

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

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### Scott Dixon

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Six-time NTT INDYCAR Series champion, Scott Dixon, back to drive the No. 9 PNC Bank Chip Ganassi Racing Honda as he starts his 25th season in the NTT INDYCAR Series --

SCOTT DIXON: Wow. Wow. I thought it was only my 24th.

**Q. Two more race wins in 2024, and this May scheduled to break the all-time starts record held by Mario Andretti. Congratulations on obviously the accolades continue and the off-season is almost in the rear view mirror. How much are you looking forward to 2025?**

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, excited. It was a long off-season. Not much driving, too, which was new. I think last year all of us kind of had a little bit more with the hybrid stuff, but yeah, I won't drive the INDYCAR from Nashville to the open test the middle of February before we go to St. Pete.

But excited to get going. Excited to drive some IMSA cars, as well, as we get prepped for Daytona. But, yeah, it was actually a nice off-season.

**Q. What changes are in store for you or is it pretty much steady she goes?**

SCOTT DIXON: No, I think there will be a fair few changes. Obviously the team goes from five back down to three. I think in all fairness that will help a lot, and just attention to detail and getting back to basics a little bit.

Plus I think they were a little stressed on people and size of the team and things like that. Obviously a new partnership with Meyer Shank, so it's obviously fun to work with Armstrong again and obviously my old teammate, Felix, so looking forward to that combo.

But yeah, personnel-wise I think there will be a fair few changes around the board and around the team with how they've restructured and starting an Indy Lights team.

Chip has got a lot of things going on, so it is fun to be a part of, but excited for the season to kick off.

**Q. You've made referenced to it a little bit, last year having five full-time cars. I know you'll still have five engineers with the two cars that some CGR folks will be looking after at MSR, but now that you've had some distance from it, what was the experience like of having four plus you, four guys that you were working with, in debriefs and just the way the team moved through the 2024 campaign?**

SCOTT DIXON: The debriefs I think could go a bit crazy, but they didn't. I think the group that we had was well-balanced. I think the team had done a great job in bringing some pretty good structure to it. They were well-managed, especially the meetings. I think going into the season, you kind of imagined how things could go poorly, but it didn't.

I think honestly with five cars, the team did a great job. It's just sometimes some areas lack a bit or cataloging things don't work as well. You don't have the same amount of parts maybe that are in rotation and things like that.

I know for the crews it was kind of difficult, especially with how the season is structured. Those summer months are pretty brutal. Luckily we didn't have as much damage throughout the season as well, and that made the back-to-back races and testing pretty seamless.

**Q. Moving from five to three as you referenced, this teams takes over a new technical partnership with Meyer Shank Racing. You guys add an Indy Lights team. This team has continued to evolve, especially over the last five, six, seven years and what Chip is involved in in and out of IMSA, NASCAR, and as that has been going on you continue to rattle off championships between the team. What is so important about this team and the ways in which the group that Chip and Mike have assembled can perform at such a high level with all different things that you guys are involved in?**

SCOTT DIXON: I think it's pretty simple. I think it comes down to the people. Obviously you have a structure and



the way that you manage it. There's obviously a lot of great people at the top. But the key part is the people.

I think even as you mentioned kind of cutting over from the IMSA programs kind of dipping in and dipping out, I know Chip has said that he's not going to be at Daytona this year, and hopefully they're working on some progress for that.

Indy Lights is kind of a revisit thing from I don't even know when that was, 12 years ago, 10 years ago, something like that, so that's exciting. I think that's big for obviously the growth of the team and also making sure you hold on to the talent that you had for whether they decide to make a change later down the road, as well.

I think it's the mentality. Chip is as I always say one of the most competitive people I know, and having that right from the top I think goes a long way. They also create opportunity from our partners that have enabled us to dig deep and get what we need to do and get what we need to get done to help us do that.

It's a great environment to be involved in.

**Q. As you've been on the doorstep of championship No. 7 the last couple years and you had a chance to reflect on 2024, where were some of the places that either you or the team fell short or just lost bits of points here or there that left you out of serious contention for the championship once we got down to the last couple races of the year?**

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, it was a trying year. I think we led kind of the first half of the season and then just -- it kind of went to s--t.

We had some little mistakes. We had kind of an issue with the tire at Road America. Then we had a hybrid failure at mid-Ohio. Then crashed out in Portland. The list kind of goes on.

It was a bit of a rough end to the season and one that you could have made some changes and a lot of things were really just out of our control, as well.

Those things definitely make you stronger. I think going into the season, I think as a whole the team ran well. I think our short track oval stuff needed some attention. Road courses were okay. Street courses fundamentally as a group qualifying-wise wasn't great. Race pace was decent.

We definitely have some big areas and some low-hanging fruit where I think we can make some big shifts and some

big changes for a positive effect. Looking forward to that.

**Q. Do you feel like you're every bit a part of having a shot with the group you've got with having a shot at championship No. 7 in 2025?**

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, I think it's all about execution and preparation. Last year I think we prepared quite well. Execution was maybe not so great on many levels.

I think the great thing about the series and also the hardest thing about the series is just how competitive it is. It's brutal. You miss a little bit or give up a couple of races and you're really not going to be in it.

You've got to finish all the races. You've got to be quick. You've got to be quick on all disciplines. It's tight right now, really tight, which is great for everybody to watch.

**Q. Ross moved over to MSR, so do you know who your engineer is going to be? Can you tell us?**

SCOTT DIXON: I don't know. I don't know if I can tell. I can? Oh, I can't say apparently. Someone that's been there for a long time.

**Q. So Brad?**

SCOTT DIXON: I don't know. He could be.

**Q. Have you had a chance to see the new FOX commercial with Josef, and have you --**

SCOTT DIXON: I haven't seen it. I saw it like it flicked past, but I haven't watched the whole thing. I hope it's great. FOX is going to be a great partner, so I'm looking forward to that.

**Q. I'm going to follow up a little bit more on the FOX question. You've seen, been through a lot of TV partners here in your INDYCAR career. When you see the level of engagement and promotion and marketing that they're putting into the product, how excited does that make you, and how much is this just what INDYCAR needs?**

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, I think it's big. I think that's kind of what you always ask even from partners in the past, and sometimes it would kind of click and sometimes it wouldn't.

But it seems like out of the gate they're really excited. They're wanting to make this bigger and better, which is what you really want from partners.

I'm excited for it. I think a lot of the sport side of it, whether



it's been with the NFL or other forms of sports throughout the year or throughout kind of the off-season has been exciting to see.

A lot of things in the works, so haven't done any of the sets yet today, but I've heard they're pretty extensive, which is exciting, too. Just hope they can blow this thing up. It would be great for everyone.

**Q. You've been through a lot of ups and downs in INDYCAR as an organization, from some pretty lean years where they weren't really getting much attention at all and now it seems like there's a lot of momentum. The Grand Prix of Arlington that's going to happen in 2026, new car on the drawing board maybe being developed. How satisfied are you to see all of this finally starting to take hold?**

SCOTT DIXON: Super excited. I think excited for the future of the sport. I think as a group, everybody in here has always seen what the product is. I think getting it in front of new eyeballs has always been the key, and especially now I think with the reach that many sports have had, I think even if you referred to the F1 thing, I think that's helping all racing entities at the moment.

Excited for that, and I think it was a great time to have that switch with FOX. They're really going to embrace it. I'm excited, man. I hope it's going to be big.

**Q. You mentioned teammates earlier. You've worked with and been teammates with some of the best in INDYCAR history. You add Helio Castroneves to that coming up in the month of May, how excited are you looking forward to working with him?**

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, I never actually thought about that. Just in the fact that, yeah, I hadn't got to that portion of the season. But no, it's going to be fun, actually. I think with Helio, I've known Helio for 25 or more years with racing against him, so never in a capacity and especially at Indy, I think, where he's a four-time champion. It's going to be exciting to see what they do, how he works that race just by itself.

But it will be a lot of fun, I know that, with Helio. It's always a lot of fun just hanging with him. But yeah, excited to see his insight of what's made him so successful at the speedway.

**Q. What continues to drive Scott Dixon? I think your son is starting to get into racing now, too, and maybe had a go-kart or a pedal cart. But what continues to drive Scott Dixon forward? It's been 25 years since you won the Indy Lights Championship, INDY NXT.**

**Kind of unfathomable to think about you're still on top of your game 25 years later.**

SCOTT DIXON: I think, again, it's just the competition. It sucks to get beat and I hate it. I think that's what drives you. As I've always said, it's weird how you don't really think too much about the championships that you won. It's kind of the ones lost and even going to a different level, about the races that you lost over certain things or just not getting it right.

Yeah, the fire burns strong, man. I'm looking forward to getting after it for another year.

**Q. Speaking of sucks to get beat, we talked about Alex going for three in a row and Josef going for three Indy 500s in a row. The fact that we're overlooking Scott Dixon, a six-time champion, are we going to wake a sleeping giant come September?**

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, I'm fine with flying under the radar, man. That's what I love the most. Yeah, keep those guys working flat out. That sounds good to me.

**Q. Speaking of champions, I feel like this championship has been won in several different ways lately. You look at Alex last year and Will a couple years before that, but then Alex had, what five, six wins the season between that. How much out of your six and now we're going into your 25th season has winning this championship evolved, and how do you balance the aggression versus taking a good points day knowing that you almost have to be perfect to win this title now?**

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, it's definitely played, I think, into how we've won some championships throughout the years, even looking back to Dario's championships where consistency is key. I think my first championship I DNF'd six races. I think there was only 16 races that season, too, and only finished 10 of them but still won it. You couldn't do that these days. It's not even possible.

If you're having a bad day, you've got to get the most out of it. Alex, him and the 10 car team last year was a huge testament to that. You know, rough weekends where they just maybe had an issue in qualifying or something, but were still able to pull out a top 5 or a top 4, those are the days that win you the championship.

I think the both of us only had two wins last year but still for him to come away with the championship and go into the last race with a pretty healthy -- Will made it a little bit easier for him, I think, with the Milwaukee situation. But it just showed that consistency last year was definitely -- and



you must finish, you must finish well. They did a great job.

**Q. You mentioned earlier about the execution in terms of kind of getting results and stuff heading into this year. In terms of the team dynamic, how do you think that's going to change in terms of, hey, the team runs kind of on a day-to-day basis?**

SCOTT DIXON: Day-to-day stuff I don't think will change much. I think at-track presence may be a little bit different just with groups and how they're structured I think throughout. I think some of those details still haven't been kind of defined yet.

I think once we get kind of closer to the February test we'll understand a little bit more to that, but you're not going to change something that's working. The team is still wanting championships.

You can kind of take that to a different level on which stand or which group of people that you're working with on your own, the 9 car or the 10 car or the 8, things like that. There will definitely be some changes I think on that front.

I think as far as how the group works, we'll stay pretty similar.

**Q. In terms of the races this year, outside of the Indy 500, which are you most looking forward to?**

SCOTT DIXON: The first one, St. Pete. I want to win that one.

**Q. Something we're all looking forward to in hopefully 2027 is the new formula. What boxes as a driver does that new formula need to check?**

SCOTT DIXON: I haven't heard much about the whole new formula or what's coming or if anything is coming. I know there's a car supposedly happening in '27, but --

**Q. Have you seen it?**

SCOTT DIXON: I haven't even -- nobody has even asked me about it, so I have no idea. I wouldn't know if it's going to have two wheels or three wheels or...

**Q. If you were developing a new chassis, what would your wish list be?**

SCOTT DIXON: The weight. I'm sure everybody says that. But that, I think, will make raceability a lot better. This will give the tire some breathing window, as well. The look definitely needs to be updated.

I think as far as the driver situation, I don't even know if they're going to introduce power steering. Those are some things that even junior categories have now where we don't, and that would help, especially with a lot of wrist and hand injuries.

So on the safety side I think that would be pretty big.

You don't want to change too much because the fundamentals work really well. It's a great racing series. I think we're very lucky to do what we do.

I would like to see more power. The car has kind of degraded over the year as far as if you look for a power-to-weight situation. The first car I drove in kart was 1000 horsepower and probably several pounds lighter. So I think to get back to a faster car would be cool.

A lot of circuits we go to are only a couple seconds quicker than the INDY NXT car.

**Q. Something I remember you mentioning a year or two ago, specifically about the superspeedway racing, is that the current car is maybe too aero efficient. Could you expand on that a little bit?**

SCOTT DIXON: Everybody is in the same box, right? Even if you were going to -- there's just not much adjustability. I think obviously the extreme was the body kit, the aero kit days where you had a lot of pieces that you could put on or take off, and I think that made the variables much bigger between where you started the race to where cars finished at the end.

I remember a Texas race and everybody was laughing at us starting in the middle of the pack with a loaded downforce and we nearly lapped the whole field. They were like, oh, you got way too, much downforce. Going to be so slow. But that was pretty cool because everybody was on a different kind of strategy as far as downforce versus drag.

I think some changeability would be kind of nice, some areas for a little bit of development. At the minute you can't really do anything apart from dampers and stuff like that. There's a lot of different windows. But I have no idea what the car is even going to be.

**Q. About Helio, have you ever had a situation where you were in strategic conversations with Helio, sports cars, anything have you worked with him?**

SCOTT DIXON: No, not at all.

**Q. It's unbelievable, isn't it?**



SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, yeah. It's kind of -- I'm trying to think because even with Daytona this year, I thought maybe he was going to be in that lineup, as well, and then things changed with other things he had coming. So no, I haven't. I've heard stories, but...

**Q. I just wondered a little bit more about the MSR relationship. Obviously you've got Armstrong there now, which was at Ganassi last year, Felix has been there before. Do these factors come into play in that relationship? Is it just a technical thing, or will that come up in debriefs and they know Ganassi, so will that impact things?**

SCOTT DIXON: I think it makes it a little bit easier. Obviously for Marcus it's kind of seamless because he has the same kind of engineering group. So that kind of just goes with him, which is great. Actually most of his interaction as far as -- I don't even know. I haven't seen him actually today, whether he's still living in Indy. I imagine he is because then he would just come to the Ganassi shop as usual to debrief and all that kind of stuff.

Felix has been out of the mix for a little bit but obviously knows many of the people.

It makes it a lot easier, one, for them, but also for us in a debrief situation. So yeah, I think for Marcus, obviously it's pretty seamless, and then for Felix, not much has changed since I think he was here.

**Q. You kind of touched on it before and we know this is all about winning and winning counts, but the motivation factor for you, 24, maybe 25 years in, I look back at when we were first together in Indy Lights days and stuff like that. Do you still wake up with that urge to get on in there and be amongst the team and get the car to the front? What gives you that each morning?**

SCOTT DIXON: I don't know. I think it's wanting to -- obviously each season is different and then how that kind of goes into the next season. But for me, this year I want to make the best year yet. It's just working on the issues that you maybe had last year in preparation and to maybe the situations that we had at different races.

So again, as I said, some situations are out of your control, but also try and make things a lot better.

Again, it's just the competitiveness side for me, I think for me, for the team, for my wife. Yeah, it's winning, man. It's all about winning. I think that's definitely what makes me wake up in the morning and want to go train, train harder and be better for the season.

**Q. I spoke to Jim Leo once and he said at the age that you're at now by comparison to say an Armstrong or something, the level of commitment and training is actually stronger now from you than what it was back then just to be on par with those guys. Do you feel that?**

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, you have more structure in your older life. I remember my younger years. You've got a lot of different things that you do.

I don't know, it's just, I guess, what is important at the time, and I think racing has always been extremely important for me. That's what drives me every day. You need to be committed at this level. Marcus is very much that way, as well.

It's these long off-seasons, man. You've got too much time to think about stuff.

**Q. The relationship, obviously, on the stand and having Mike Hull there again, how important is that consistency for you with someone like him there? You've been together as a combo for a long time. When it comes to the judgment calls, do you feel better knowing that sort of relationship?**

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, absolutely. Mike and I have had some amazing days and some not so amazing days throughout, which is obviously what happens in racing.

But yeah, excited for the new year. I know he is. Some things will change on the stand this year, so we'll see how that plays out.

But yeah, I love working with Mike. He's been an amazing part of, obviously, Chip's team for many years even before me. I'm looking forward to it. He's in a great place right now, and obviously having that confidence with him there is huge.

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