

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

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### Scott McLaughlin

### Will Power

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Wrapping up qualifying. Joined now by the NTT P1 Award winner, Scott McLaughlin. Getting it done. First pole of the season, sixth of his career.

Scott, saving the best for last at the end. Talk us through that pole-winning run.

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: Yeah, I lost my voice on the way in from the finish line to the pit entry (smiling).

Look, it obviously means a lot. Really proud for Good Ranchers to come back here with another fast car. Ultimately proud for Team Penske. 1-2, it's quite tough to come by in any series, let alone INDYCAR. Obviously after the week we've all had, it's a nice little reward.

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Will Power. All-Team Penske front row. Second straight front row start. Two-time winner here.

Will, I guess if you're going to give up pole position for this race, might as well do it for a teammate. Your thoughts?

WILL POWER: Yeah, good bounceback for the team. Man, from the moment we rolled off the truck, the thing's been great. Really haven't changed much at all. Felt comfortable the whole time.

Just cool to be back in the Fast Six each week. Felt like we should have done it at St. Pete. Yeah, enjoying it a lot. Enjoying it a lot. Like fighting for poles. Always sucks to miss out by a little bit. At least this is like almost a 10th. The hundredths really hurt.

It's cool to start up the front. We're strong in racing. So determined to win a race, man. If I get a sniff of a win, it's been so long. I'm hanging for that. So starting there gives you a great shot.

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

**Q. Scott, obviously you're on the radio with your crew. They're telling you Will's time. How do you balance getting that little extra while listening or reading on your steering wheel? How do you manage that?**

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: They don't tell me much. I ask for no lap times. I just go out there and drive basically. I don't have a predicted lap on the dash like Will or anything. It's more for me a feel thing, just drive the wheels off it. For me, it's a process that I go about. It's an execution.

The car today was just phenomenal. Like Will said, we've hardly changed it. When you arrive here, you drop it out of the truck, you don't have to change it that much, you build more confidence, more confidence, more confidence. You just find the limit, know the limit.

Thankfully the car was really good on that final set of reds. We were able to put her up the front.

**Q. Why did you choose to attack twice with red tires this time?**

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: Because we thought it was faster, so we did that. I think pole last year, they did a 2-2 type strategy. That's exactly what we did, as well. It worked.

**Q. Scott, you seemed to gain a lot of time in the 13, 14 section. Was there something there different you did or...**

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: I had a pretty good run through there. I just love this place. I mean, Will does, as well. I think it's a matter of just putting it together.

I knew on my first flyer I didn't quite nail that part of the track. I had a little bit of a time left up in me. I knew if I could just nail the first part of the lap, then get to 13, sort of send it through there. It was really just see what happens when I turned right into there. It worked. Yeah, it was all good.

**Q. Will, you were kind of handicapped last weekend going with the 2-2 reds situation. In that same boat now going into the race. What's the tire situation here?**



WILL POWER: That is true. That is true. But you sort of have to take that hit to go for a pole. It's either sit back and save...

Yeah, could have saved the first set maybe. I only put one lap on 'em. Yeah, it is what it is. We'll start up front is what matters, man. It just does, big-time.

**Q. I believe I heard a stat 114 front row starts out of 288 races.**

WILL POWER: That's not bad (smiling).

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: 300 poles for Team Penske, and he's had ton of them.

**Q. Starting up front is more important than the tires?**

WILL POWER: Yeah, big-time. That was the problem last year. Even the year I won the championship, yeah, was just on the back foot from qualifying. I focused on that pretty hard this year. It makes things a lot easier.

Obviously it didn't last week. Like if I qualified eighth or seventh, it would have been nice because you're saving your green tires, starting on the hard compound. Literally that yellow last week fell just as bad as it could from that perspective, yeah.

**Q. Scott, same thing on the tire situation. Do you feel comfortable?**

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: Got to live for the now. That's exactly what we did.

THE MODERATOR: Scott, all those poles means he's been around for a while.

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: Still bloody good.

**Q. Will, I was wondering if anything sort of clicked in qualifying this year compared to last season.**

WILL POWER: Yeah, man, we worked pretty hard in the off-season on the car. Chevy has improved, for sure. Last year was tough for me. I just wasn't all there because my wife was sick. The preparation for the start of the season wasn't good. I was constantly in the back of my mind worried what might happen, whether I should even keep racing or not. Once you have a kid, do a dangerous sport, if my wife is sick, what if something happens to her, I'm doing this. I was sort of juggling that last year.

Just all in right now, as I usually am. Just a weird

circumstances. Unfortunate circumstance last year.

**Q. Scott, you ended last season with seven front rows in the last eight races. What's clicked for you compared to your two teammates?**

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: Yeah, the last couple races we just probably haven't nailed qualifying. Circumstances and mistakes by me, whatnot. We've been through to Q2, just missed the Fast Six. It's nice to nail and get our first Fast Six of the year and put it on pole.

Yeah, ultimately it's so hard to just continually be up the front in the sport. You've got to put everything into it. As Will shows, if you had a little bit of adversity or whatever it is, it's very hard to keep track, keep focused.

But we've all been working together really well. I think we're really pushing this team forward, along with Team Chevy. It's nice to turn up to the racetrack knowing you can have a really good shot at a win or a pole every time.

**Q. With the events of the last week, is there an extra motivation to go out there and prove yourself again tomorrow?**

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: Look, just take it as it comes. Ultimately we're always out there to win. Yeah, look, like I said before, it's been a tough week, but it is what it is. We've moved forward.

We'll just keep starting our championship I guess comeback we would like to say and do the best we can. The best thing we can do is continue getting poles and hope to get a win, but we know it's going to be hard.

**Q. Scott, a lot of people were commenting about the variation in cloud cover and temperature, track temperature. Did you feel any of that at all?**

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: Say again. Sorry?

**Q. Changes and variations in the track temperature.**

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: Yeah, the sun is pretty strong here. It's quite hot here at the moment. Certainly there were times where we had a lot of cloud cover and times where we didn't.

I think it probably affects more for me the newer tire, track temp, how the car feels. On those two runs it felt pretty similar at the end there.

**Q. I noticed how aggressive you need to be before you get to the demarcation line. That's a tricky section to**



**negotiate during the race, isn't it?**

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: Yeah, it is, particularly if someone is not pitting. It's quite a wide entry, late apex to turn 16. You sort of have to wait on people, especially if you are behind them, so you don't hit them.

It's a wicked track here. Someone from Australia, New Zealand needs to come and check it out because it's really cool. A lot of camping. It is great for the fans. The fans can watch from everywhere, too. We have a blast here.

**Q. Will, last week at Long Beach you said how quick these cars are, you felt you're still on for a front row lockout at Indianapolis. Do you still feel that way?**

WILL POWER: I certainly do, yeah. Just like I said, I'd be shocked if one of our cars isn't fighting for pole at Indy. Done a lot of work. We've been quick everywhere. But in particular we've done a lot of work for that race.

I think we'd all be a bit disappointed if one of our cars wasn't on the front row, but I think fighting for pole.

**Q. New aeroscreen. Did they make any difference for today?**

WILL POWER: No. I think the problem is it's actually reduced the air going into your helmet from that pipe. I think it's because the air is going in those eyebrow sort of slots at the top, but you're not getting much from that.

I'd much rather have them closed off to increase the air in my helmet. Like, you're almost breathing your own air in. It's brutal. At least if they do something for the race, in warm-up, try to tape them, see if that helps the situation.

Yeah, it's tough. It's like your head is where your body gets rid of the heat. As long as I got air on my head, I'm fine.

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: This is probably one of the hardest tracks physically. Your neck gets a workout, shoulders, all that stuff. Yeah, we'll just have to eat some spinach tonight, see how we go.

WILL POWER: That's not good. It's red meat.

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: Oh, yeah (smiling).

THE MODERATOR: Vegemite maybe.

WILL POWER: It was the spinach industry that was using propaganda with Popeye to get it out there.

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: Will Power, everyone (laughter).

THE MODERATOR: With that, we'll wrap things up.

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