

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

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Conor Daly

Dennis Reinbold

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Welcome everyone. Great unveiling of the Polkadot Chevrolet for Dryer Reinbold Cusick Racing.

Conor, walk through bringing Polkadot onboard for the sponsorship.

CONOR DALY: First of all, to explain what Polkadot is, because that's what people are probably going to ask. I've taken notes for several days, learned about this myself for several months.

Basically it is the powerful secure core of tomorrow's free and open Internet, which is called Web3, right? It's not controlled by big tech. It's where, like, individuals control their own personal information, their personal data and finances. That's kind of like a quick overview of what it is.

The whole situation started on Twitter or X, whatever it's called now. Chris, who is here in the room, sent me a DM one day. He said, Hey, do you think this could be a good Indy 500 sponsor? I didn't answer it at first. It was a long message. I didn't know what was going on. I get a lot of weird DMs on the Internet. You never know which one could be.

It was something that I wasn't aware of what Polkadot was at the time. Turns out my dad was after I did research. Went down into this basically information overload on learning about what it was. This is basically a situation where we were able to put together a proposal with my manager Andrew and a fellow group. We put this deal together.

It's pretty incredible. We learned about basically how you could make this proposal happen. It's a democratic vote essentially. We had voters of the Polkadot community, anyone who holds Dot, could vote on this proposal.

It basically went through with flying colors. Everyone was excited about the Indy 500. People all over the world voted

for this. People who didn't know what the Indy 500 was now know what the Indy 500 is. It was a pretty incredible deal to be able to put it together. We made it happen. Took a couple months essentially of work.

I think people know why the Indy 500 is the right place to make people aware of what Polkadot is. That's the power of the Indy 500. When you look at the numbers, when you look at, wow, this is actually an amazing event. This is the biggest event in the world. This is an event that is worthy of sharing Polkadot's vision with the world. That's why we're here. That's pretty cool.

THE MODERATOR: Something about the largest single day sporting event in the world.

CONOR DALY: Turns out it's pretty cool.

THE MODERATOR: Dennis, you've had so many great partners over the years. To get into this particular block chain space, who knew, right, where this thing goes. Obviously great partner. You look forward to them being with you during the month of May.

DENNIS REINBOLD: Yeah, very much. We're excited to have Polkadot onboard. Chris, all the work you helped to push this over the goal line. We were just talking about the ups and downs about how this all came about. Conor, for answering the DM, good job.

CONOR DALY: Thank you.

DENNIS REINBOLD: But that helps put us out on track. We're excited to represent Polkadot. Just unveiled the Dot Dart out there. Looks pretty fast sitting in the parking lot. Can't wait to get it on track and verify how quick this thing is.

We're excited. I mean, this is our 25th year coming to the Speedway. Most of those have been with Chevy power. We're very much grateful for Chevy and everyone.

If you looked at the car, you saw not only Polkadot that we're rolling out today, but you saw a lot of other sponsors that have been with us for a long time. We hope to develop a good, lasting relationship with Polkadot, like we

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have with WIX Filters on the car. Several other people that are on there. Thermal. Who am I missing? There's several.

CONOR DALY: Peterman Brothers.

DENNIS REINBOLD: Who we're welcoming in this year new. A local company that's gone through vast growth, is really taking care of not only Indianapolis, but the central part of the U.S. marketplace. A lot of really good people that all have come together to make this happen for us.

We feel like we're better prepared than we've ever been rolling into this race. Excited to have Ryan and Conor both as our drivers this year. Just these guys are fast. Conor finds his way to the front of this race every year. Ryan has won it. Ryan impressed us last year with his tenacity, what he can do with the car.

We feel better prepared than we've ever felt. Sorry I'm rambling on. Go ahead.

THE MODERATOR: We'll take questions here.

Q. There's a pretty big car count this year. Everybody is going to have to really be on top of things during that week. What is it like to have that pressure back to the way it used to be?

CONOR DALY: I love it honestly because I love everything that the Indy 500 stands for, right? I fought to be in this race, but I've also had plenty of speed at this race several times. It's been an amazing experience.

Also knowing what this team has done ever since I've been contracted to them. We've been talking about this deal since September of last year essentially. Seeing the effort that's gone in, knowing the people they have in this group, gives me more confidence than ever to be able to come here and focus on what our job is, which is to win the race.

Dennis just said in our meeting yesterday that we're not here to finish in the top 10, we're here to win. That's an amazing effort, amazing thought process here. That's what everyone has been doing since last May. They've focused on this race solely, which is an amazing opportunity.

I'm excited seeing what Chevrolet has done, as well. Seeing what everyone in our team has done. Working with Chevrolet, I feel like we're very, very lucky to do so. It's an amazing organization. I can't wait.

DENNIS REINBOLD: Same thing. This place is special. You can't take anything for granted here. It's one of those deals when you show up, you have to be prepared, you

have to be ready to change on a dime your strategy on a daily basis. Anything can happen.

We don't take it for granted. That's why our preparation level is what it is because we start as soon as the checkered flag falls from last year's race. We start thinking about what we need to do differently and better to prepare for this race.

We focused a little bit harder last year on qualifying. That didn't work out great for us, but we made some strides. It didn't show during our qualifying. We worked on that even more so this year.

There are a lot of things that we're coming out here... I mean, the next couple days are going to be a good test, literally a good test, for us to really kind of find out what we have with our cars and with our communication within our team.

We worked with Conor differently a little bit. I've known him since he was a kid. We haven't worked together on a daily basis face to face in the race car, me on the pit stand, that sort of thing. I'm looking forward to that. We get along really well.

I'm going to tell him things he doesn't want to hear. He's going to tell me things I probably don't want to hear. You have to work through that, because the common goal is what it is, it's to win this race.

I feel like I sit here every year for the last 24 years before this saying that our goal is to win this race. That's it. We don't have any hidden agenda other than that.

Q. In 2019 you had the anxiety, the car struggled a little bit in qualifying weekend, you really had to work with your driver to get the thing up there. How do you describe that anxiety if you haven't gone through it before?

DENNIS REINBOLD: It's terrible. I hate Saturday. Pole Day is like the worst day of my life. We've been on the front row, we've been on the last row. It's just not a comfortable thing to do at a racetrack, is to be out here qualifying.

Everybody wants to go fast and do everything they can. These guys have to hang on every lap to try to put the speed together and thousandths of a second matter.

Yeah, that's a tough day. So getting through qualifying is the first big hurdle, so we have to focus on that really hard this year, more so than what we've had to. Well, we've had to before, but this year it really matters because we have to

force our way into the field. Nobody's going to give it to you. You have to come out here and earn it. That's what I love about this place, everything you get here at this track is earned.

Q. Conor, a little bit more about your sponsor Polkadot. You said this proposal for them to be your primary sponsor was brought to their subscriber base, then voted on. Can you go into that part of all of this a little bit more.

CONOR DALY: So Dot is a currency essentially, right? Polkadot itself is a network, a block chain network that there's a ton of Dot holders, right? My dad is essentially one of them as well. Our mechanic is a Dot holder. I am also a Dot holder.

There's an opportunity then to vote on what the community does. It's not a corporate marketing team. It's a community. It's a group of people that are obviously wanting the Polkadot network to be seen by more people, to understand where and what it is.

Polkadot, they work with groups that are very recognized groups. They've been working with Mythical Games, Mythical Games has an NFL game. There's companies that work in the Polkadot network that you would know of, that you definitely are aware of.

For us, it was basically, like, selling our event, selling ourselves. Hey, this is the platform that you want to be able to push what this community is all about, what the feature of the Internet looks like, Web3, the feature of how we are going to interact with each other on the Internet.

Like, I've learned so much about it myself. It's a pretty incredible group. Honestly, I love the future of tech. I love the future of what the Internet can be. So that is kind of how this worked.

It's essentially a democratic voting process, right? Like, if you were putting up a proposal, I don't think that's where we should market ourselves, then it wouldn't have been accepted. We were able to show the power of what the Indy 500 is, the power of what motorsport currently is, and where we are able to push viewership.

We have an incredible amount of viewership at the Indy 500. Our sport is growing. We have an incredible television show around our sport, 100 Days to Indy. That's why the Indy 500 was attractive.

Q. It seems to always work out for you to have some sponsors that are new to the sport. I think I counted your last full-time year two years ago, you brought 10

million plus new social media followers. Sometimes it works out that way. You take a sponsor to the 500 to get you in the field. Bringing new eyes, audiences. How important is it to you to partner with a sponsor that is new, continue to be innovative to grow not only yourself but your brand, now a new platform with Polkadot?

CONOR DALY: Well, it means a lot that people care about what I love, and people care about supporting me, which is something that I'm very, very proud of. I've worked with a lot of incredible people at this event, in this series, because it's what I care about. I want to continue to pursue winning this race. That's the goal. That's why we're here with Dennis. That's why we're here with Polkadot.

It's been pretty cool. Again, we plan on blowing this out of the water. We want to have Polkadot back in the future, more INDYCAR races, have them in general to enjoy this experience, right? That's our job. We have to make sure we do our part.

Yeah, it's a team effort all across the board. Been able to work with a lot of incredible partners and brought a lot of incredible partners to this paddock, which I'm very, very proud of.

Q. Dennis, you've known Conor for a long time. You probably have watched him from afar. When this opportunity came up to have Conor in your car, got to have a lot of confidence going in, how important is it to have a guy like Conor in the car with Ryan to move your team forward this year?

DENNIS REINBOLD: Absolutely. That's why we started talking to Conor a long time ago, as well as Ryan, as soon as last year's race was done. We knew we wanted to have him back. We started those conversations early.

I mean, if our goal is truly to win this race, we have to have the guy in the cockpit that can deliver on that. It feels good when you're at this racetrack and you've done everything all year long to prepare for it, you get to the last pit stop and you're in the hunt, you're in the mix to win this race. The only way to pull that off from here is hand it over to a capable guy like Conor and Ryan to be able to bring it home.

Yeah, we know Conor pretty well from a long time going back. His development, his maturity as a driver, his experience as a driver, skill level, it's a great fit for us. Yeah, he can definitely elevate our team.

We haven't won this race yet. We win it this year, that's going to take us up a notch, for sure.



Q. Dennis, you mentioned working on the program from the end of the 500 last year. What do you work on behind the scenes? How much of your workforce stays employed through that whole time? Is it simulation?

DENNIS REINBOLD: Yeah, our team is full-time. We have a full-time racing team. We do the Nitrocross series, as well. We've been fortunate to win the last two championships in Nitrocross, which is a really cool race and cool format. All electric cars.

We spend a lot of time on that, but we recap the Indy 500 every year and focus on what changes we need to make to improve for next year. We've done that and put those things in place. Hopefully it shows itself out on the track next month.

We're not just doing this last minute. It's a lot of planning and preparation. We don't spend time and effort on short ovals or road courses or street courses. We focus fully on this race.

It's a different scenario, this race versus all those others, it's a different discipline. That keeps us in line to where our budget is totally focused on one event and one type of track.

If we were to go try to do some other races, frankly we'd have quite a bit of catching up and a lot of work and experimenting and testing that we would have to do to be able to show up elsewhere and be competitive right now. That's why we focus on this place.

Q. Conor, you've done Indy-only rides before. You've also had full-season cars. Does that also give you maybe the most confidence leading in, that this car you're driving has been prepared for a year?

CONOR DALY: Well, I mean, having been here for so many years and understanding what having a good car is, what having a not good car is, for sure, what having a more difficult situation is. I know all of the whole spectrum of what it's like to be at Indy.

There are several elements you need for speed here at Indy, right? That all happens away from the track. Once you get here, there's a lot that we can do between our engineers to fine-tune, right? But all of the speed comes from the development over the winter, what Dennis is doing with his people at multiple areas. Also helps that Dennis has a great relationship with Chevrolet. We want to have those guys locked in, working with us at a very high level.

When I go into the shop, where I see where the work is done, that gives me the confidence. All that work is done away from the track. That is where the speed comes from. I believe that Dennis knows where to do the development. That's what makes me excited about being here with these guys.

Yeah, we'll obviously see tomorrow what that feels like right out the gate. I have a lot of experience from my last several years driving for good organizations here, for sure. Ryan has that, as well. Ryan spent years at Andretti. That's a good organization. I was teammates with him at Andretti, too. I definitely know what that's like. Even what I learned at ECR, they've been very good here, too.

I know what I want. Dennis I think knows where the speed comes from. It's hopefully all the work we've done on the off-season, everyone coming together, a great recipe for success.

Q. I think it was several years ago you got a car from Dennis.

DENNIS REINBOLD: You did.

Q. How did that come about? Is there a deal of a dealership car coming your way?

CONOR DALY: I actually did put it in my contract that Dennis has to give me a car for the month of May. He helped me out. My Subaru broke down. Dennis thankfully helped me out with a car years ago out of the kindness of his heart. I appreciated that.

I have driven for Dennis before, but it's been a car off his dealership floor.

DENNIS REINBOLD: I knew it was a good investment with Conor back then. It would pave the way for him signing with us at a later date.

CONOR DALY: Dennis was doing more behind the scenes years ago, so here we are.

THE MODERATOR: Talk about what the goal is tomorrow, what you hope to get out of this thing the next couple days.

CONOR DALY: Well, I hope whatever the moon and the sun did, we're going to hold off the rain. I don't know what was going on up there in space. I hope that somehow can give us a better weather outlook for the next couple days.

I mean, look, it's super important for me to get into a new situation. You get used to a situation, the same situation

I've had for the last four years here. It's a very similar setup, very similar feel of a car that I've had for the last four years.

Now I'm in something completely different, right? For me, it's getting into a new feel for the car, a new outlook on what might be essentially a whole new setup package for me that I have to get used to. There's a lot.

You don't get used to that without laps. So we need a lot of laps. Give us all the sets of tires, every amount of green flag time that we can get. I will be strapped into that car as much as humanly possible tomorrow.

That will be the goal: do as many laps as possible but also be respectable that we also have the whole month of May in front of us, too. We don't want to get ahead of ourselves. We want to eliminate this is good, this is bad, be responsible about the two days. Hopefully two days, please.

DENNIS REINBOLD: No matter what happens the next couple days, we will leave here with the direction we need to pursue to be ready for the month of May.

Like Conor said, as many laps as we can do, as much data as we can collect. There's a lot of changes on the car this year. The tire configuration is a little bit different. Quite a few changes to feel out and see how the setups react to those changes.

It will be interesting to see. It's going to be a lot of relearning for all of us as teams with this car on this track because we haven't been out here and tested this all the new components that are on the car.

THE MODERATOR: Dennis, you said you knew Conor what he was a kid. Most of us still think of him as a kid.

CONOR DALY: Thank God.

THE MODERATOR: A lot of good stuff today. Congratulations on the announcement.

CONOR DALY: Thank you, everyone.

DENNIS REINBOLD: Appreciate it.

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