

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

**Ryan Hunter-Reay**

**Jack Harvey**

**Dennis Reinbold**

**Don Cusick**

Press Conference



Ryan, this is our third year, so he knows the situation with us. We're familiar, so he's pretty turn-key, plug-and-play. Jack living locally here in north side of Indianapolis, we'll have him in the shop and get up to speed in no time with him.

THE MODERATOR: Great news.

Don, you've quickly become a veteran owner at the Indy 500. Evolved over the years. Tell us the decision behind Ryan and Jack, how excited you are about being part of another 500.

DON CUSICK: I'm always super excited about being a part of the 500. To have Ryan and Jack is great. Having Ryan back, of course, we know what he can do. We saw what he can do. Having Jack in the team is really awesome.

They're both great guys. They'll be great for the partners that we bring onboard. Obviously super accomplished race car drivers.

Yeah, we're looking forward to it. Can't wait.

THE MODERATOR: For the drivers, Ryan, you know what you're getting yourself into. This is a quality race team. They go all out for the 500, don't they?

RYAN HUNTER-REAY: No doubt. It's been a fantastic time that I spent with this team. Ever since the beginning really, since we first got together a few years ago, just really enjoyed. Like I've been saying, I really enjoyed the people there. That was the biggest thing for me, to really surround myself with some great folks.

We all have the same agenda, right? That's to win the Indy 500. We're not there simply to participate. Last year, being the only Indy-only effort, getting into the Fast 12 was a huge accomplishment. Unfortunately we had some suspension damage on lap three, so it was a long day after that.

We were strong all month. We've been strong each year we've partnered up together. Again, I'm looking forward to another opportunity with the same group. I'm really looking

THE MODERATOR: As you know, the 2025 INDYCAR SERIES season, with that the Indy 500 Presented by Gainbridge, continues to take shape. Earlier today Dryer & Reinbold Racing - Cusick Motorsports locking in their two-car lineup for the Greatest Spectacle in Racing.

Driver of the No. 23 Dryer & Reinbold Racing - Cusick Motorsports Chevrolet is the 2014 winner of the Indy 500 Ryan Hunter-Reay. Ryan, great to see you.

Driving the No. 24 Dryer & Reinbold Racing - Cusick Motorsports Chevrolet, his eighth start in the 500 next year, Jack Harvey is with us.

The ownership group also joins us. The namesake behind Dryer & Reinbold Racing, Dennis Reinbold. Of course, the namesake behind Cusick Motorsports, Don Cusick joins us as well.

Let's start with the owners here. Dennis, congratulations. Talk through the process of landing Ryan again and bringing in Jack. Here we are in December, you're looking good for May.

DENNIS REINBOLD: Yeah, we began talking with Ryan right after the 500 last year. Actually did a test, what was that, October I think, at Indy, a couple days with him as well. We knew we were going that direction with Ryan putting the deal together to come back. We'll release some sponsor details later on. For today, we wanted to talk about Ryan as well as Jack.

We have been talking to Jack some time, followed his career obviously, being in the paddock next to him. His reputation as a great guy and a great driver. We're excited to bring him in.



forward to working with Jack again. It was great news having Jack join us.

I was explaining to him the atmosphere within the team, how much he's going to love it. He's going to have fun. Granted, we have a lot of work ahead obviously with the new hybrid, the different weight distribution, the differences with how the car handled at the test. There's a lot coming for us, a lot we have to work on and have been working on.

Yeah, this group is as hungry as any team I've ever been with. It's just a great group of people. I'm looking forward to getting back on track in May.

THE MODERATOR: Jack, congratulations. Ryan kind of set the stage for what you're getting yourself into. How much are you looking forward to this opportunity with Dryer & Reinbold Racing - Cusick Motorsports?

JACK HARVEY: It's a dream honestly. I know people say that. It's not frivolous. Getting any opportunity to compete at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway for any driver I think is elite level. It doesn't get better than that. I've always had so much respect for Dennis and the entire team as competitors for many years. Only recently been able to kind of develop that relationship.

I don't know if I'd exactly say I was pestering him. Maybe he'd need to answer that. It was maybe getting close (smiling). I just really wanted to be a part of this program. That's the bottom line. I really felt like we go into Indy, have a really strong month of May. For me and the partners that are going to be announced, that was our primary objective.

I was thrilled when the conversation started to develop and continued to develop. Actually in the end it came together very quickly. But the common denominator already from signing to now, how many people have told me they're going to enjoy the atmosphere in the team. I've been in there nearly every day in the last, I don't know, week or so already getting familiar with everybody. It's already been that way.

Feel like I'm just joining an absolutely fantastic race team but also really great people. To be teammates again with Ryan from our time previously is great. Actually, Ryan won the 500, the first 500, I ever attended. I've always found him to be very generous with his time and mentorship. It feels like a really great fit.

THE MODERATOR: To be clear, Ryan, that wasn't all that long ago when you won the Indy 500.

RYAN HUNTER-REAY: Thanks. Appreciate that

(smiling). Very recent.

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

**Q. Ryan, you mentioned the hybrid. Is it an advantage that it's everybody's first time at Indy in a race in the hybrid or are you at a disadvantage because you haven't raced it at all yet?**

RYAN HUNTER-REAY: Great question actually.

That can go either way. In racing over the years for me it can go either way. The problem is obviously the manufacturer partner teams, which we are one of them, but you would get the Penskes, Ganassis, they will get more time on track with this unit, with this reconfigured weight distribution and evening else. They'll get more time on track than we will. That's plain and simple, right?

You can look at it from another perspective where they've had a bit of a lock at the end of these races recently with the spec, let's call it last year's spec, right? This gives us an opportunity to potentially crack that and make a run for it, find something new with some of the things that we have in the works.

It could go either way. But they have the resources. They're going to have more track time than us. We're going to have to play from that position, race from that position. That's just a matter of how it goes.

It can definitely go either way.

**Q. Jack, at the moment what is the rest of the year looking like for you? What are your plans? More INDYCAR, IMSA, broadcasting?**

JACK HARVEY: To be honest, mate, the first port of call was to get something locked up. Doing this deal was the number one priority. We put all of our time and effort, resources into just locking this up.

Why do we want to be here? Because we feel it's the best shot of going into the Indy 500 and really being able to compete.

As far as how things develop after that, I'm not anticipating doing too terribly much before the Indy 500 because, as everyone has already said, the focus is making sure that we arrive in May in the best possible state from a preparation stance.

What happens after May, I mean, I don't know, mate. Honestly, kind of just play that by ear. Obviously I've expressed an interest in some commentating and

commentary work. If that progresses, I would say that's pretty fantastic opportunity, too.

I think the people forget that in my heart I also am just a race fan. I love being in the INDYCAR paddock. From that perspective, I have something that is a little bit unique to share. However, just everything around May is the primary goal, the primary objective. All of our desires are very aligned, which I think why it's going to make this May very good. Nothing is going to take focus off the 500, at least.

**Q. Ryan, when you think of Indy-only entries, what is it that makes that so special? Last year, how special was it achieving that Fast 12 with an Indy-only team against the teams that compete full season long?**

RYAN HUNTER-REAY: Yeah, the Indy-only effort, when you get the right group of people together, has a lot of advantages. You have the advantage of focusing on the car, the build, the body fit, all the details that go into making a race car fast at Indy. You have the advantage of just focusing on that alone.

You also have the advantage of getting into the month of May. Most of the other paddock spit out the backside of the GP. They're all tired. They want to go home. It's just another kind of day at the racetrack. For us, it's quite a bit different than that.

There are advantages. Disadvantages are that we're going to hit our stride as a team in how the minute-to-minute goes on the radio, strategy, all that stuff, we're hitting our stride during the race, right? We haven't had a go at it in a race prior to that. That's where we have to be very, very cognizant of making sure we're on top of all that.

Aside from that, I mean, Indy is what our passion is. Especially for me, the 500 is it. The rest of the season revolves around that. To be able to just focus on that one, it just makes it that much more enjoyable purely from a driving perspective.

**Q. Dennis, we've had the charter agreement come in. Your take on that? Will there be any implications for you or is it business as usual?**

DENNIS REINBOLD: I don't think there's any implication about the charter situation for the Indy 500 for the next two years. Obviously we're pointing at '27 as a bit of a reset that there's going to be new cars, new engine programs coming in. We want to look toward being part of that.

At that point in time, the charter becomes an issue. For the near future or for the next two years, it's not an issue at all at Indy. They have said they're not going to carry that over

to Indy, which I appreciate and hope that that continues long-term no matter what. Indy was basically founded on the fastest 33 go out and race each other, we see what we have. May the best man or woman win is kind of how it is.

I like the purity of that, the history and nostalgia of that aspect of the Indy 500. Just the traditions in general, it's just such a great place to go to and be part of. It's an honor to be part of that program.

We don't take that lightly. We work really hard in the off-season. We've been working really hard. Ryan alluded to it earlier. From our test, we figured out where some deficiencies we have as a team. We have to absolutely attack the new hybrid system and figure out how that's going to impact our setups. It's going to impact everyone equally. So whoever figures that out the best is going to have the better chance of coming out on top.

We've dedicated our resources pretty much full-time. We worked hand-in-hand with Chevy, our partner since the end of the race last year. They put their neck out to get us as part of that test we did in October. We're working with them as well to try to develop and see what's out there with the hybrid system.

It's going to introduce a lot of challenges for all of us. We're focused on that. Head down and test, figure out what we can.

**Q. Don, having Jack join the team, how big of an announcement is that for you?**

DON CUSICK: Oh, it's huge. It's great. First of all, having our drivers set this early in the year is really a great thing. It's super helpful for everything we do on our end at Cusick Motorsports. But Jack is a great guy. We had a really good conversation the other night. He called me up, I don't know, a couple nights ago, and we talked.

I don't really know Jack that well, but I surely know what he's capable of as a driver. I also know what he's capable of as a person. Yeah, super excited to have Jack back. Always glad to partner with Ryan.

**Q. Jack, obviously you've driven the Honda power unit recently. How do you think that's going to shift to driving for Chevy next year?**

JACK HARVEY: Someone actually said to me the other day, Have you ever driven a Chevy? I said, No.

Every practice session I've gotten in the seat of an INDYCAR, it's always been powered by Honda. Obviously it's going to be a little bit of a change. I know there's some

differences in delivery of the power of the car, drivability aspect.

Again, I've had so much respect for everybody at Chevrolet, their motorsports program, it was just another part of this. It was an exciting new step, new experience for sure heading into May. I certainly don't see it as something that's going to be handicapping or anything.

I think having driven with the hybrid on ovals this past season, hopefully it's a nice feather in my cap into what to expect at least from that side. How we apply it to Indy, how Chevy go about their use of the hybrid obviously is going to be a little bit of a learning curve.

I was just excited to get onboard, do a race with them. I think when you've been competitive with people for so long, it feels like there's a lot of mutual respect there. Sometimes it's nice to get the opportunity to work together at some point go from there.

I think the relationship between Honda and Chevy I think is actually very healthy, very competitive. I think it's just great. The more parties... Just excited to get the chance to race for Chevy.

**Q. Jack, after last year at Indy, sometimes you hear about athletes or drivers get the respect you gained from being on the sidelines and coming back. Anything you learned this past month of May, a learning aspect, respect of the place, something from being on the sidelines that you can bring back for 2025?**

JACK HARVEY: I mean, honestly I think the biggest thing that made me realize, I didn't even need this realization to be honest, I already know how much I love the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Not being a part of the race was a killer honestly. You're there for essentially two weeks, then watching everyone participate.

I'll be the first person to say I think I'm extremely lucky in life. No doubt we work hard for the opportunities we have. No one should feel bad for us in any of that capacity. I get to do this as a job. I don't have to do this. I keep that perspective with me all the time.

But I would say when you can go to the track and you're not under that pressure, I think you can see how insular your day and your week can become, that level of tunnel vision that starts to creep in. At least you've got to make lemons out of lemonade. I still thought it was cool to be at the track and kind of observe.

I think the biggest thing going and being there, not under

pressure at least for last month, I think was the ability to step away and continue to do the big picture on what we're trying to achieve across Indy. It's not just one day, it might be across several days. The plan, how you get there, really having respect for the process.

I think how I was able to help Katherine and Nolan in that moment was bringing a level of calm, which is also something I'd like to roll into next year. It's not my first 500 now. I understand the flow of the month and how it goes. I feel like I use that time productively even if I wasn't in the car.

**Q. A lot of people would see being an Indy-only ride being a disadvantage. Dennis talked about a lot of advantages. The cars are ready for a superspeedway. You're not switching between road course, oval... Do you feel this is one of the best shots you have?**

JACK HARVEY: Absolutely. Like I said, this was our number one priority, was to be here. Selfishly I felt like this was going to be as good a shot as I've had to go and achieve something really great at the 500. Getting to go to the shop and meet everybody, just continue building this relationship, even though it's early, we're all very, very aligned on what we want to achieve in May.

Participation is not what we're looking to achieve. We want to really go and compete. One of my first conversations with Dennis was, Here's what we're doing as a team, just so I'm comfortable and confident with the direction they're going. I was in.

I've had so much respect for the team just from the years we've competed against each other. I watched Ryan's qualifying run. I thought it was awesome. I think he was in a really good position for the race. The suspension damage. That pretty gnarly 360 that he did going into turn three which I don't want to see, be a part of, hope that he's not a part of again.

The singular focus, everything for us revolves around this. It's very much all eggs in one basket. Sometimes that's how you get stuff done. We go in there, know what we're doing, united and rally behind a common goal.

What Ryan alluded to, we're all coming in fresh. Day one, practice for the 500, we're going to be like kids in a candy shop out there on pit lane ready to go. People are already tired and thinking about everything that happens after Indy.

There's obviously disadvantages. We know them. We accept them. I just feel from my side the singular focus is more towards the positive than negative.

Like I also said to our partners, if I didn't think this was a place we could come compete and have a proper shot, I would have saved everybody the time, the money, the headache, the future headaches, just not have done it. But I believe this is really worth it.

**Q. Ryan, you won a football championship as a coach. How much can that help just being around the team, the joy of winning something, the rewarding nature of that, seeing your kids thrive?**

RYAN HUNTER-REAY: Yeah, I mean, it's a lot of fun first of all. It's rewarding in that regard.

I have to constantly remind myself they're nine years old, 10 years old. I'm extremely competitive. I'm way too competitive. I should probably at times not be in that position (smiling). 'Doesn't matter if you win or lose' does not apply on my team. It's just been a lot of fun (laughter). The kids are coming out of it enjoying it that much more.

I kind of apply the things that I've learned in racing over the years, meaning just the competitive side on how I can deal with different personalities, work them a little bit differently to work them into our plays and everything else.

Yeah, I'm so thankful. That's probably the biggest positive not being full-time in racing, is being able to be with my kids, coach them all at such an impressionable age.

**Q. Do they look at you as Ryan Hunter-Reay car driver or Bobby Knight-type coach?**

RYAN HUNTER-REAY: A little bit of both. When I put the uniform, the race suit on, their eyes open, too. There's both of them. No, I'm not throwing any chairs. I haven't gotten that far yet (smiling).

THE MODERATOR: Ryan, you played quarterback growing up, honestly?

RYAN HUNTER-REAY: Yeah. Little techniques and the mechanics of how the throw should look. They won't listen to me a lot of time. A guy will say, Look what I learned. I've been telling you that for years (smiling).

**Q. Ryan, after you won the Greatest Spectacle in Racing, is that something you try to replicate year in and year out? Jack, same type of thing with you chasing first 500, have you had the same approach year in and year out or have you tried to tinker with that approach.**

RYAN HUNTER-REAY: Yeah, I think it is a bit of a process as you learn. You're just learning through

experiences, right? In '14, I think that year I learned to focus on the right things through the week, through the month, whatever you want to call it, leading up to it in practice.

I didn't necessarily care about being the guy that was fastest on the sheets. Really, really focused with a lot of discipline on other areas. I felt like that paid off.

I've learned a lot since then in other races. I've had a lot of close calls. In 2014 I knew when the race started I had the car to win it. I just had to get there. In 2016 I had that same feeling that it was going to happen, as well. It was even a better car actually. Got tied up in pit lane. Pit lane is like the burning pit of hell when you're on the racetrack. You come in there and anything can go wrong. Everything and anything can go wrong, right? You have to work really hard to make sure everything in there is clean. There's just a lot that goes into this race: the strategy, radio communications, how you deal with all that...

Over the years there's been a lot of lessons learned. I feel like I just apply all of it. That's where knowledge and experience I should say really pays at Indy.

JACK HARVEY: I think one of the best things about having Ryan as a teammate is that he's won the race. All the things that we talk about, we want to achieve, we hope to achieve, Ryan's done it. Sometimes just having someone who's got that winner's perspective I think is one of the greatest assets as a team or teammate that we can have.

To answer your question, I'm about as open when it comes to things like that as possible because I haven't won one yet. If someone's got advice, I'll listen to it. If I think it's applicable, I'll try and apply it.

I ask questions. I want to be pliable. I want to be a sponge. If someone has something good, I want that info because I'd love to obviously win the Indy 500. Until we do that, I don't think you can turn around and say, This is my process. I've sure learnt a lot of what not to do, some of what to do.

I just keep tweaking it a little bit every year, stay as open-minded as possible. If someone's got some great advice, I'm all ears.

**Q. Dennis, you mentioned you've followed Jack for years, known his reputation. Could you elaborate further on that.**

DENNIS REINBOLD: Well, the first thing I think is Jack talked about earlier of our conversation, I wanted to sit

down with him face to face and see how much winning was important to him. He convinced me that's what he's all about. That's what we're all about. That's fit number one. If you don't have that, there's no reason to keep talking and going forward.

As we kept talking, I explained to him that I'm really blunt and I'm going to be brutally honest about how things are. In June we can be friends. Up until then, we're going to work our asses off to win this race. That's just the way it's going to be.

I didn't scare him off when we had that conversation. He's still around and likes the idea and bought into that. Not that he needed to buy in, but that's kind of his personality, too.

I think it's all about having a really good fit. We're going to come in and we're going to keep our heads down. We have one goal, and that's it. Everybody has to pull their weight. If somebody's not, sorry, we have to move on to the next person. That's just our approach. It's like we are singularly focused. That's how we look at it.

On top of that, Jack has impressed me that he's always available and ready to do whatever we want him to do. In terms of driving our practice pit stop car in the shop or whatever, he's going to be doing that, working with us and learning our system.

I'm just really impressed with him as a person, and I like his dedication to how he approaches driving. I think that's where the fit started.

DON CUSICK: Jack, if you need somebody to be nice to you, I'll be glad to do that. I play that role over there.

DENNIS REINBOLD: Don does. I am the mean guy. Don sweeps up the problems.

RYAN HUNTER-REAY: Dennis, I would be at the shop more, but I have to fly Spirit. If you want to send the plane down (smiling).

DENNIS REINBOLD: Ryan, talk to Don (laughter).

DON CUSICK: We can make that happen, Ryan.

**Q. Jack, what is your head space now that you have this on the calendar and this team?**

JACK HARVEY: I feel fantastic. You work so long and so hard. The more that you don't have something, whether you like (indiscernible) or not, that doubt starts to creep in, anxiety starts to build.

From our first conversation to now, it probably still has not even been -- our first conversation when it started to develop has still been less than two weeks. Everything's felt very organic. I feel like I'm in a great place.

This as an anchor program for the entire year, it's so easy now to rally around it. We have one of the common themes as a very clear goal. What does that do for me? It means every time I go to the gym, I can think about not just wanting to be in the race, we're going to be there and we're going to be fighting and we're going to be putting our heads down.

It's just a really uniting feeling I think for all parties. I think especially after the announcement, as well, you hear it all the time, but that's when the work gets started. You work to try to get the deal, then you work after to make the deal successful.

As soon as I was driving back literally after we had signed, I called Ryan straightaway to chat to him. We had a really good conversation about the direction of the team from his perspective, too.

In some ways it's pressure off, but then we're going to pile it all back on because we want to be successful. I'll probably go back, enjoy Christmas and New Year's with my family in the UK, I'll be coming back in January just ready to go.

**Q. Jack, next year is going to take the focus off the 500 is what you said, related to other things you might be playing around with. What is your plan leading up to the 500? Are you doing more sim work, film, driving the pit car?**

JACK HARVEY: I'll still probably go to quite a few of the INDYCAR races. Selfishly I like being in the paddock. I like being immersed in INDYCAR racing. I think it's fantastic. I like being around. It keeps my mind focused and zoned in.

I'm 14 minutes away from the shop. I timed it the other day. I told Dennis and everybody in the team, if you need me, just ask. No ask is too big or too small. I mean that. Like, I want to be involved. The biggest thing I try to say to everybody that I chatted to is I want to contribute and I want to do my part. Ultimately one of those is helping all of us.

As far as other racing programs, I was pretty open about it a little while ago. If there was an opportunity to do Daytona in a good program, if it didn't take away from our 500 effort in any way, then obviously everybody wants to do the big

aces.

Again, I just love driving. Even if you're not active in the car, I'm going to be very active in this space to make sure when we arrive at May we are as ready to go. Whether that's pit stop practice with the guys, whether it's me being physically fit and healthy. Actually from Nashville, I'm down 12 pounds myself. I take this seriously. I'm not here to, like I said, participate. Whether it's on track, off track, meeting with whoever and anybody, I'm in. I'm dedicated to this.

To be honest, it's because that's the level that it needs to be. What we're all going to try and achieve would be life changing, probably the most fantastic thing I could ever achieve.

At least until the end of May, like, this is my everything. Everything revolves around this. If it takes away, it's temporarily going to be cut out and gone, then maybe we'll reevaluate in June.

**Q. We've known for a long time in the INDYCAR paddock you've been chasing the full-time opportunities. What's the flip in mentality knowing this is effectively an all-in itself versus something where it's sprinkled throughout the whole season?**

JACK HARVEY: I mean, this was very intentional. Like, this is where we wanted to be. When the conversation popped up with me and Dennis, when it really started to evolve, first thing I did because call some of our partners saying, I think this can happen, are you in? They said, What do you want to do. They put the ball back in my court.

This is what I wanted to do. No disrespect to anybody in any capacity, I just wanted to be in a really top program that probably more so had that singular focus and effort, if that meant doing less races but perhaps a slightly higher quality.

Again, I hate saying that because I'm not trying to say it was a lesser quality or anything. Everything that we're doing now is so singular focused with as much resources as we can throw at this to be successful we're doing actually. I think the cars that we're about to field, I don't think anyone's fielding more prepared or loved-on cars than what we are.

I have a huge amount of respect for all the teams I've raced with. Obviously we've raced full-time for four years. This will be my eighth 500. This isn't our first go around. I understand the industry, the ebb and flow. I mean, this was totally intentional. If it meant doing less races but to

be in a position that I felt like we could go and compete, maybe win, let's dare to dream, but that's what I wanted to do, so...

**Q. Dennis, typically when you bring drivers into the family, it's not just for one-off runs. With Jack, is this a situation where you feel like you can build around him, looking at something bigger, part-time for partial races after the 500 or... I don't know if the charter impacts that at all for you.**

DENNIS REINBOLD: We're going into it with the hopes that we can win the race obviously first and foremost. Also, with Ryan, for example, we feel like we have unfinished business. We can still improve on the results that we've had.

When we bring drivers in, we want to keep them as long as it makes sense for everyone, as long as we feel like the hunger is there. The goal is to win the race.

In terms of doing races outside of Indy, we do focus on Indy with all of our resources and setups and everything. I'm not going to pretend we could go out to a road course or a street course or a short oval and be competitive. We could show up and go race. To go outside at this point in time with the teams as deep as they are, try to compete like we can do at Indy because we only focus on it, that's not really a good plan.

That's why I said really pointing toward '27 when there's a bit of a reset. If we're going to go full-time, that's the time to do it, is when everybody starts from ground zero and builds from there. That's what we would want to do.

We've learned a lot just focusing on the Indy program. For us to do it the right way, that's the only way we would come back and do it full-time in '27, would be to do all the testing necessary to be competitive in every discipline.

INDYCAR is awesome. Street courses, road courses, natural terrain, smooth road courses, short ovals, superspeedways, there's a variety of racing. You can't just show up with the same base package and expect to be competitive from track to track and discipline to discipline.

There's a lot of work involved, so I don't think - a long answer to your question - I don't think we would be able to do another race post Indy. We've talked about it before. We've done some before. That's just not where our strength and our expertise is at this point in time.

Again, we point to '27 to try to do that. That's a whole different scenario.

**Q. With '27, is it just a matter of a clean slate because of the car or also a matter of building a better infrastructure with different engineers?**

DENNIS REINBOLD: In '27, that would be a full reset and a full restructure. We would have to add a lot of people and a lot of depth. Mostly a lot of testing for all disciplines of racing to be able to go to it.

Why we haven't done it is just budget-related. We haven't had the budget to be able to do a full season, so we just focus on Indy only.

We're pointing toward '27 to try to grow our budget, to be able to do it the right way and bring in additional engineers and really do the testing to do it the right way. If we can pull that off, that's our goal.

**Q. Jack, you are an experienced driver with a new hybrid unit. How much does the experience since Mid-Ohio do you think you can apply during this month to prepare to the Indy 500?**

JACK HARVEY: I think anytime you've driven with an updated part on a car, it's a good thing. I haven't seen yet exactly what the hybrid specs are going to be heading into the 500 for May. I guess it's going to be a little bit of a new learning opportunity just to see exactly how Chevy operate their hybrid, perhaps their philosophy differences than Honda.

I mean, actually I think until some of these areas get finalized, it's going to be a little bit hard to say other than I've got the experience of driving with it and I'll be ready to use that knowledge effectively in Indy.

If I was going to guess, I don't know what qualifying looks like at the Speedway with the hybrid. I think in the race scenario, I think it will very much be in play. Typically you're not able to be flat in a lot of traffic.

I think there's going to be some nice potential uses for it. More so in a race scenario is where I think it's going to help me, knowing when you can harvest some power, when to use all of it, when to use a little bit, et cetera, et cetera. Hopefully by the time the race comes in, we've had several days of really clean on-track activities. First of all, learn how to use it and really dial into the best strategy there.

Anytime you're in a car with a new system, it can't hurt, for sure. I think we just got to wait and see exactly how they finalize the usage.

**Q. Ryan, how excited are you with this first race with a new hybrid unit? How helpful do you think the**

**experience of Jack will be?**

RYAN HUNTER-REAY: I think it's very track-dependent first of all on how that hybrid unit is used. It's early days. Too early really, especially after talking to all the drivers after the test, to really tell what we're dealing with.

Right now the biggest thing is trying to get our head around the setup changes that are needed to compensate, to deal with the weight distribution. The added weight first of all, the weight distribution shift, trying to get the grip back in the car. That's the biggest thing.

The actual deployment of power and the harvesting of power, yeah, we've been working on that in a simulator, we've been working with that on track. It's not the most powerful unit. I expected a bit more out of it, what it does give you. When you need to re-gen, harvest the power, it's taking away from it.

It will be a strategy play. It will obviously be easy to harvest energy when you're in a pack trying to save fuel and things like that. Yeah, hitting the button while the other car in front of you, let's say, doesn't have the pack stored with power, it could be an advantage. Right now it's trying to get basically the mechanical package within the window that we need to run as close as possible in traffic.

**Q. You mentioned your goal is always to win the Indy 500. In a realistic way, taking into account it's the only race of the year, what will be a goal?**

DON CUSICK: As Dennis said, our goal is to win the race. That's what we set out to do every time. That will be my third year with them.

I was up in the pit box with Dennis last year. He calls a hell of a race. I'll tell you what, he's a really, really smart guy. I like our chances every time we put a car on the track. They do an unbelievable job of preparing those cars, as good as anybody. I think we showed last year what we can do. I think it's only going to get better this year. We got a little bit more budget. We're going to do a little more testing.

I'm just super excited for it. I believe we can win the race. If I didn't, I don't think I'd be involved. I feel very fortunate to be involved with Dennis and Brett and Chase and the entire team. Also Chevrolet, which Jack, you're going to love by the way. You'll love Chevy. They're great.

THE MODERATOR: We'll leave it there for now. Dennis, Don, Ryan, Jack, congratulations. See you at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Have a great holiday season.



