

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

Saturday, September 2, 2023

Scott McLaughlin

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Wrapping up qualifying today for tomorrow's Bitnile.com Grand Prix of Portland here at beautiful Portland International Raceway, Graham Rahal with the NTT P1 award will join us here momentarily. Already joined by the man that will start on the front row with Graham, back on the front row here in Portland, driver of the No. 3 Freightliner Team Penske Chevrolet, Scott McLaughlin, sixth front-row start of the season.

What was the difference, three hundredths of a second, something crazy like that? Just your thoughts.

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: Yeah, you can't be upset with a front-row start, but I felt like I just left a little bit out there. My first lap on the reds, which should have been probably my money lap, we locked our right front going into 12, so basically that's the first lap after the alternate start-finish line, and I just had to bail out and just sacrifice that lap, save the tire and go. But I just think I missed that push lap there.

But yeah, congrats to Graham. Great job.

Our Freightliner Chevy all day, all weekend has been really strong. We're basically running exactly the same setup we ran last year, and it's handy when you have cars that we've had in the past that are just very good and suit me, and I can just sort of work on my driving.

A little bummed with the mistake. That's totally on me. But at the end of the day, Graham put a really good lap together, and we start P2, which isn't bad.

Q. (No microphone.)

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: I think it's nice to start on pole purely because you control the start. You know when you're going, and I've got to react to Graham.

But at the same time, like it's not night and day. I think we can slot into second, maybe try and go in first.

I haven't started P2 here, so it will be my first time, so I

don't know, but I feel like we'll be able to settle into a groove pretty easily. From a strategy standpoint, I think it's just nice to be in that Fast Six. I think you can make hay from those first three rows and potentially win the race without something lucky happening in some way.

Yeah, I'm pretty confident with our race car for tomorrow and see where we end up.

Q. (On fitness for the race.)

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: No, this is a breeze, man. This is a breeze compared to Nashville and other races that we've had throughout the year. I feel like at the point of the season, neck strength, shoulder strength, all that stuff, you're very like match fit right now. I feel like everyone is plenty good enough. It's going to be hot, don't get me wrong, but I think we'll combat pretty well.

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