

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

Wednesday, April 10, 2024

**Rene Rosin**

**Jay Frye**

**Piers Phillips**

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Good morning, everyone. Welcome to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, racing capital of the world.

As everyone knows, yesterday PREMA Racing, winners of some 80 driver and team single-seater championships through the years, announcing they'll be joining the NTT INDYCAR SERIES in 2025. It is a full-time two-car effort with Chevrolet power and a shop that will be located here in the state of Indiana.

Joining us this morning, PREMA Racing, Rene Rosin. We welcome back Piers Phillips, who is the PREMA Racing INDYCAR CEO. As well, INDYCAR president Jay Frye. Good morning to all three of you gentlemen.

We'll begin with Rene. The growth of the team over the last 40 years now, certainly well-documented, the drivers that have come out of your program read like a who's who in INDYCAR and Formula 1. What makes the move to INDYCAR the right move at the right time for you?

RENE ROSIN: Good afternoon, everybody, and good morning.

For PREMA, we always looking to new challenge. Having the possibility to compete here in the U.S., in the most important championship in the most important American teams, is something that we are really proud and looking forward next year.

Is a new challenge for us. We always looking to find new adventure, new possibility to expand not only for our drivers but as well for mechanics, engineers. Given the opportunity to grow up within our structure and our business is something that we always looking forwards.

THE MODERATOR: Welcome. Great news.

Piers, through your various INDYCAR roles, welcome back. Certainly you know a setup is not easy. As you've gotten into this, what has excited you about this opportunity?

PIERS PHILLIPS: The first thing that obviously excited me was working with Rene and his organization, PREMA, amazing organization with amazing history.

The challenge is something we all live for. Everybody that is a racer gets out of the bed to go and win, the challenges associated with that.

For me, starting from what is effectively a blank page, being able to incorporate what I know from my time here in the U.S., in this amazing championship, and my previous experience in obviously the PREMA experience from Europe, being able to blend that and really produce a different sort of culture, really progressive-thinking organization, along with our partners at Chevrolet, really excites me about putting a consistently competitive team together.

THE MODERATOR: Jay, you bring in Meyer Shank, the list goes and on. The majority stakeholder that McLaren has had over the last couple years. Some four teams really since 2020 that have joined the NTT INDYCAR SERIES. How did this new relationship come about?

JAY FRYE: It's amazing. You think about the rolling five-year plan we implemented in 2017. One of the goals was to recruit new and elite race teams and owners, that type of thing. Obviously 80 championships in 40 years, that's pretty elite. We're certainly thrilled to have them.

We've been talking with them for the last six, eight months. We worked on the plan, let them see what it looks like going forward. We're really excited to have them.

By my count, this will be 29 full-time entries, so things are really good.

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

**Q. Rene, you have produced some drivers that have done well here, Marcus, Felix, Callum. Did you speak**



**to some of those guys before coming here to start an INDYCAR program?**

RENE ROSIN: Honestly, even if we start talking together with INDYCAR in the last six, seven months, of course the discussion of opportunity to expand into America is something that is coming already between more than two, three years ago with some ideas, of course discussion.

We are still in very good contact with all these drivers that you mentioned. We just celebrate our 40th anniversary in December. Most of them have been able to join us in Venice in our event. We always very close to them and very friendly relationship with all of them. We always talk together.

They always say, Why not coming to America? Why not do INDYCAR? It would be something very good for you, very good for the team.

That is something we are looking forward in 2025 now.

**Q. Jay, obviously with 29 cars potential next year, there's going to be some likely issues on a few of the pit lanes. Any thoughts so far on how you will take care of those issues, Mid-Ohio, Toronto?**

JAY FRYE: We've talked about it before. There's problems now with some of the places we go to, right? It's something we've got to evaluate, look at going forward. Certainly a problem, but a really good problem to have, and something we'll sort out.

**Q. Will the driver lineup be drivers that are already in your pipeline or possibly drivers that are already in INDYCAR?**

RENE ROSIN: The driver lineup is something we are evaluating. We are looking at how the market will lead first.

We have some ideas. Of course, we want to get the most prepared as possible, get a good lineup to perform. But of course is something we will discuss in the next coming months.

We are looking to get a competitive lineup within our self experience. Rookies, something we're evaluating. Possible our pipeline, possibly not. Everything is open at the moment.

**Q. Why INDYCAR and why did you want to embark on this project right now?**

RENE ROSIN: I think, first of all, why INDYCAR? As I

said before, is a great challenge. Is something that expand our business opportunity in another level, in another continent. We wanted to get out of Europe because, of course, we reach every possible category within the ladder of motorsport apart from Formula 1 in Europe, from karting till Formula 2. We have a technical partnership in World Endurance Championship and (indiscernible) DH. This is something we were looking to expand our boundaries to make sure we can create a global group within our entity.

Why in '25? Of course, when PREMA join a championship, it's not to join to be just a number or to be somebody part of it, we want to be part as a protagonist, we want to be part when we are ready to do something. '24 to '25 was the right time for us in terms of structures, all the other programs we are doing, to setting up a new adventure here in the U.S.

**Q. Why two full-time cars to start off in a brand-new series?**

PIERS PHILLIPS: That's a good question. It's to concentrate the effort more than anything else. There's a huge amount for PREMA to understand. Obviously the core of the team will have experience, and I'm really comfortable with the individuals we have in line for that.

I always tell people INDYCAR is probably the most challenging series in the world. The diversity of the tracks, the street courses, the ovals. Every street course is different. Every oval is different. Every road course is different. We need to really hone in, concentrate our efforts and put a competitive program together as quickly as possible.

**Q. In the release you mentioned starting in a shop in the Indiana area. Have you landed on that area yet, purchased it?**

PIERS PHILLIPS: We are evaluating the options. We have various places at the moment. Right now that's to be confirmed.

**Q. You are coming into the series at a time where you could have the potential to have to qualify for just about every race on the calendar with the new charter system. Is that a tough thing for you to battle, new team, two full-time cars, potential to have to qualify to start races?**

PIERS PHILLIPS: Obviously we're aware of the situation, aware of the discussions that are ongoing. Yes, obviously in communications with INDYCAR on that. We'll keep that in our focus as we move forward.



If I could speak from a competition standpoint. There's some very, very strong, top-level teams in this championship. We know that. But it is our desire that we will come in and we want to be competitive right from the word 'go'. I know that's a big ask, but we will be working extremely hard in putting all our efforts from the start of the program.

**Q. Piers, will the team members be comprised of a mixture of guys that you necessarily may be familiar with along with some guys that may be working for the team over in Europe?**

PIERS PHILLIPS: Yeah, that's a possibility. Obviously INDYCAR, it's a very sort of, particularly the ovals, a niche of experience that is required. There's a lot of people. Even since the release yesterday, I'm surprised my phone didn't end up in a little ball of melted plastic yesterday (smiling).

We will be looking at blending the talents from both sides of the Atlantic. I think that's a fair statement, yeah.

**Q. Jay, when you began, one of the problems was there were a lot of good crew guys out there and not necessarily a lot of opportunities for jobs. Now it's the opposite. How do you address that? Is that a great problem to have?**

JAY FRYE: Yes, just like when you mentioned about the car count, it's a problem, but it's a great problem to have.

We have tried to do things like last year we set up a job portal, INDYCAR did, to help recruit, the teams do that. There have been a lot of teams that actually used that portal.

We are collectively as a group working with the paddock to recruit new and young talent coming into the sport. It's a great opportunity for a lot of young people right now to come into the sport at a time when it's growing rapidly.

Yeah, again, it's a problem. It's a good problem. One we're all addressing together. I think we'll get through it.

**Q. You mentioned you competed in pretty much everything over in Europe. Coming to INDYCAR, how difficult do you feel this challenge is going to be next season?**

RENE ROSIN: First of all, is a great challenge to have because is meaning that we are the top level of the motorsport worldwide, I would say. Of course, there will be some tough times in terms of organization, in terms of planning, in terms of engineering. With the patience and

determination of everybody in the team, I think we can succeed.

Of course, it will be a learning year, 2025. We need to learn this difficult way of racing from road course, ovals and street circuits. I think we are looking forward to blend together the European and American mentality and bring some novelties within this championship.

**Q. Rene, do you see INDYCAR as a special opportunity to keep some of the talents and bring them to INDYCAR to continue this relationship?**

RENE ROSIN: This is for sure an opportunity that we gave to drivers. Of course, the motorsport market can offer different opportunity. But for drivers going after Formula 2, one of the opportunity, the place in Formula 1 are quite limited. Having the chance to explore the INDYCAR world is also something to consider and something positive. It's something we can offer to our drivers in order to continue their progression and their aspire to professionalism.

**Q. Piers, you talked about your experience in INDYCAR. How exciting is it for you to have something from a blank slate, being able to bring some people from Europe, from America, everyone meeting in PREMA?**

PIERS PHILLIPS: It's an exciting opportunity as I touched on before. I think having known Rene and his team for a while now, the enthusiasm, the energy that emanates from them, it's unbelievable.

I think to come in as maybe nobody else has done, we haven't done an Indy Lights team, haven't bought anybody, really put our mark on this from the first day we open the workshop, is incredibly exciting.

I think to see that come to fulfillment, first race, first race win dare I say, will be an amazing journey for everybody that's involved with it.

**Q. Jay, we've talked about the car count. Do you envision one day a hard stop on the number of cars allowed to race or everyone can still come in and you will find the solutions, even 31 or 32 entries?**

JAY FRYE: Probably a hybrid of all. We will do all we can to start as many cars as we can. But like you mentioned, obviously there are limits. There will be a time where that has to be addressed and we will address it.

**Q. Rene, how hands on is your role going to be? More focused on the European side of things or...**

RENE ROSIN: First of all, we need to continue competing and winning, of course, in the European side. My role will evolve into a more overlooking both sides of PREMA, both European and America.

In each group we have a responsible that is on the day-by-day management. Of course, I will be present in the most important events, then I will try to do my best to make sure that every team has all the needs and the possibility to well perform.

**Q. In the last couple years you've seen a few teams form alliances and partnerships. Is that something you look at exploring to help your growth in the series?**

RENE ROSIN: It's something we are open to everything. We are open to evaluating. Of course, we want to do our team in the best way as possible. When will be the moment to discuss it, I think we will start discussing.

It is something that we want to do, to first analyze all the opportunities, then decide what is the best to do.

**Q. Where do you think the health of the series is, getting another European name coming in? How good news is this for the series?**

JAY FRYE: It's obviously huge news. A team that's won 80 championships in 40 years, that's phenomenal. I can even do that math. Pretty good math, right?

This is for sure our vision of what could happen, is to recruit elite teams like PREMA. To have them here, we're quite excited about it.

The car count piece, last year 27 full-time, which was a record. We have just added to that. We just added to that with an elite program. We're obviously excited to have them.

**Q. Are there any other teams potentially looking at bringing entries to the series? Could we see that number grow more in the next few years?**

JAY FRYE: Yes. There's ongoing conversations with two or three different entries or entities. Again, it's a problem, but it's a good problem to have right now.

There's a lot of interest in INDYCAR. I think it looks back over what's happened the last few years, going forward we got a lot of good things going on. There is currently a lot of interest in INDYCAR, yes.

**Q. Mr. Rosin, you've built a virtual ladder in racing in**

**the United States. Do you also plan to expand to INDY NXT? Is that a further consideration?**

RENE ROSIN: Of course, we need to keep our eyes open and see what the market will require. At the moment we have quite enough on our table to what we are doing. We are looking to improve that and stabilize all our efforts and maximize the results.

**Q. Piers, you've obviously got a wide ranging INDYCAR experience. You've seen some new teams that have come into the series. What do you feel are some of the most important things to be able to have success, be a long time team in the series?**

PIERS PHILLIPS: I think the main thing in my experience is understanding the culture of American racing because it's different to Europe. Having worked on both sides of the Atlantic, having had success on both sides, you understand the strengths.

But the racing is different. I think it's important that you come in and respect the championship and respect the series for what it is, particularly this place. What an amazing facility for anybody to come and race at.

You need to understand the cultural differences. That's back to what I was talking about earlier: being able to blend the best of both worlds and end up better than everybody else.

All the teams have different circumstances. I think we start from a really strong foundation with PREMA, their experience. It's up to me to make sure that we guide it in the right direction and keep our eyes open and make sure that we don't fall into any of the situations that those previous teams did.

**Q. It's been said that you might try to target an experienced INDYCAR driver, then someone who is currently in your development program. Is that the goal or the format that you're target the right now or in flux still?**

RENE ROSIN: If I can say for sure, ideally it will be good to have an experienced drivers and of course one rookie. On the other hand, as PREMA, we always work with rookie. We always maximize the result. We are not scared to even have two rookies.

We are really evaluating all the opportunity to maximize what is our potential. I think this is now the next step on what we will dedicate most of our time together to building up the teams in the best ways possible. That's quite soon we will have some news.



**Q. As INDYCAR is pursuing this new charter system, is it a goal to buy one or two of these whenever they become available or are you okay operating in the current status quo, potentially have to qualify?**

RENE ROSIN: Of course, chartering system is something that is on the table. Is on the discussion of INDYCAR. First we want to understand how everything had go and then we will decide what's the best way to do.

THE MODERATOR: We'll leave it there for now. Congratulations.

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