

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

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Will Power

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: As we wrap up qualifying, we're joined now by Will Power. His fourth front row start of 2024.

You were the first one to congratulate Santino. You knew what this kind of moment meant for him, right?

WILL POWER: Yeah, I'm good friends with Santino. We go-kart together, go to dinner, so on. I was upset that I didn't get pole, I really wanted it here, I wanted it badly. I was kind of a little bit upset.

Couldn't be happier for Santino. He's driving extremely well. And Foyt, it's a great partnership for those guys. It's good stuff, man. Good stuff. A fiercely competitive field. As you've seen, you never know who is going to get pole, you never know who will be the top six, you never know who is going to win the race.

THE MODERATOR: Obviously a Chevy sweep on the front row. Points championship still very much alive. Starting second, a nice boost heading into tomorrow's race.

WILL POWER: Yeah, very nice to be on the front row. Of course, you have Palou right there. I can certainly be aggressive with him because he has a lot more to lose than me. Just got to keep finishing ahead of him. I'll drive like Verstappen. Give him a little bit of pressure (smiling).

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

Q. Looking at the championship, do you still see it as a realistic opportunity for you?

WILL POWER: Yeah, man, still very, very possible. Very possible. It's almost a little less than a quarter of the races to go, four races. A lot of points, a lot of stuff can happen.

I would have to say if he finishes ahead of me tomorrow, starts to look very, very tough. We have to have a good day, at least finish ahead of him, see where we come out in points there. Then doubleheader at Milwaukee, a lot on offer. Our goal is to get as close as we can to him by

Nashville.

Q. After all that happened last week, have you cleared that up with the team? Is that sorted going into the rest of the season?

WILL POWER: Yeah, I mean, whatever. I'm over that stuff real quick. Just one of those things that was unfortunate. We had a very good car and a very good night.

Yeah, moved on very quickly, focusing on this event to get the best possible result. See what we can do tomorrow.

Q. How do you see Santino as a prospect, and Foyt as well? They have the potential to start taking points away from you. At the same time they've also got the potential to finish ahead some of your rivals as well. How do you see all that playing out?

WILL POWER: Well, yeah, they could be a great asset to us, taking points from Palou. Obviously, yes, they can take points from us, but that's just the name of the game. They got a good driver in Santino, obviously a good car with the partnership we have.

Yeah, like I said before, I couldn't be happier for Santino to get a pole. He works hard, deserves it.

Q. Looking at the final stretch of races with the three oval races to come, you have to feel a little bit more confident than Alex considering Alex hasn't had an oval victory.

WILL POWER: Yeah, based on our oval form this year, we should be more confident than he is. You never know in this series, though. I think Dixon is very strong at Nashville. Milwaukee, we haven't been there, so we don't know.

Ultimately we have to finish ahead of him every weekend. It's the only way. Anything can happen in this series. Look at last week. I mean, I led so many laps, had the quickest car, and I finished 18th just because of a restart. Same with Toronto the race before. I was running the top four or five, had an incident, gave myself a drive-through.

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A lot can go down and change quickly. We'll see how this plays out.

Q. Looking at the race tomorrow, a lot of the other championship contenders are caught in the awkward midfield area, which is not a place to be at Portland.

WILL POWER: Yeah, definitely a tough place to be at the start of the race, no question. We'll see, yeah. Can even be tough where I am honestly. Really you want to be a leader. That's why I was mad after I didn't get pole. Man, I need that, get a jump in front of the whole field, take off.

Yeah, but they have the lead to go early which strings it out more than it used to, so that will help. Yeah, we'll see what happens.

Q. Do you feel this weekend can erase what happened last weekend? How confident are you to catch some important championship points tomorrow?

WILL POWER: Yeah, it certainly can erase last weekend with a race win. That would help tremendously. I know Palou is a very tough customer. He doesn't make mistakes. He's very good in the race. We've got our work cut out for us to finish ahead of him because it's almost essential that we do.

We'll work on our car in warm-up and try to get the best possible race car that we have, yeah, see where we stand.

Q. How important is it to start in the first row for tomorrow? How do you feel about that?

WILL POWER: I think the only guy that feels completely safe is P1. Even starting on the outside of the front row can be a little tough at times because the inside row goes, if you can't block out third place.

Yeah, we'll see. Anything can happen. Can't really plan on it. Just the key is to get through that first turn in a reasonable position.

Q. Do you feel you could be P1 after the second session?

WILL POWER: Yeah, like in the Fast Six, could I have been P1? Is that what you mean?

Q. Yes.

WILL POWER: Yeah, I made a mistake. The lap he did was really good. He did a really good lap. It was going to be tough to beat that.

But I actually lost like a 10th and a half on the 10 and 12 curb when I made a little mistake there. It was doable, but man, he put a bloody good lap together. It's impressive.

Q. You said you can talk with Santino about the start, and also you can be more aggressive than Alex can be. What can you and Santino work together on ahead of the start? What kind of plan can you put in place? When you say you can be more aggressive, what does that mean?

WILL POWER: Well, we can take more risk with strategy. I mean, I race as clean and fairly as possible. Never want to win a championship in a way where you've taken someone out. Of course not. But I can race him a little harder because it's not just me that he's racing. If we both went out, it would be bad because there's a lot of people coming as well around my points.

Yeah, yeah, my goal is I just got to stay ahead of the guy. I have to finish ahead of him, it's as simple as that. It's the only way I'm going to have a shot at the championship.

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations, Will.

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