

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

Sunday, June 9, 2024

Jamie Chadwick

Louis Foster

Jacob Abel

Pippa Mann

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Joined by the podium finishers here today. Finishing in third, Jacob Abel, driver of the No. 51 Abel Construction car. Louis Foster finishing second in the No. 26 Novara Technologies car for Andretti Global. And congratulations to today's winner, Jamie Chadwick, who led all 20 laps today in the No. 28 Vext Machine for Andretti Global.

Jamie, we'll begin with you. A lot happening in the last 20 minutes or so. What are you thinking right now?

JAMIE CHADWICK: Yeah, honestly overwhelmed. Yeah, I felt like when we were running, I had good control of the race, but in this championship there's always yellows, always things that can throw anything into the mix. The red flag at the end.

Yeah, I knew anything could happen. I just had to drive my race, go for the best. Fortunately we were a bit heavier on the push to pass, able to bring it home.

Honestly super, super happy.

THE MODERATOR: For you now to have a win, hopefully the first of many, your thoughts on that.

JAMIE CHADWICK: Yeah, we came into this year aiming for that, kind of back of last year trying to be a little bit more aggressive with our approach, less conservative in each race, finish races, trying for wins.

We've had good pace this year, probably not good enough pace to challenge for a win until we got to yesterday. Yesterday I knew we had an opportunity. Then today sitting on pole, another opportunity. You don't get those regularly in this championship. I was keen to make the most of it.

THE MODERATOR: Louis and Jacob, great battle between you guys throughout the course of the race. What made the difference, do you think?

LOUIS FOSTER: Yeah, in the end I thought I was really good. Firstly, Jamie's day. Congratulations to Jamie. She did an amazing job out there.

Really happy for the team. Yeah, for us, we just made a bit of an heroic -- optimistic start, shall we say, then that made us fall back a little bit. I had to burn tires, push to pass to get back up to the front.

Kind of midway through the race, I probably used a bit too much push to pass. At the end it was always trying to get to Jacob. After the red had come out and I was aware of the numbers of the push to pass, it was Jamie's race to lose.

Yeah, just I don't know how close it was, but I could like right and see him. It was pretty close.

THE MODERATOR: Jacob, fifth podium of the season for you. Battle between you and Louis. How did you see it from your cockpit?

JACOB ABEL: Yeah, it was a good race. Congratulations to Jamie. Pretty awesome for her to get her first win here. We had a pretty good battle the first half of the race. But she was able to hold onto it. Louis and I were battling a little bit there at the end.

Yeah, it was really just good, hard racing. I think we made contact a couple of times. But it is what it is. It's going to be like that.

Yeah, we'll take the points and we'll move forward. A little bit disappointing. I think we really had the fastest car or the car to beat today. So you're never happy when that's the case and you finish third.

It's a good day when you're disappointed with third. Just keep up with the consistent results and eyes forward to Laguna.



THE MODERATOR: Jamie, on the cool-down lap, seems like everyone came up alongside and congratulated you. What did that mean to you?

JAMIE CHADWICK: Yeah, it all means a lot. Everyone I race against, but also the wider support. Last year was a tough year. Fighting where I think we should be fighting, it's a great feeling. Grateful for everyone's support.

I think we'll keep pushing. I appreciate how tough this championship is, as well. Just respecting the level. Coming at it this year with the speed we've had, I'm just super happy.

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

Q. Jamie, Louis, I was hoping to get both of your respective views on the battle. You were hounding for the lead about five or six laps to go. Jamie had to put up a pretty heavy defense.

JAMIE CHADWICK: Yeah, from my side, not nothing to lose. Well, everyone's got something to lose. I'm not necessarily in the championship battle. I knew I had to be aggressive.

I think if you allow one of those moments, someone like Louis to get past you, you're going to be on the back foot the rest of the race. I had to put up the fight where I could.

I've got a lot of respect for Louis, a lot of respect for his championship campaign that he's building this year. I really wanted to win today. That's all I was focusing on.

LOUIS FOSTER: I only had one opportunity really. Like I said, it was hard to get to her and hard to pass, even harder to pass.

It was just into turn 13, got a bit (indiscernible) on the button a little bit. I put my nose there. I'm never going to commit to that until they don't commit to it. Yeah, she just turned in. I would have done the same thing if I was her. I think it was the only time we were even that close.

So, yeah, no, wasn't too much battle between me and Jamie. Me and Jacob, I would say.

Q. Jamie, those of us that have covered the series, seen how much effort you've put into this, is it more relief, vindication? What's the feeling?

JAMIE CHADWICK: I don't know. Just happy. Honestly just happy. Even last year, it was only the first half of the year we really struggled, then we got going. Last year was a super competitive year in this championship. It's hard to

make progress throughout the year.

I felt like we've been, yeah, coming at it stronger race by race. This year, yeah, we definitely made a big step. But it's where I feel like we should be now.

Normally, before this weekend, I felt like there was a bit of a gap to these two especially. Now we're closing that gap. After today especially I think we can try to always be up with these two as much as we can.

These two have great opportunities to go next to the level. If I can compete wheel to wheel with these guys, then I know I'm in a good place. That's all I care about.

Q. When you saw these two start to battle and fight for second, did you get the feeling that that was the best thing you could see right now because it allowed you to open it up?

JAMIE CHADWICK: Yeah, that was always my plan, try to get those guys to fight as much as I could, try to get them as close where it was an issue, the higher speed stuff, try to get my gap. I always had it in the back of my mind.

Fortunately they were battling. I think my life would have been harder without that. I just had my eyes forward. We had a really good car today.

Q. Last year do you think the expectations when you entered this series were a little high or was that something that you had to deal with?

JAMIE CHADWICK: I don't know. Some rookies come in and do a great job straightaway. Someone like Caio coming in, being fast. I wasn't. Everyone gets better. Everyone can develop.

I feel like we're just getting better and better. I have a great group of people around me helping me, Andretti. There's no reason why we can't keep improving. I don't know why you get labeled something straight out of the box. We're just getting stronger. That's all I'm focusing on.

Q. The last time a woman won an INDY NXT race, you were 12. It was also on the oval. To be able to win a race at Road America, how huge of an accomplishment is that?

JAMIE CHADWICK: Yeah, this is one of my favorite tracks. It felt like the one that got away a bit last year. I had my best qualifying here last year. I was excited to come back here.

Honestly I would have taken (indiscernible) for a win. I

wouldn't have expected that coming into it. But still very special. Amazing track. Yeah, I'm excited for the rest of the year.

Q. You see everybody behind you by several seconds, how difficult is it to not let the excitement of being in the lead on the last lap take away from your focus that you hit your apexes because...

JAMIE CHADWICK: Yeah, honestly I know the level and everything is very different. Because I come from the W Series, I felt a lot more comfortable out front than I've ever felt all year. Yeah, it's kind of what I'm almost used to. It's a different level, but I felt pretty comfortable and happy. I led races and happy doing that.

It's a lot harder being in that position, being in the pack because you're attacking and being attacked. Making right decisions in a championship like this isn't easy. I felt like I was in the best place. I was pretty comfortable.

Q. There was a massive noise from the infield, pretty much everyone ran over to the podium. How neat was it to go out there and see that large crowd at that podium?

JAMIE CHADWICK: Special. I've got a lot of support. I'm grateful for that. Yeah, I think from my side, we kind of talk about not having too much pressure early on. At the same time I really want to show what women are capable of in this sport. I strongly believe women are capable of getting to the highest level.

We have an amazing young generation coming through. There's so many great women in the sport. We just need more. Hopefully it inspires more and that's all I care about.

Q. Jamie, you said late last season you felt results started to change. Was there a turning point for you? What caused you to make that next step?

JAMIE CHADWICK: It takes a while to go into it all. There were definitely turning points and moments last year.

I think the thing is, is once you're in season, to make sudden changes and improvements, suddenly turn the season around, it's very difficult. I knew that was always going to be the case. Your confidence, where you expect to be, where you feel like you are as a driver, versus where you want to be, are two different things.

Yes, halfway through last year we started to really turn a corner. Yeah, just to put that further into this season is the difference. I'm a lot stronger this year. I feel different. Feel confident. Have a really great team around me. I ask

for different things in the car, I know what's coming, I know the tracks. All that stuff makes a big difference.

THE MODERATOR: Jamie, you're the third woman in the history of this level of competition in INDYCAR to win. The last one was Pippa Mann in 2010 at Kentucky Speedway. Just so happens on Zoom Pippa has joined us.

Pippa, your thoughts as I'm sure you have a congratulatory message for Jamie.

PIPPA MANN: Jamie, I want to say congratulations. I was watching at home. Not at the track this weekend.

What a fantastic race. I hope you can hear it in my voice if you can't see my face. I am so thrilled for you. This is mega. It's so fantastic to see. Congratulations.

JAMIE CHADWICK: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: You feel there was history made or added to it all?

JAMIE CHADWICK: No, not really. Pippa would have felt the same back when she was racing. It doesn't make a difference.

At the same time I find the stat scary because there is no reason, it's tough, it's physical, but there's no reason why women can't be competing at the highest level of motorsports. It shouldn't be that. I don't think it's something we should be proud of to celebrate in a way.

I really want more women. Seeing Lindsay come to the championship is great, but I think we should have more and more young girls starting in the Indy feeder series, getting through INDY NXT.

THE MODERATOR: Pippa, do you want to chime in about that?

PIPPA MANN: It's obviously something I'm equally as passionate about as Jamie. I've been doing a lot of work outside of the car trying to help other women in the sport. My business is pretty small and we can't do a lot. It's really important to me to help see more women have the funding and opportunities.

Female drivers can be just as talented as men, just as Jamie is proving. With the opportunity and the equipment and the talent, we could win races and championships. This is why it means so much for me to see Jamie out there succeeding.

THE MODERATOR: Wonderful story. Many more to

come. Congratulations all three of you.

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