitation, there was no negative. It was

just, We're so excited you guys are coming back downtown.

When we moved, I immediately recognized that we have a big bar to hit, nostalgia, as I said. We can't bring this thing back downtown and put a fence around it, charge admission. It wouldn't work. We didn't want to do it. We wanted it to be inclusive.

That from the jump was one of the foundational pillars. Craziest thing ever. I remember having a conversation with another sports promoter in a different sport. They said something to the effect, We invite a bunch of people to come.

That's not the same. Picture it with there are no fences around. It's a different concept.

With the support of our community partners who helped us fill the revenue gap that that created, they helped us bring the businesses from across the footprint of Detroit downtown in this small business straightaway, and they helped us bring the art and culture into our event from across the city with the murals we did with the Boys and Girls Club.

It's a gratifying way to go about having an event. It was a true community event. All you had to do was walk through any of the fan areas throughout the entire weekend and realize I think we really accomplished something on that front.

THE MODERATOR: We'll open it up for questions here. I've gotten the question a number of times already today about attendance numbers. That's something we don't have the information on right now. It's tough to put a handle on it with all the free areas. That's something I don't think we're going to have a truly accurate number because you can't really put a number on it, other than the fact pretty much every place around the city. In terms of the ticket number sales, don't have them yet. A lot was focused on making sure we hosted a great event. We'll get those numbers released in the days ahead here.

Questions.

**Q. Do you have any estimates or guesses about the numbers?**

BUD DENKER: If you saw, I can show you the picture of Steve Aoki, it's crazy. We had Big Boy, then Flavor Flav helped to step out on the show with some of his friends on Friday night.

**Q. Will Power is the number one fan.**



BUD DENKER: Tim Cindric maybe, too (laughter). I have a great picture of Roger Penske, the governor, Flavor Flav. I'll cherish that one for a long time. Pretty precious. Why does he have a clock around his neck (laughter)?

What was the question (laughter)?

**Q. Do you have any guesses? You don't have hard numbers yet.**

BUD DENKER: What we have to do, to answer your question, we're going to take our shots, drone views, look at the people. People do these studies by square foot and such to see what it is.

I just don't have any idea right now. I know what we had in terms of grandstand, the chalet. The grandstands I think we had about 10,000 people a day. We had 3,500 people a day up on the party porch. Five thousand people in the chalets. What else did we count? Anything else we counted?

MICHAEL MONTRI: No, everything else was free.

BUD DENKER: Everything else was free.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

BUD DENKER: About \$20,000 paid. Could have had a lot more if we built more grandstands. They were sold out. Per day. We just don't know what it was in terms of the people in Hart Plaza.

**Q. Do you have anything you know you want to do to the track yet? Last night they were working on that wall where Kirkwood hit during qualifying. Grinding and things you know you want to do for next year?**

BUD DENKER: To Kyle, the track was okay there. Leading edge. When you put banners up on a fence, the wind blows, it moves the barrier. Even though it's nine thousand pounds, it moves the barrier a little bit. He thought there was a leading edge there.

The things we can look at improving upon are the turn three braking zone. We ground the hell out of the concrete, which is why it really ate up those softer tires because it was like a cheese grater. I told my guys, If you keep grinding, we're going to have a dirt track.

The other thing we can do in turn eight, the runoff, if we have time, which we will next year, we can put those blocks up on the curb, right, which gives you essentially another six feet. 44 feet there now of runoff, which should

be enough.

But there are a lot of stalls there, especially in the first practice. First practice, there were stalls and stalls. Then we saw the INDY NXT race and it was a great race with very little problem of the runoffs. People got this perception of the first practice it was not going to be good. Then the track rubbered up and we saw a different race today.

Braking zone turn three. Runoff turn eight on the curbs, extra six feet of space. That's a lot, those two pieces.

**Q. There's an adage that there's no such thing as bad publicity. Obviously you took a little bit of criticism from the race winner and some others. Do you feel like it damaged the brand? Give you a chance to respond to it.**

BUD DENKER: No, no. I think we recovered any kind of potential damage by today's race, right? You saw the action today. I was happy to see the competition.

I mean, how much action in the last 20 laps, right? A lot of what happened, the cautions was not because of the track. For instance, the last caution in turn nine was the wall. What happened to Graham?

**Q. (No microphone.)**

BUD DENKER: I thought something broke.

**Q. He said he had to look at the tape to figure it out.**

BUD DENKER: Under caution, wasn't it?

**Q. (No microphone.)**

BUD DENKER: I didn't understand that. If you look back at the cautions that happened, I don't think a lot of them were the fault of the track really.

I think we had maybe one or two cautions that were because somebody stalled the car in the runoff. I was afraid we were going to have more of those frankly based on what we saw in the first practice.

We accounted for 25 caution laps, that area, 25 to 30 caution laps, in our budget, which is how we look at the TV time. We had 32. We were right there.

**Q. With the way some of the drivers talked entering qualifying, I think they were thinking they couldn't get the gap right for them to get their runs. Do you think that was more what fueled whatever criticism the**

**drivers had more so than how the track would actually race?**

BUD DENKER: No, I didn't hear so much of that. St. Pete is the same problem, right? Almost the same track. We have a long straightaway to separate yourself rather than being on top of yourself than you do when you have a lot more than nine turns.

I have a good communication process with most drivers. They give me some real good feedback. They ask me questions about changing the restart line, changing the qualifying timing line, those kind of things, which is obviously not my decision, that's Jay Frye and Kyle Novak. I just provide the feedback to them.

One thing we did change together was Thursday, the pit limiter line out of pit lane was about 66 feet past the concrete, which means at 66 feet after that you can go as fast as you want out of that pit lane.

With the drivers' feedback, with Kyle and Jay and myself, we sat out there and we moved the pit limiter now to after pit out. You didn't want a calamity of guys going 90 miles an hour from 67 feet to pit out when you already may have a calamity with this pit lane.

That's interesting. We never had a situation where we had everybody coming to the pit lane, did we? It was all in spurts. You never saw this 27 cars at one time going from six lanes to one. Never happened. I didn't see the whole race because we were running around so much, but I don't think it happened. You guys know better than I do.

The dual pit lane worked. It was so easy to track everything. It's right there in front of you versus having to look a thousand feet down the pit lane area. It was a good story.

Last year at Indy when they were picking the pit boxes, talking to the crews, are we faster on the left or right? Is my finger on the clutch better turning out this way? Is the left side going to be faster than the right side? A lot of dynamics going into deciding your pit box. I thought that was pretty cool, as well.

**Q. After all those years at Belle Isle, do you think this event was better for the business community of Detroit in terms of dollars spent, people leaving the track going to restaurants here, whereas at Belle Isle they may get in their car and go back to Auburn Hills, wherever they're coming from?**

BUD DENKER: 100%. The fact of the matter is most of the people that come to our race are within a four-county

area. Just like Indianapolis, one state for them.

I think the fact is Belle Isle you came down, you parked in the same parking deck where the sponsors parked that had been there for 13 years, get in a bus, come back, get in their car, they go home.

Here you had to park somewhere. You had to come downtown. Took the people mover, Q line, all these different places and you came downtown. That was the difference for us.

Belle Isle in my mind, 50 miles away from Detroit in some respects because we didn't see the benefit the city would get. We saw the benefit this time because of how busy it was. You saw it. You were staying here at a hotel somewhere and saw it.

I was very happy about that. We'll do another economic study. The one we did before, the economic study, was done before we announced this free idea.

What was the number, Michael?

MICHAEL MONTRI: \$77 million spent, projected.

BUD DENKER: Versus Belle Isle?

MICHAEL MONTRI: Last time we did it, it was 58.

BUD DENKER: Without this free dynamic, more people coming downtown. It will be very interesting to see what that is when we do another study.

Those things, you got to dig into those things to see how much of it is real. We've all seen these studies before. But we know we made a big impact on the city? Why? Because the hotels were all filled up. They weren't filled up when Belle Isle was there.

**Q. From a competitive standpoint, was there a moment in the race where you could allow yourself a feeling of being vindicated?**

BUD DENKER: I think the long green flag stretches there for a while were good quality racing. I don't think it was because people were dialing back their fuel situation. I didn't hear a lot of saving on fuel. Didn't hear a lot of people coasting.

I saw a lot of guys using their push to passes up early to keep position. I don't like fuel saving races. No one does, right? First lap of some races, you dial it back. I did not want that.

What I don't know did most cars take two stops? Does anybody know? We figured it would be a two-stop race. That worked out okay.

Yeah, we talked about should we go 110 laps, 100 laps, 90 laps. The fact is, you got a track that was doing 63- to 64-second laps. That's good for the fans because the fans got to see the cars a hundred times, versus Belle Isle, 70 times.

No reason to change it next year, I don't think.

**Q. Is it ever amazing to you guys that these drivers find a way to put on a race, to be competitive, to lay it all out there? That has something to do with it, too, right?**

BUD DENKER: I think they're the best drivers in the world. Look at these guys that are out there. Alex had a great weekend, the pole, then win the race. It was just amazing first time out, right?

Honda did a great job. I loved the action of the McLaren guys. For a fan, man (laughter). For a team owner, not so much, but for a fan, pretty darn good.

There was a lot of action taking place out there, so I was pretty pumped about that.

**Q. Talking about the track, where things can be improved, I think it's six, seven, eight, a little bit of an S, that looked really bumpy. Is that something y'all can attack before the next one?**

BUD DENKER: Yeah, because it's concrete. You can grind concrete. In fact, you can go out there now and see where most of the tire patches are now to get an idea.

We did Lidar end of February. We had another scan done Thursday, just this week. We'll take that and look at where those are. We'll get the feedback of the drivers. I'm not a person that doesn't want feedback. Their feedback is very valuable. We'll get that and we'll account for it.

We're not going to do a lot of that until probably next year because our roads change so much here, especially concrete. It moves so much around. But we'll make those changes next year before the race.

**Q. You spent all this time and effort, money, et cetera, building up this racetrack. Now you got to tear most of it down, right?**

BUD DENKER: Yeah. All of it.

**Q. Describe the emotion you go through, your baby going back into hibernation.**

BUD DENKER: Tell them what we got to do before Tuesday.

MICHAEL MONTRI: Obviously being in the middle of city, city streets, we have to open all the roads, all the intersections I should say back up by Tuesday morning at 5 a.m. That includes the bridge that's up over Jefferson, it includes the bridge that is up over Bates. Both of those going to Hart Plaza. The team is actually out there doing it now.

BUD DENKER: The grandstand in the middle of the freeway in turn three (laughter)?

THE MODERATOR: We should get that out. No, the team, for the ops team, they're still working. They're out there working now. We have to get all the displays out, all the teams out, all the trucks out.

We'll be fully out by about mid June. It will be a long, long slog here.

BUD DENKER: The cruise ship behind pit lane, I call it that.

THE MODERATOR: It will be out by the 3rd of June.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

BUD DENKER: Become a good carpark. Blue Cross, Blue Shield, that's their parking lot.

**Q. Back when this race was revived after the recession, you grabbed the weekend after the Indy 500 date and said, Nobody's getting it from us. At that time you didn't own the Indy 500 or the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. How valuable is that date and how taxing is it that the same people put this race on also put on the biggest race in the world?**

BUD DENKER: Well, it's a good question. Here is the reason why we have to have it in Michigan, that date. Michigan schools close this coming week, this week. Our schools close this week, guess where people go? North, am I right? They head north. Those sponsor chalets, if I had the race next weekend, they would be empty. They wouldn't get the guests there that they wanted.

Labor Day, we had the first two races in Belle Isle Labor Day. Couldn't get people to be here because they were all up north. That weekend is mostly determined by us because of getting our sponsors to have here people here

locally still here before they head up north next week. That's the biggest reason.

**Q. People were also at the Speedway.**

BUD DENKER: Even more than that, you may not know, these same people, including him, put the Iowa race on. The same ladies, guys, me. We go to Iowa June 19th or something, June 16th.

MICHAEL MONTRI: 19th.

BUD DENKER: We head to Iowa. That's the taxing piece. A couple days off, decompress, then you go to Iowa. We have a big event there. Ed Sheeran, Zac Brown band, Kerry Underwood, Kenny Chesney.

**Q. Bud, you said you did a lot of work on the right side. Drivers mentioned it was farther back, the middle of the straight, it was bumpy to the level they felt like they couldn't swing out to make an outside pass before the turn. Is that something you would consider addressing? You said it's owned by the state.**

BUD DENKER: Yeah, no, it's a good question because the state has been tremendous for us. Coming out of turn two, there is a bridge, it goes over 375. The state rebuilt that bridge for us last fall. There's expansion joints in there about this wide that never had a problem with. The bridge was a factor early on that the state resolved.

162 manhole covers in Jefferson Avenue, 162. You know the clearance we have, about an eighth of an inch. That had to be fixed, and they were.

Then the other issue is the fact that where those bumps are, there's a reason there's a bump, it's because every one of those is an intersection that comes through Jefferson Avenue. When you have an intersection come through a road, there's always a little crown, just for drainage purposes of the road coming together perpendicular.

The question will be how much can we remove those crowns while still having the effectiveness of what a state highway has to be. Those are all things that the state will help us look at because they've been great partners of ours.

Governor was here yesterday. Lieutenant governor was here today.

**Q. I think I heard you say earlier this general course profile and layout is what you will have moving forward. Questions people had was if this could be**

**any longer. Did you feel there was any leeway anywhere?**

BUD DENKER: Well, Michael's original design was going through the tunnel, going down to the riverfront a while longer. Wasn't it?

MICHAEL MONTRI: Yeah.

BUD DENKER: We couldn't do it. We couldn't find a place after the tunnel to have the cars go back the other way through the tunnel. It would be pretty cool.

To answer your question, we are where we are because once you go anywhere east, then you're in a neighborhood. You guys drove through the neighborhoods to get here. We can't go anywhere west because of the tunnel. We can't go anywhere north because then you're in business.

Yeah, we have what we have. At one time we were going to go all the way down Atwater and turn on Brevard. Too much of a square. Our issue was finding a pit lane. The original pit lane was around Atwater Street, but we couldn't fit it in there, so we did the dual pit lane.

Yeah, we are where we are.

**Q. Not about the track itself, but everything else around the track, walkways, the paddock, what were the biggest issues that you found or people were raising to you? How will you fix those issues for next year?**

BUD DENKER: You take that as far as logistics. You have one of the most complex buildings in the world, goes in circles, talking about getting from Point A to Point B when you have six bridges.

MICHAEL MONTRI: We do have six bridges. That was one of the things we decided as well pretty early. We needed to have a number of bridges to contribute to the way finding and pedestrian traffic.

For folks that aren't familiar with this part of Detroit, it's still a really challenging place to walk from one end to the other.

What we didn't really have a whole lot of visibility of, most of you have been to other INDYCAR events, there's a lot of golf carts, scooters. We just weren't sure how much of that stuff we were going to be able to use.

In the end I think we were able to use a little bit more than we originally thought. But still, if you go up Brevard, where the barriers are, there's no room for a golf cart back there.



We had the whole conversation with TV pretty early. There were a lot of challenges like that.

What is the path going to be? We had some learnings this year that we'll improve on next year. The paddock was a whole different challenge. That was a real jigsaw puzzle to get INDYCAR, NTT INDYCAR SERIES, INDY NXT and IMSA in there.

We'll just continue to work it. Now that we have one year under our belt, we know a lot more, have a lot more data to understand, improve it.

BUD DENKER: I kept telling people who were in the paddock to go out to the riverfront and walk the riverfront to Hart Plaza, walk the riverfront to Jefferson and get across that way than having to try to go through the Marriott and go through one or two more bridges. That seemed to be a better direct route.

Those are the things we'll learn from. We also didn't know how many people were going to come from the north to use the grandstand across from the pit lane, right?

MICHAEL MONTRI: Yeah.

BUD DENKER: Where were they coming from?

MICHAEL MONTRI: Exactly. We put a bridge in on Bates. It was a hard bridge to put in. Won't bore you with the details. I think that was probably the most traversed bridge of the six we had.

BUD DENKER: The one on Brevard, was it ever used?

MICHAEL MONTRI: The Autotrader was used, yeah.

**Q. Some of the businesses in Greek Town complained they did not see a lot of business over the weekend. I was wondering were there any plans in place to address them? Some of the businesses that were in Hart Plaza closer to the water also had some of the same concerns. Were there any adjustments in place to close those gaps for next year?**

BUD DENKER: Well, we have a business advisory council that we've had now in place for a year, so we have quarterly meetings. I haven't heard that. First time I heard those comments.

MICHAEL MONTRI: I haven't heard anything either.

When you say Hart Plaza, you mean some of the vendors in Hart Plaza close to the water?

**Q. Correct.**

MICHAEL MONTRI: Got it.

Any time you have a new venue, you have displays setting up, you don't have any understanding of how the pedestrian traffic is going to flow.

We can certainly take those learnings and adjust. I haven't heard that feedback yet. We'll take any feedback we get and move vendors around, for sure.

BUD DENKER: One area that was a big miss for us was the INDYCAR tent. We couldn't fit it anywhere. We had low sales in that because of where it was located.

MICHAEL MONTRI: Merchandise tent. Expected more people to come.

**Q. Do you think the pop-up shops in (indiscernible) instead of the established brick and mortar places?**

BUD DENKER: Don't know yet. Have to get the feedback. I think it's a great idea, though. People from Joy Road, Hazel Park, people from other parts of Detroit. That was an early idea, bring people from the communities of Detroit to display their wares. I was up there and walked it today. Those are all factors that we'll have to look at.

I don't know the answers to them right now because we haven't had the discussions these folks yet, especially the business folks.

**Q. An analogy. What Louis Meyer drank milk after winning the Indy 500, was spontaneous, became a tradition. The first driver who took a dip in the fountain on Belle Isle, it became a tradition. The images post race resonate all over. Do you have any ideas for the future?**

MICHAEL MONTRI: You're looking at me (laughter)?

Rarely do renderings, by the way, end up to be completely true in reality. The rendering we made over a year ago for Victory Lane, the pictures we took out there with the podium today, they look almost exactly like those renderings. I was really pleased to find we were able to recreate that shot. I mean, I kind of like the Victory Lane like it was.

Traditions and all those things, those take a little time to develop. We were on Belle Isle a while before we figured out the fountain thing.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

BUD DENKER: Fireboat was awesome.

**Q. Bud, you're literally wearing a Detroit hat right now. This isn't the only race you get to. I've been to all the street circuits except for Nashville. Some of the sight lines here just blow everything else out of the water. Do you have any pride in that or thoughts?**

BUD DENKER: I think what came to play was every single parking deck became a viewing point, right? They were actually much cooler yesterday. They had a breeze going through them. They were cool. I noticed that myself when I was up in the turn one parking deck during practice. That's something we're going to look at.

I think every single parking deck should be a party down there, like we had in turn five. So real big idea for us. The parking deck in turn eight was a Corvette car corral. So nice not having to worrying about mud and burying Corvettes in mud. That was terrific, the Corvettes that were in there.

I think the vantage points were awesome. People were watching from their offices, the hotels. If you had a room in the Marriott, you got some great shots, right? There were some great vantage points that I'm happy about. I'm curious to know how we can monetize some of those next year (laughter).

THE MODERATOR: We started talking in our discussion today about nostalgia, harkening back to the original street circuit. We had a grand marshal from that era joining us this weekend with John Watson, helped connect the past to the future. Thoughts on his presence, how he represented the history of this event?

BUD DENKER: What a gentleman he is. What a gentleman John is. I didn't know him that well. After the race ended, he came up and gave me a hug. He said this is just really, really well done. Gave me a hug.

That's how I would say my day ended, with John, his delight. We've been trying to get him here for a while.

MICHAEL MONTRI: Like four years. With Roger in 1976 with the Australian Grand Prix, as well. A lot of ties. Great to have him here. He's a real gentleman.

**Q. Have you had a chance to speak with Mr. Penske? If so, can you gauge his reaction?**

BUD DENKER: He's been calling me. He's been calling me (smiling). Mike Royce has been calling me.

To answer your question, not yet. Can I call you later? He called me again. I'll talk to him here soon.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you to the media for your coverage this weekend. I think everybody really embraced it. We appreciate you guys looking into all that this event means to the city, not just another race. Bud said from the very get-go, it's an event, a happening for the city. We appreciate your coverage and all this hard work. Bud, Michael, thank you for your leadership.

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