

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

Sunday, May 26, 2024

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

### Scott Dixon

#### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We'll get started with our post-race news conferences featuring the top 3 in the 108th running of the Indianapolis 500. Josef Newgarden, Team Penske, will join us here in a little bit. Pato O'Ward, as well, as the second-place finisher.

But we'll lead off with today's third-place finisher and the six-time NTT INDYCAR series champion and 2008 Indianapolis 500 champion, Scott Dixon, who led 12 of the 200 laps in the No. 9 PNC Bank Chip Ganassi Racing Honda, his best finish in the 500. It's the second, back in 2020. 139 podiums in the NTT INDYCAR Series and counting; still second all time behind the great Mario Andretti and his 164.

So much to digest. Scott, and I'm sure you're trying to replay a lot of this in your mind. Your thoughts on a third-place finish here today.

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, kind of, honestly, all we had. Went and made that restart from first position, and from the start-finish there was two of them past me already, and I knew it was going to be pretty tough.

Kudos to them for having the pace.

Big thanks to everybody on the PNC Bank No. 9. We had some weird kind of restarts there in the middle. Kind of got to the back, and then kind of went off sequence, but then had some great restarts at the end to kind of jump us back up to the lead portion of that group, which I think was Pato and myself.

Yeah the last shot there we were pretty much flat, man. Just staying in their tow and their wake, and honestly you kind of knew that I think we could run 218s out front and they were like 220s, and once they started cycling there were 222s and we were just trying to hang on there.

They had much better pace than us today, and unfortunately we just didn't have enough there at the end.

**Q. Have you ever experienced anything like what happened today at the speedway?**

SCOTT DIXON: In what way?

**Q. In terms of the drama.**

SCOTT DIXON: The drama? Was there drama? It was a long day, that's for sure. I took a nap. It was actually really nice.

Yeah, late start to the day. I think sometimes it can kind of suck the energy out of you, but as soon as I snapped out of my nap and looked outside and saw the people in the stands I was like, holy cow, this is awesome.

It's great to see just the enthusiasm I think from this crowd and what they have here at the speedway.

The race itself, it was pretty full on. It was pretty action packed. At the end there when you're kind of capturing third, you hope that the first two are going to take each other out, but obviously that didn't happen.

A little bit of drama, but I thought everybody raced pretty cleanly, and at the end there it was a great move by Josef around the outside. Just had the momentum, and pretty interesting that actually stuck, especially after kind of a stint in that second lane can kind of get pretty slippery there. But he pulled it off, man.

**Q. The issues you had with Honda in qualifying, how rewarding was it for you to come back with this result?**

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, it's nice. I think the biggest thing is when you get out of the car you're happy with what you did today. I think we gave it all, man. I think that's myself and the team. We were trying. They were definitely trying to pump me up at the end and I was telling them I'm going flat out here. I've got nothing left. I'm trying.

Yeah, I think in that way the only bummer you can have is when you leave the track and you know you didn't give everything you had. I know we as a group left nothing on the table.



**Q. Maybe a little deeper dive on that pass that Josef had around the outside. Were you wondering whether that was going to stick or not?**

SCOTT DIXON: Well, I've seen finishes that can go pretty sideways in situations like that, and you could be in the right position. The Sato and Dario, there's loads of different races that have finished that way.

But he did a great job; Pato gave him some room; the rest is history.

**Q. You talked about the delay, but you know this track well. This is probably as late as anybody's ridden on this track. Was there anything different, lights, where the shadows were, maybe even the temperature getting this deep into the day and still racing?**

SCOTT DIXON: I think the only time was when there was sun breaking through in 4, and just as you are kind of getting to apexes, pretty bright lights through there as it was kind of breaking through the stands, which you'd just get a pretty crazy flicker going in there.

But yeah, conditions were good. I think there was no issues out there. Great job by the speedway and obviously timing-wise just with how you get it with the rain. Mother Nature, you can't do much about that. But that was cool to get this race in today.

**Q. You just said that Pato gave Josef some room. In 2022 he was accused of not being aggressive enough; in 2023 he was too aggressive. Today he appeared to have been crying after the race and very upset. Is there something he could have done differently on those final two corners?**

SCOTT DIXON: You know, it's just timing. Timing is a little bit off, you know. I think the other year where he had the outside move I think on Ericsson in 1, I think he could have held that there.

But it's a balance. You don't really know if it's going to take it, especially when you have a stint or two where the marbles can build up. All it takes is getting off line and you go straight into the fence, and we've seen that plenty of times, too.

Yeah, those cars were fast. They were in a different category to me. So I don't know if there was -- the Penskes. I don't know if there was a difference between those two. It looked like they could both suck up pretty well. The 7 definitely had issues kind of hanging in there tight, but yeah, I think -- I don't think Pato could have done anything different apart from the timing.

He could have swapped it by a half lap and that would have changed it. But if he had not given him the room they both would have crashed. That would have been great for Alex and I. But yeah.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

SCOTT DIXON: I don't know. It's a privilege to race here, right? I'm in a situation where I'm lucky to have won, but Pato has come close a few times. It can go in cycles. As I've said many a times, finishing second sucks. It's horrible. You'd rather finish last I think almost at this place and be out of the race early.

He'll be fine. He's got plenty of time on his hands.

**Q. I know you were talking about qualifying. You were kind of giving something back to Honda in the sense that you were the top Honda so you weren't blaming them for anything. Did you feel like in the race that that was -- the deficit was between Honda and Chevy, or do you feel like there was something on the Ganassi side you could have done something better in the race it?**

SCOTT DIXON: There was definitely a difference, man. They come from so far back. The pace changed. When they started cycling in front and getting back to the restart, they got past me before I got to the start finish, I knew it was going to be a pretty rough end to the race.

Great job by them. Everybody at Honda and HRC have done as much as they can. Sometimes it goes in cycles, and I know this will inspire them to work harder, and they'll be back.

**Q. When you hit pit lane, did you think, oh, no, not a speeding penalty?**

SCOTT DIXON: When I hit pit lane? No, it felt good, man. That's how it should be, right? On the limit. I was trying to get the lead.

No, I didn't question that one. I had already had the -- well, actually last time I got done for speeding I had (indiscernible), too, so, yeah, I didn't think it was that close. I thought it was okay. A bit of bobble there at the end, but we we're all good.

**Q. What happened with you and RHR?**

SCOTT DIXON: I don't really know. There was no room to go, and then I was kind of looking to the right. Just saw at the last minute when he hit me, but he was pretty deep in

the grass at that point. I hope he's okay. I haven't looked at the replay yet to see if there was anything I could have done different apart from just pulling out of his way, but that's not the way you race.

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