

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

Sunday, September 3, 2023

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

### Felix Rosenqvist

### Scott Dixon

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Wrapping up this year's BITNILE.COM Grand Prix of Portland. The Champion, Alex Palou, will join us momentarily. Chip Ganassi and Mike Hull also expected to be here later on.

First thing is first, we're joined now by the second and third place finishing drivers. Finishing second today, Felix Rosenqvist, who led 3 of the 110 laps, driving, of course, the No. 6 Arrow McLaren Chevrolet. Best finish of the season, second podium of the season, and sixth of his career.

Also, finishing third, Scott Dixon, who led 15 laps today, driver of the No. 9 PNC Bank Chip Ganassi Racing Honda.

It's his fifth podium of the season, third straight podium here in 2023. 136th of his career. Second all-time, and 202nd top-5 in his INDYCAR SERIES career, extending his record.

We'll start with Felix. Again, best finish of the season. Finishing off on a high note in 2023, huh?

FELIX ROSENQVIST: Yeah, it's been a really good weekend for us. The Arrow McLaren SmartStop was really good rolling off the truck.

Yeah, I was really bummed yesterday after qualifying. We had something break in the steering rack, and we had to pit before we could do our lap in Q2. So there was definitely more in it than our starting position showed.

Yeah, what a race. That was really good fun. It kind of went our way as well. We kind of gambled on staying out on reds, but it worked out with the yellow in the end.

We had to obviously save the tires a bit, so I think it wasn't the winning strategy, but it was for sure enough for a podium. Really happy with the comeback we did.

THE MODERATOR: For sure. Scott, again,

congratulations. Another podium, and even bigger congratulations for the team as they celebrate another championship, which is huge for Chip and the entire organization.

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, it was definitely a great milestone to have first and second totally sewn up before going into the last race. It's very special.

Congrats to Chip on his 15th Championship and Alex's second. They had a fantastic race today.

Obviously I think the starting position and us starting on the tires that we did definitely helped play out the way that it did.

Yeah, it was a little bit frustrating with some of the traffic and some of the pit sequences that we were in and kind of lost some time during those crossovers, but it is what it is.

Everybody probably fought with it for most of the race, and then race control kind of messed with the finish of the race a little bit. I don't know why they keep doing it, but you know, I guess that's the way we race under those conditions now.

Yeah, positives, huge weekend for the team; and, I don't know, it's kind of cool. I can't really change anything in the championship. I shouldn't say cool, but relaxing I guess going into the last one. I can only be second, so maybe go on vacation.

THE MODERATOR: We'll open it up for questions.

**Q. Felix, a question for you. The gap finally was 5.43 after the race to Alex. Was there any key situations where you lost contact to Alex or, maybe like Scott said, you also had troubles with traffic?**

FELIX ROSENQVIST: No, not really. It was a pretty straight shot in a final restart, and I was on the reds. He was on the blacks. Both fairly new tires.

I thought I had a shot, but honestly the blacks were kind of as good as the reds in the restart. That's at least from my point of view. I had some really good restarts on blacks.

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I just couldn't really attack him. Once I realized he was pulling away, I was, like, I probably have to save my tires now because otherwise I risk actually falling through the field in the last five laps.

I was just kind of managing after a couple of laps, and I think I pretty much did the optimal stint time that I could with those tires. So, yeah, it was kind of frustrating, but it could have been worse, so...

**Q. Scott, I hate to poke a wound that's still painful, but can you take us through what happened exactly there at the end in the decision from control that kept you from I think seriously racing with Felix for the second spot?**

SCOTT DIXON: Well, I think it was the 78 spun off of probably the most dangerous part of the track in turn 11, and then they just let him sit there until the leaders pit.

The issue there is that as soon as the leaders pit, they make it to pit lane, they go caution, so the leaders don't have to eat the out-lap, which can be several seconds.

It's just they feel like they're probably helping people, but they're making it worse in a lot of scenarios, but I'm happy that it helped Felix. He is a good friend and a guy I like a lot. If it was somebody else, I would have been a little more pissed off.

**Q. Scott, did you plan to stay longer than Alex for the first stint and to see which tire he's going to take, or you knew which tire Alex was going to take?**

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, the picking of the tire was just -- they were lingering around our stand. They knew what tire we were going to pick and then just go with it.

But it seemed like starting on the black had been tradition for positive races for ourselves, but also for maybe the 12 car throughout the season.

If you can get through the first corner, which mine was a little tricky. Just kind of got caught on the bottom there, and then obviously Alex was the first car on that strategy and obviously worked out very well for him.

So, yeah, I think we've seen it play well, and it did today as well.

**Q. Felix, your teammate Pato again complained about traffic after the race. I understand it is an issue, but he actually pointed out that they were letting Hondas through, but when you Chevys got around -- but was it**

**a lot of manufacturer battling, or was it more just personal?**

FELIX ROSENQVIST: I mean, I don't know. I feel like it doesn't really matter manufacturer-wise. It seems equally frustrating whoever you're trying to pass, but you saw with Pato, he finished 19 seconds behind me, and I don't think he was 19 seconds slower than me, so that's how big of an effect it has.

It played into my favor. I felt like I got through traffic pretty smoothly. Like, I followed Scott, and we managed to kind of get through quicker than normal because you can really get stuck behind people for the whole stint.

Yeah, sometimes it works in your favor. Sometimes not. I feel like this race everything kind of flowed for me, so I'm thankful for that. Yeah, for sure frustrating for some guys.

THE MODERATOR: (Off microphone) -- talk about your teammate battles there.

FELIX ROSENQVIST: We started, like, way lower than we should have. I think we had a fast qualifying yesterday, so I knew we were going to go through the field, and I felt quite a lot quicker.

I think it's a good thing. We're racing each other hard, like me and Alex have been racing each other all year hard. Obviously a bit unfortunate when I had to burn 80 seconds of push-to-pass. I got by him once, and then he passed me back, and it's just -- you know, you're not really helping each other, but that's the way we want to play, and I respect that.

That's how I raced this guy at Mid-Ohio a couple of years ago. That's what the fans want to see. I think that's what the teams want to see. Whoever is quickest is going to end up in front.

Yeah, I had a lot of fun. It was a lot of good battles out there.

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations on the podium. See you in a couple of days.

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