

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

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Colton Herta

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Colton Herta. Colton, it was close in the end.

COLTON HERTA: Yeah. But a good fight and a good showing for our team, Andretti Global. Did a great job bringing these race cars here. We've been very fast here in the past. I think at least in my career, we've never had a front row lockout in Toronto.

THE MODERATOR: One, two, three if you want to throw in Felix, as well.

COLTON HERTA: Yeah.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Obviously you guys unload and y'all are going to have confidence going into a lot of different tracks. There's something unique about the extra amount of confidence y'all seemed to show this year coming into street courses. Am I seeing that right?

COLTON HERTA: I think it's been the last few years Andretti has been very, very strong on street courses. This year in particular seems to be another step. So yeah, it's great for us.

I already love, like, street courses the most out of all the tracks I think that we do. I think it's the toughest single lap that you'll put together all year, is on a street course.

When you get a pole here, it's very rewarding, or at any street course that we go to.

Q. Obviously there's been some moments where you've won pole, for whatever circumstance, throw anything in there, there's not been an opportunity to win. What do you have to do to convert? It's been since 2022.

COLTON HERTA: Yeah, that's the bad thing about getting poles, you can only break even. You can't go further up (smiling).

But it's something that I want really bad. It's been brutal to not have a win in a year and a half. We've had pace and we've been doing the right things. I think three second-place finishes, a couple thirds, a bunch of top fives. We're putting ourselves in positions to win, but it hasn't fallen our way for one reason or another.

But I'm excited for tomorrow. It's good to have another teammate up there that we can work on with strategy and help each other out.

Yeah, I think it should be a fun and exciting race for everybody. Giant windows, a two-stopper, a lot of strategy to come into play, which if you're starting up front you don't want. But it's how this race is. It's always exciting.

Hopefully it's another exciting one and we can capitalize on the opportunities and have a win tomorrow.

Q. You mentioned the whole team is going the right direction with pace. Is any of that attributable going from four cars to three cars?

COLTON HERTA: I don't think it hurts. I don't think it hurts moving down to three cars for us. I think having guys that can look at maybe two or three things rather than five or six in more detail is always better.

I don't think we were spread thin before, but I think there's so many more options on a bunch of things, shaker rig tests, straight line tests, sim days, actual testing, race weekends. There's so many more people to help lessen the workload, which I think is why we have been a little bit more competitive this year.

Q. Thinking about the difference between that last lap with you have to nail it, 1/10th you need to find, what is that mindset like?

COLTON HERTA: So I never get told lap times because I don't want to know. I don't really care about any of it because in my mind I'm always driving as hard as I can in qualifying. If someone says, You need a 10th, that's not going to make me drive harder. I'm already trying as hard as I can.



It's tough because you know how tight this field is. You know if you give up even just six inches off the apex of one corner, that's going to drop you at least one spot, most likely more. It's difficult to judge that when you're braking from 200 miles per hour down to 60 miles per hour in 300 feet. It's a very difficult thing.

Saturdays are some of the hardest days that we have in this sport just 'cause you need to be so perfect. When everybody is on their A game like they are in qualifying, it's very difficult to better somebody.

Q. When you have topped every session this weekend, how do you sleep tonight?

COLTON HERTA: It's bit easier, yeah. Like I said, this race is crazy with the strategy, big window. INDYCAR races like that tend to be crazy. There's a whole bunch of different ways to win this race.

Obviously it's still a big advantage starting up front, and that should help us. You can never take anything for granted in INDYCAR racing. It doesn't matter where you start.

We have fast race cars. That's a biggest thing. We checked that box. Everything else, we just need that hope comes our way.

Q. Are you starting to get a sense of when to use the hybrid assist? Does it even come into play on a street course?

COLTON HERTA: Yeah, it definitely will. For me, like we've done so much off-seasoning testing, so much simulator work, it's straightforward. It's not a complex thing in the car to understand it and get the most out of it. You're using it very similar to how you would use push to pass.

There is some stuff that maybe you can manipulate balance with it, and maybe that takes a little bit more time to get used to. It's nothing major and it's not going to send a team to the front if they know that sort of stuff or can take advantage of it.

I think for the racing tomorrow, it will be similar to how you use it at Mid-Ohio. You're going to use it on the long straights and whatnot. That won't change. That's how everyone has been doing it. I'm fairly positive that the racing is going to be a lot better than Mid-Ohio with it just because of how this track races is a lot better.

Q. Are you sensing that better fortune is coming your way? It has to eventually.

COLTON HERTA: I hope so. Like I said, we're putting ourselves in the right opportunities week in, week out. We have strong race cars pretty much everywhere we've gone this year. We've done a lot of the things right, it just hasn't fallen our way.

If we keep doing what we're doing, we're going to be just fine.

Q. I understand INDYCAR opened up so we can use our regen-ing and deployment in pit lane. How is it going to be an advantage to you?

COLTON HERTA: I don't think it will change much. I think the main reason of doing that was just to avoid problems like we had at Iowa. In doing that, it gets rid of it.

I think from the team's point of view, there was no reason to have it off anyway in pit lane. Might as well just keep it on the whole time and avoid those problems entirely.

Luckily INDYCAR took the feedback well and agreed with us, so the change came quickly.

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