

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

Friday, May 24, 2024

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Anne Fornoro

Mark Miles

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Good morning, everyone. Welcome to the Dex Imaging Media Center on Carb Day at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway and a very special occasion that's become a tradition here over the years with the 2024 addition of the Robin Miller Award.

Joining us today, Anne Fornoro, longtime communications and public relations liaison at A.J. Foyt Racing, and we'll begin with Mark Miles who is the president and CEO of Penske Entertainment Corp.

MARK MILES: Anne, we got you here. We're so happy about that. She was surprised, I promise you. I saw it. She couldn't figure out --

ANNE FORNORO: Why A.J. was here.

MARK MILES: A strong clue. Other people know Anne longer and better than I do, so I'm not going to be an imposter, although I can tell you every dealing I've ever had with Anne has been professional and terrific, and I've loved those exchanges.

But what I can tell you is that this is a special day. Maybe three times a month, I go into the Working Man's Friend. I walk in there for my burger. If it wasn't a workday, it would be a beer. By instinct, I'm going to the table that Robin and I would have been at catching up and hearing some stories.

That's just one of the ways I miss him all the time. This is a very special award for all of us, all of you who knew him and miss him, as well.

The Robin Miller Award was brilliantly conceived by Marshall and Jay Frye, and I just want to read the point. The award is to honor an unheralded individual who's devoted a significant portion of their life to INDYCAR racing while bringing unbridled passion and unrelenting work ethic to enrich the sport. That's what this is about.

I would just say that I think, Anne, you are the perfect recipient, and couldn't be more pleased. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: I'll go through some of this. By the way, the past honorees, of course Robin was the first recipient of his own award in 2019. It was Bob Jenkins in 2021, Judy Dominick and the late great T.E. McHale in 2022, and last year was Ziggy Harkus from Andretti Global.

Anne's background, in case you did not know, Anne's life is consumed with racing. As a young lady growing up in Long Island, Anne attended races watching her father Russ Klar and future father-in-law Nick Fornoro, Sr., compete across midget tracks in the northeast. Her mother Flavia also occasionally raced under the alias Mickey Carter. Is that correct?

ANNE FORNORO: Yes.

THE MODERATOR: Having met at a racetrack, she married the late National Midget Hall of Famer Drew FORNORO. Anne raced herself --

ANNE FORNORO: Once.

THE MODERATOR: In a powder puff race. We won't say when --

ANNE FORNORO: It was a long time ago.

THE MODERATOR: Her career in motorsports began at the National Speed Sport News where she worked alongside the legendary editor Chris Economaki. In 1984 she moved to help the promotions department at U.S. Tobacco, which kind of led you to INDYCAR racing and A.J. Foyt Enterprises, and the rest, they say, is history.

For a little bit more on Anne's -- well, friends, drivers that you've known over the years, please turn your attention to the video monitors as we kind of take a trip down memory lane a little bit.

(Video shown.)

On behalf of INDYCAR, Indianapolis Motor Speedway,

ASAP . . . when all is said, we're done.®
sports

we're honored to present the 2024 Robin Miller Award. All that's left now is the award itself, and we want to bring up Diane Miller, Robin's sister, to help with the presentation.

DIANE MILLER: I've had the privilege of knowing you for many years, and Robin loved you. He loved you dearly, and he always called you Annie. You weren't Anne, you were Annie to Robin. Robin had a way of putting a -y or an -ie on anyone's name, other than A.J.. I don't think he did that to you. But he always referred to you as AJ's other woman, and just like A.J. said, everybody always thought you were married, but we all knew the truth: You were the other woman in his life.

Tony Stewart, he stole what I was going to say. Robin used to tell stories that would just curl your hair about Anne saved his life again. She's just -- if it wasn't for Anne, he'd be in prison, he'd be in jail. Somebody would have been knocked up against the head. Who knows. But Anne has just been there with A.J. forever and it's been a wonderful love story for many, many years.

I know that you've had a wonderful, wonderful career in racing, and I know it's deep in your heart and means the world to you. Racing meant everything to my brother, and this was home. The Indianapolis Motor Speedway was his very special place.

I just can't thank the speedway enough and everybody here that always invites me back each year to help present this award on behalf of my family, as well.

You're just great. You deserve this. I know he's smiling down from heaven and so thrilled that you were selected and so chosen because you're so deserving of this award, Annie. We love you.

THE MODERATOR: You want to read the inscription here? You want me to read it? This is the inscription on the award itself. She's an artist -- by the way, Marshall Pruett with huge help on this. She's an artist, a storyteller, a friend. Her press releases bring unique flourishes of history, humanity and eloquence to the sport, and then there's her unique ability to wrangle INDYCAR's biggest name, Anthony Joseph Foyt.

Nicknamed "Mother Superior" by Foyt, FORNORO is a fierce defender of her team and her cantankerous boss, a maker of fine messes she's cleaned up over the last 40 years. Kindness is her currency, and we are all richer for knowing her. There is and always will be only one Anne FORNORO. Congratulations.

Do you want to talk?

ANNE FORNORO: Thank you very much. This is very touching. A little warning would have been nice.

I usually don't get in front of the microphone. I feel like as a PR rep, you need to get these stars in front of the microphone. But Robin was very special to me. I miss him a lot. I miss his columns. Even there were times when I didn't agree with him, but he always wrote from the heart, and I appreciated that. He appreciated the fact that I grew up in midget racing, and so I think I got a pass as far as some of the PR reps were concerned.

I don't even know what to say. I can't believe -- this will go in a very special place in my home. Just thank you. Thank you very much.

Q. What's our favorite PG-13 A.J. Foyt story? I know there's a lot of R's.

ANNE FORNORO: Well, my first experience with A.J. was at the 1985 Indy 500, and he set the pits on fire. I almost got killed because there was a stampede in the pits as everybody was trying to evacuate, and he had told them -- he had been having problems, and he told his crew, "I'll show you how to vent the thing," and he sticks his arm in the buckeye, and poof.

But it did make People magazine, and it was the back, and Copenhagen, it was a full page -- I thought, well, it turned out okay because we got a lot of publicity from it.

There are a lot of stories about A.J. People say, you should write a book. I say, he pays me not to write the book.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports