

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

Thursday, August 3, 2023

**Scott Borchetta**

**Mayor John Cooper**

**Governor Bill Lee**

**Mark Miles**

**Josef Newgarden**

**Matt Crews**

Press Conference



He's the president and CEO of Penske Entertainment Corp, Mark Miles.

We'll begin with the CEO of Big Machine Music City Grand Prix. You know you love him, Nashville's own, Matt Crews.

MATT CREWS: Wow, what a turnout. I cannot believe it was three years ago literally across the water at the Bridge Building when we announced the inaugural Music City Grand Prix, which became the Big Machine Music City Grand Prix.

Really want to thank everybody for coming out, especially four of our owners made it out.

When we started the Grand Prix years ago, the dream was always to use the incredible platform that INDYCAR has to show this incredible city to the world. Looking back on it, we did that. We've done it in such a way that now it entitles us to move on to something bigger and better that we can announce today.

This came to fruition based on a lot of the support and belief in a lot of people here working collectively together, the stakeholders, the fans obviously, our corporate partners, incredible support from both the state and city in various departments to pull something off.

As our event moves from a weekend of incredible action, we move to more of a destination, a year-long promotion of our state across the series, we thought it would be appropriate to turn to Governor Bill Lee to go through the details of what 2024 is going to look like.

GOVERNOR BILL LEE: (Via video conference) Bill Lee here. Tennessee is known across the globe for good food, great music, the finest hospitality, and now more than ever world class racing. We're excited to announce that Nashville will host the 2024 NTT INDYCAR SERIES finale. Next year we'll crown the series champion right here at the Big Machine Music City Grand Prix.

Tennessee's leading the future of American auto manufacturing. Home to two-time series champion and current Indy 500 champion, Josef Newgarden. It just

THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, everyone. Great to be back in Nashville and the launch of another very important chapter in the Big Machine Music City Grand Prix.

I want to acknowledge several folks with us today in the audience:

Please welcome the INDYCAR president, Jay Frye.

He is the president and COO of the Big Machine Music City Grand Prix Grand Prix, Jason Rittenberry.

Several drivers in the NTT INDYCAR SERIES have also joined us today. From Team Penske Scott McLaughlin and Will Power. From Arrow McLaren Pato O'Ward is here. From Andretti Autosport, Colton Herta. From Dale Coyne Racing, Sting Ray Robb is here. From Juncos Hollinger Racing, Augustin Canapino and Callum Ilott.

Also joining us today, will be sitting here on the stools located to my left, it's been at least 15 minutes or so since he's received a round of applause for this, let's hear it for the reigning Indy 500 champion and two-time INDYCAR SERIES champion, Nashville's own, Josef Newgarden is here.

He was here for the very first announcement of this great event back in 2020. He's the mayor of Nashville, Mayor John Cooper.

He's the CEO of Big Machine, great to have with us Scott Borchetta.



makes sense.

With the national and international spotlight on Nashville, the world will see what Tennesseans already know to be true, which is there's no better stage for racing than Music City.

In 2024, all roads lead to Nashville right here in the Volunteer State. Pack your boots, INDYCAR fans, and we'll see you on Broadway.

**MATT CREWS:** Our next speaker. The dream of the Big Machine Music City Grand Prix started about 10 years ago, that was four mayors ago here in the city of Nashville. Our current mayor really saw the vision and because of him we have a race here. He truly believed in it, and made it happen.

Helio Castroneves yesterday said the bridge is iconic, the bridge is what Nashville will be famous for forever. We didn't have use of the bridge until Mayor Cooper called me one night and said, Why aren't we using the bridge?

I said, Well, all of your predecessors told me no.

So literally the next day, with the help of Tony Cotman, we had a track design using the iconic bridge.

In the last 90 days, Mayor Cooper and his team have done so much to ensure the long-term viability of this race, to make it thrive. It's been a gargantuan effort to leave our city and this event a better place. We'll be eternally grateful to the mayor for doing that.

**MAYOR JOHN COOPER:** Thank you all for being here. I have a lot of thank yous because this is a great event and it's fantastic that Nashville can showcase such a great event.

But thank you, Matt, and thank you Roger Penske, thank you Mark Miles of INDYCAR. I thank Governor Lee for making this announcement about Nashville's role in racing going forward.

But, Matt, thank you to your team. To Scott Borchetta here, it's his vision. We've gone from dream to tradition here on racing in Nashville. It's my honor to be with Nashville's hometown favorite. It's great that we all have a favorite in the race here. Thank you, Josef. Two INDYCAR SERIES victories, Indy 500. You're making Nashville proud. If you hear a special cheer on Sunday, you'll know where it's coming from.

The Grand Prix is a big success to go from dream to tradition. But thank you, Scott. Thank you, everybody, for

making it possible.

And to you looking out here, look at this amazing city, this great host city, this is where racing needs to be. This is where the Grand Prix needs to be. Never will racing have a better city to show off and to actually compete in. So thank you to everybody.

Matt, your vision. Scott, your vision. Mr. Penske, Indy 500, this is a great partnership going forward. Again, I love the fact that this is our third great race, and on to our bright future.

Thank you very much.

**MATT CREWS:** Thank you, Mayor.

For various reasons, it's great to have our next guest here today. Scott Borchetta was one of the very first believers in this event. He stepped up as an owner, as the founder of Big Machine Records, our first-ever sponsor. But Scott is way more than a sponsor. He works tirelessly year round to make sure the Grand Prix is one of racing's marquee events.

His expertise in the music business has defined our event in so many different ways and created the best of racing and the best music. Scott has helped us set a level of expectation for other events that has made other venues actually raise their bar.

With that, it's great to have Scott here with us today. Great to have him as part of the family. We would love to have him introduce a video that will show the layout of the track.

**SCOTT BORCHETTA:** This really is the culmination of a vision and a dream come true, to be racing through the streets of Nashville. You're going to see in a second what it's going to look like next year.

We truly will be racing through downtown next year with the great new Titan stadium happening. We're going to make a couple of different changes and turns and twists. It's going to be loud and proud.

For everything that Big Machine does with the record company, with the distillery, Big Machine Vodka, our Spiked Coolers brand, we have our third release of Borchetta Bourbon coming out tomorrow. This year we're honoring Mario Andretti, coming in for the day. It's only going to get bigger.

It really has become the Monaco of the South. That was always the vision, the goal. You plug into a great party city like Nashville, you bring a fantastic race with some of the

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

best race car drivers in the world, the best technology, the best Fortune 500 companies that support everything that we do, you bring in the power of Penske Entertainment, and guess what, we have a mega, knock-down drag-out rock'n roll party in the streets.

I'm proud to announce that we're going to continue this race for a long time to come. If we have the video ready, we're going to give you a preview of what all these fantastic race car drivers are going to be doing next year in '24.

Roll it.

(Video Shown.)

SCOTT BORCHETTA: So, yeah, we're going to rock right up 1st Avenue, turn left on Broadway, back across 4th, down Koreans Vet, go over the bridge again. We're going to go faster than ever over the bridge with a longer run up to it. I'm sure Tony is trying to figure out some kind of chicane to mess with you guys. I apologize in advance (laughter).

We could not do what we do without the mighty Penske Entertainment Corp. When I first met Mark Miles, he's been a gentleman and a supporter, just a great guy with great business acumen, but also understands the one on one, understands the relationships. I'm so proud to be able to sit next to Mark and introduce him.

Please welcome Mark Miles, Penske Entertainment.

MARK MILES: Scott, that's incredibly kind. I can't tell you how happy I am to be sitting next to you right now. To see you progress, last time I saw you were making great progress. Tonight you walk up here. I'm sure when I come back the next time, you'll be walking on water (smiling). It's so great to see. We're so proud of you.

It's probably out of protocol, but he's here, I want to thank Mayor Cooper who has been central to this at every step of the way, a leader who got stuff done. I'll talk in a second about this next step. But, mayor, we'll never be able to repay this debt of gratitude to you for the leadership.

And for the governor, that was pretty cool. He's obviously dialed in. So to have the city and state and all the agencies fully behind it is critical.

This management team, Matt and Jason, along with Scott, is kind of maybe the unofficial chair. They know racing and they know Nashville. They know how to pull the whole community together. They've done a great job from the very beginning.

Happens that Bridgestone Firestone, are one of our couple biggest sponsors, is right down the street. That's terrific. They're fully behind it. Tonight we have a lot of the leadership from NTT DATA from Plano, Texas. And all the agencies.

This is a community that's a great host community because they know instinctively how to get the convention and visitors folks, the sports commission folks, the downtown partnership folks, the business community, all the agencies together seamlessly. We just don't have issues. That is not something that we ever take for granted. It's a great host city.

Here's the story. This is why we're really here tonight from my perspective. We've had two great years having this event here. It's well-established as a fan favorite, driver favorite. The paddock loves being here.

From the very beginning, actually before the first race, the leadership of the promoter group was bugging me about the idea of this being the finale. Nashville ought to have the finale. Right, just run a race first and let's see if it works, let's grow into the opportunity. I just sort of dismissed it, to be honest with you, the first two, three years that it would come up.

Then we had the situation where I think necessity is the mother of invention, the situation where the Nissan Stadium developed. They came to us with a plan that just blew us away. The only question for us was, Can you do it? Can you actually pull all these things together right here in this hallowed ground for this host city? I think it might be the best big event city, the best entertainment city in the United States. The epicenter of it is right here on Broadway.

When we thought about the possibility of our race being here, we said, What was the idea about the finale? This is going to deserve that. It's going to be a phenomenal event that will take the INDYCAR finale to a whole 'nother level, along with our celebration of that finale. It means that it will be in September. It means that our champion for the year will not only be celebrated here, but if past form holds, will be decided here in this race. So it comes down to that.

As is the case with INDYCAR, it's going to be accessible and affordable. The racing will be fantastic. This track is going to be fast with great passing zones. We think we're going to have great sport. We know it's going to be a super entertaining, fun place to have the finale. We couldn't be more excited about it.

Can't wait to get on with this year and have another third successful event, then everybody will be turning their



attention to all roads on the INDYCAR SERIES next year will lead to Nashville. Couldn't be more excited about it. Thank you.

Now the guy who really knows something about the track, my pleasure to introduce Josef Newgarden, who is our champion, a great ambassador for the sport, obviously for the city of Nashville.

Josef.

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Thank you, Mark. It's great to be here tonight. We've got a huge cast here with a lot of other drivers that are here representing.

I would echo a lot of the comments. I think for me the thing that stands out is the amount of synergies that are here. When you look across the board with INDYCAR and the city of Nashville, they just pair together so well. For me, it's a beautiful thing to see.

I was born and raised here. I dreamed of becoming an INDYCAR driver ever since I was a kid. To see so many years later a city street race for INDYCAR, now the finale for INDYCAR, in Nashville, is really just I think such a fitting way for this group to come together.

It's a tremendous amount of effort. I don't want to go back through everything. There's been so much support from Mayor Cooper, Scott Borchetta, Governor Lee. It's really a lot of collaboration to get this level of an event up and off the ground. It's no easy feat by any means.

I think as a driver, to speak on everybody's behalf, we all love coming to Nashville and racing this event. It is a big bucket list item for anybody that is in motorsports. Nashville to me is the best of the best at music and entertainment, sports. I think with INDYCAR, you have the best of the best of sports and entertainment in the motorsports realm. It's really a great pairing.

Proud to be from here. Proud to live back here with my family. I think we're going to put on a really good show for the season finale. It's going to be chaotic which is going to be great for the fans. You're going to hope for a tight championship finale. For us it's stressful, but the fans are the winners in this thing. It's going to be a great show and an honor to be here tonight. Thank you, everybody, for supporting and coming out.

THE MODERATOR: There you have it, ladies and gentlemen. Once again, Matt, thank you so much. Mark Miles, Scott Borchetta, Mayor Cooper, Josef Newgarden. Thanks, everyone, for being here. The Countdown to the 2024 Big Machine Music City Grand Prix is definitely on,

not before the Countdown to the 2023 Big Machine Music City Grand Prix comes up on Sunday, noon eastern on NBC, 11 a.m. central.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

