

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

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Linus Lundqvist

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Wrap things up here at the Bommarito Automotive Group 500 with the podium finishers this evening. Now joined by Linus Lundqvist, matching his best career finish in his brief NTT INDYCAR SERIES career with a third, first on an oval.

Crazy pass on the backstretch there, but you got it done. Tell us about your night, how pleased you are here this evening.

LINUS LUNDQVIST: Unbelievably happy. We've had a season with a lot of ups and downs, let's put it that way. I think the summer break was actually good I think for everybody on the team to kind of take a little bit of time to reflect, especially on my side kind of reflect on the lessons that I've had to learn.

This weekend in itself has not been ideal. We had some issues in P1, then qualifying didn't go exactly to plan. We knew we had good pace in the car. The American Legion Honda was fast. Especially when we actually got some clean air, I was able to push. I think most of the race was just fuel running, hitting your fuel mileage, which I think was the same for everybody. We were able to extend.

I think we got a little bit lucky with the last yellow. Unlucky with the second to last yellow. Kind of worked out in the end for us.

Towards the end we had five or six laps to kind of let it go. I knew that a podium was on the cards and we got it done.

THE MODERATOR: You see the red come out. Did you think you had an opportunity?

LINUS LUNDQVIST: I was nervous as anybody. Basically when they said we were P5 in the restart, I was like, All right, I wouldn't be too unhappy if I saw a checkered flag right now. I'd take a P5. Then the red came out.

I was a little bit worried about what was going to happen with the guys behind us. They said, Everybody else was a lap behind. That makes me feel a little bit better.

I knew we had a pretty big tire advantage going forward. I think Alex and Herta had, like, 45- or 50-lap-old tires. We were basically on stickers. I knew we might have a possibility to do something here.

Obviously got around Alex as he got squeezed into turn one, then one or two laps later we got the move done on Herta.

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

Q. Yesterday after qualifying, there were a lot of drivers that expected a non-race for lack of a better term. They thought it was going to be single file, follow the leader. Pretty exciting show. Were you surprised at how good it was?

LINUS LUNDQVIST: Yeah, because I think I was one of the ones as well going into this race, I wasn't overly optimistic about how this was going to play out.

I think firstly INDYCAR did a good job with the sweeping. That makes a tremendous amount of difference for us in the starts and restarts, just having the confidence to go high. You saw guys staying high for 10, 20, maybe 30 laps into a stint. I think that makes all the difference when it comes to INDYCAR racing on ovals. I was happy to see that.

I was happy to see there was a bit of tire deg. Not so much tire deg but a difference in tire performance, new versus old. I think that's a reason why we were able to get past Alex and Colton at the end, we had a tire advantage.

Q. American Legion announced their latest program. Everybody on the team is going to take the suicide prevention classes so they can help others who have issues. To cap that all off on the same weekend you have your best finish, how cool is that?

LINUS LUNDQVIST: I mean, it's absolutely amazing. Like you said, it's a big weekend for the American Legion and their whole 'Be the One' initiative. Every weekend you step out in these colors, you're proud to represent 'em, I think especially on a weekend like this where they announce



something as critical as this.

It's amazing to see. Obviously I've been involved in working with them for the last year or so. It's amazing to see how they integrate further with the team, everybody on the team taking the initiative to be the one.

Getting this result for them is amazing. I'm very proud of that. It was great to see a lot of Legionaires out there. I'm sure you've seen them out there as well. It's been good to see all the shirts, my shirts, Alex's shirts from previous years. Good to see those red, white and blue colors.

Q. Was there ever any hesitation to pass? Alex was the points leader. Cut him slack or no?

LINUS LUNDQVIST: I mean, there's always a certain amount of respect that goes into racing with your teammates, especially when your teammate is the points leader. You definitely have that in mind.

But at the same time I'm a racer, I want to win races. I knew that I wasn't going to make anything foolish. But if I had a run, had a move, I was going to go for it. I knew a podium was on the cards.

If this was a fight for P13 or 12, maybe I would have thought differently. When you can get a sniff of that podium champagne, everything is on the cards.

Q. You had a major tire advantage. That helped a lot?

LINUS LUNDQVIST: Absolutely, it did. I think just from a driver point of view the amount of confidence you have when the guys on your stand say these guys are on 50-old-lap tires and I'm on stickers, makes you feel good when you know they swept one and two, you could go higher.

As the track cooled down, you had generally more downforce, the confidence got up especially for me. Towards the end there I felt good. I knew as well it was going to be good for us if I could get around Herta, which we were able to do.

Q. Can you take us through how you feel your rookie year has gone.

LINUS LUNDQVIST: I mean, I think I touched on it earlier. It's been a year of some good highs but some pretty low lows. I think it goes for a rookie year campaign as well. Obviously I've done some rookie mistakes, but I also think we definitely learned from it.

As I said earlier, this summer break has been good to take

time to reflect. I think basically before that it was flat out since end of April. I haven't had a proper time to go back and look through everything I learned. It was all preparation for the next weekend. The month of May was hectic.

Good to get a bit of a break and kind of let everything settle down. Hopefully now with this momentum we can finish the year off strongly and kind of show what we learned.

Q. Looking forward to the future, there's a bit of uncertainty with the charter agreement. How important was it for you today to have a result like this?

LINUS LUNDQVIST: Yeah, I mean, every day when you have a good Saturday, usually it's Sunday, it's always a good thing, whether it's being for next year or moving forward.

Like I said, my focus right now is just finish the year strong and try to show what we learned from the beginning of the year. I'd like to think we've showed when everything comes together that we can be as fast as anybody, dare I say, and hopefully look forward to next year and to stringing it all together, what we're all here to do, which is compete for championships.

THE MODERATOR: Linus, safe travels. We'll see you in Portland.

LINUS LUNDQVIST: Mega. I'll be there.

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