

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

Thursday, January 11, 2024

### Kyffin Simpson

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We welcome in Kyffin Simpson, ready for his rookie campaign in the NTT INDYCAR Series, Chip Ganassi Racing, after competing in the Indy NXT by Firestone series last year. Two podiums in 2023. And if you follow along on social media on the CGR channels, driver of the No. 4 Journie Rewards Honda, correct?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: That's correct.

**Q. A lot of history with Chip Ganassi Racing with Juan Pablo Montoya, Bryan Herta, Bruno Junqueira all racing No. 4, and now you're going to have that opportunity in 2024. Talk about hopping into 2024 as a rookie. What are the feelings like?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, I'm just really excited to get started, honestly. This is kind of the start of it, media day. It's great to be jumping into it, and I'm excited to get to what's to come, testing and racing.

I think St. Pete is going to come up on us quickly, so got to get ready for it.

**Q. Talk about the No. 4, all the history involved with that with Chip Ganassi Racing?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, it's very cool. I'm not great with the history, but, yeah, it's great. There's been lots of great drivers driving the No. 4. To bring it back is very cool, and I'm very honored.

**Q. The fact that you've made the jump so quickly, in some ways it's very impressive to get right up to INDYCAR, but it's also going to be a bit of a challenge. How much of that on-the-job experience do you expect you'll have to do on the fly in INDYCAR?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, I think there will be quite a bit of it, but Chip and Mike have expressed their faith in me for being able to make the jump. And I think that I've got a lot of great teammates and great engineers, as well, that will help me through it.

I'm not too worried about it. I also have quite a lot of experience in sports car stuff over the last couple of years, as well, so I think that'll all help.

I think it'll get easier as we get into it.

**Q. You're super smart; there's a lot of people in the room that are going to be helping you from Taylor Kiel to Dario to Scott, probably information overload. How do you process what you're going to learn to fit it into your driving style? And what's been your relationship so far over the last couple of months with Marcus Armstrong as well as Linus Lundqvist coming in, Linus a rookie, as well, who you had some experience at HMD with, but Marcus who's coming to the ovals for the first time, as well?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, I think it'll be a big mix of experience and inexperience this year with two rookies on the team, with me and Linus and Marcus being new to the ovals, but also have Dario and Scott and Alex, along with all the engineers and strategists.

I think we'll all learn from each other, and I think I can learn not just from Scott and Dario and Alex, but I can also learn from Linus and Marcus, as well, with what they struggle with and what they find helps.

**Q. Can you give me a little background on the uniform? I thought a few months ago this might be a Ridgeline green uniform you were wearing today. How did they decide which sponsor went with which program?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, that was a team decision. With them, they would have sorted it out with Parkland and decided what they wanted to run on the car.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Me specifically? Not really other than Parkland.

**Q. How does a kid from the Cayman Islands come into racing? What's your background as far as how did you get into it, and what are your early memories of**



**why you wanted to go down that path?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: I first got into it through a friend, Zane Maloney, who was racing in F2. He was racing from a very young age, and I would always watch his races.

One summer I just wanted to try it out and fell in love with it.

**Q. Has it sunk in yet you're part of a top team that's expanded its organization as others like Penske and Andretti have previously scaled back?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, I think it's very impressive that they've been able to run even four cars so successfully. I think now running five cars is going to be a challenge, but I think it's a challenge that the team is up for and a challenge that they're ready for, as well.

**Q. What are your targets going into the year realistically? Is it more about adapting and developing on your side with any headline results maybe secondary to that?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, I think this year is going to be a lot about learning. I don't really have any set targets that I have for myself. I just want to maximize everything that I can. If I've got a car for fifth, I want to get fifth. If I only have a car for 10th, I'll take 10th or anything like that. I just want to make sure that I maximize every session. Not just learning everything I can, but also putting the car where it should be.

**Q. Was the plan always to make the step up to INDYCAR in 2024? When did you find out that that was what you were going to do? When was that decided?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: I can't remember exactly when, but I believe it was just after the season ended that I got confirmation about it, just after Laguna.

**Q. Obviously we've known that you've been on this path for a while now. A ton of sports car stuff over the last couple years, Indy NXT, et cetera. You come in with a top team in a year that we're transitioning mid year to a hybrid. You're a rookie. My question is, with all of that going on, how patient do you have to be with yourself do you think?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: I think it'll be interesting for sure. It'll be a weird season. But I think the fact that things are changing up with the new hybrid system coming in may benefit the rookies, as everyone will be learning at the same time.

I haven't gotten to drive it yet, unlike some other people. So I think once I do, I'll see how different it is, and maybe it'll help the rookies more or less. I don't really know yet.

**Q. You talked about your friend that's over in F2 that kind of inspired you when you were younger. I'm curious what specifically drew you to the INDYCAR route? What's your earlier INDYCAR memory of why you fell in love with the sport?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Originally I was big into F1 because he was, and he got me into racing. So I started watching F1 with him. That's where I wanted to be.

But I started racing in America, and I discovered INDYCAR and just fell in love with how close the racing was and how competitive it was. I changed my mind and decided that I wanted to be in INDYCAR.

**Q. Any particular race stand out that drew your interest from back in the day?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: I think the first race I watched was 2018 Indy 500, and that was an incredible race to watch. That is definitely when it became an option for me.

**Q. You're joining the Ganassi squad. There's two New Zealanders in that team with you. I asked Marcus this time last year and I'll ask you, how intimidating is it when you go into the Ganassi workshop for the very first time?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, it's pretty crazy. They've got all their trophies laid out in their -- I guess it's in the lobby. And just walking in there is pretty insane to see all the success that they've had.

Then you go back to the workshop, and it just gets even more impressive.

**Q. Chip is a very powerful figure, but he's one that's also equally very passionate. From a media point of view, he can be intimidating at times, so I'm sure for a driver he can be intimidating, as well?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, I think Chip definitely has a very strong personality and he's very passionate about racing. It's great to see it because there aren't as many people as passionate as he is about racing, which is very impressive to see and very inspiring, as well.

**Q. Obviously it's a very big year for you. It's big for other members of the team, as well. Then there's one big thing that happens in the month of May, the 108th running of the Indy 500. What sort of thoughts are**

**going through your mind already about things like having to qualify for the race, let alone the race itself?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, I think it's going to be very crazy. I haven't driven the track yet, so it's kind of hard to think about. But I'm sure that Dario and Scott will help me out learning the track and learning how to drive it, and I'm sure that the rest of the team will help out, as well, to help me figure it out.

**Q. What do you learn the most out of racing in sports cars, specifically last year when you won the European Le Mans Series championship? How is that going to help you as an INDYCAR driver for this year?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: I think it's very important to have the pit stops. Pit stops isn't something you do in the Indy NXT series. So learning how to do pit stops was a big draw for sports cars for me -- a big draw to sports cars for me.

So I think that was very important over the last couple of years, learning how to do that, getting in and out of the box. And also just managing fuel and tires throughout a race because that's also not something you really need to worry about in the Indy NXT series.

**Q. You're working alongside with one of the greatest of the sport ever, Scott Dixon, and a newcomer that's showing so much prowess in the last couple years in Alex Palou. How are those veterans going to help you in your rookie year?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: I think just being able to see their data, see their video is going to be very helpful. But also Scott and Alex are very helpful to all their teammates in helping them out with -- like, if you're not sure how they're doing something, you can go ask Scott, and he might tell you, or he might not. But, yeah, they're usually quite helpful with all that stuff.

It's been great working with them so far.

**Q. How much work do you put in for your first year in INDYCAR like during the off-season or preseason prep when it comes to sim testing? How do you prepare for that?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: I've not done too much sim testing over the off-season, but we've got a bit of real-life testing going on later this year before St. Pete. Hopefully we'll get some good laps in.

Then it's just a lot of work like off track at the gym, making sure you're physically ready for it, and at the shop, as well. Being with the team and working with them to be prepared

for the first race.

**Q. What other race besides the Indy 500 are you most looking forward to this year?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Road America is always my favorite track. I just love the speed, love the race craft of Road America. I think it's one of the best races on the calendar in my opinion.

I always love going there.

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