

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

Wednesday, January 15, 2025

Will Power

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Wrapping up content days 2025 with Will Power, back in the No. 12 Verizon Team Penske Chevrolet, beginning his 21st year of association in the NTT INDYCAR Series; three more wins last year gives him 44 for his career, along with his record 70 pole positions and two INDYCAR Series championships.

Here's to 2025.

Conor Daly was in here earlier and said you had dad hair. What is dad hair?

WILL POWER: I know. That's like an insult. That's kind of -- I was like, really? I thought his neat and tidy -- I thought he'd go into the air, and he was like, you've got dad hair.

I mean, what was the guy's name -- Liz was saying when I grew a beard I was looking like someone. Wasn't Family Ties, was it? The dad wore the sort of like sweater.

Q. Oh, on Family Ties?

WILL POWER: It was the most daddest looking dad ever. Like the daddest looking -- if someone says you look like that, it's kind of like, oh, my God. It hasn't come to this, hasn't it?

Q. What are the expectations for 2025?

WILL POWER: The expectations, yeah, based on the performance the second half, really most of the season last year were very strong. A very disappointing end, obviously, there to drop back a couple in the championship standings.

Yeah, very determined to come back and have a strong 2025. I think we'll have the car, engine, package to do it, and I think Penske is in a very good spot right now. Obviously everyone goes back and works on their stuff. I'm sure Honda has gone away and worked, and Chevy has, also, and other teams.

Obviously Colton seemed very strong last year. I think

Andretti will be strong.

I think McLaren will be strong. They've got Lundgaard there now with Pato, so that's two very strong guys, as well.

It will be a tough year, as it is, and that's why I enjoy it. I love that stuff.

Q. The Verizon car has got a little different look, clearly, this year.

WILL POWER: Yeah, I love it, man. I love the look. It's nice and bright, and it's cool they keep coming up with different liveries each year and get to try something new.

Q. It'll look good in Victory Lane, too.

WILL POWER: It'll look very good in Victory Lane.

Q. You were ahead of the curve on the FOX Sports promotions in that your car got unveiled on FOX's NFL Sunday. Just to be able to have that type of platform which is how many millions of people tune in to FOX NFL Sunday, how valuable is that to you, and is that when you realized these guys are really invested?

WILL POWER: It's great to see what FOX has been doing. You look at that commercial with Josef, the unveiling of the Verizon car, they're serious. They're advertising us before NFL games. I don't know the numbers, but you can tell they are serious about making our series big and doing a great job, and I think it's everything that we needed.

Just really, really happy to have FOX on board, to be on all network races, similar times.

Yeah, I think similar place, same times, all the stuff that INDYCAR has needed. And yeah, just watching it all, it's such a difference even from five years ago, but just having been around the series so long, it's so great to see.

Q. Have you done your commercial yet, or do you know what the script will be like for it or the theme?

WILL POWER: My commercial? Am I getting one? I don't



know. Yeah, I'm not sure. I think I'll always -- I was actually going to fly out to LA and do something at some point, but yeah. They can have me up there and sing something. Yeah, man. I'll be like Shwartzman. Him and I will get up and --

Q. You and Flavor Flav maybe? He was Duke's Mayo jar mascot, Mayo Bowl.

WILL POWER: Yeah, I like those chips. There's all these bowls I've just noticed lately. It's funny. To you guys it's just --

Q. It's been around for a while.

WILL POWER: I know it's been around for a while, but I didn't grow up with bowls. The state of origin is on -- football, rugby league -- yeah, you guys are this bowl, Chili Bow, that bowl.

Q. The Chili Bowl is not a football game, though.

WILL POWER: The Chili Bowl is racing, right? But there's just all sorts of bowls. What is a bowl, though? Why call it a bowl?

Q. It's part of the Rose Bowl because it looks like a bowl. Scott Dixon and you are both performance level, competition level, still right there, top of your game, and to be able to sustain that through the ages that both of you are, just how impressive is that?

WILL POWER: It's not just -- so about being impressive, it's like necessary. You're certainly not sticking around if you're not doing that. You'd better turn up or else she's over. That's just the way it is.

But I love it. I love the competition. I love the preparation. I love finding new little details and things to be better every year.

Yeah, it's kind of funny you get to this point in your career and I feel you're at your absolute best as far as putting a whole series together, weekend together, races together. You kind of have the same speed that you had but you don't really build on speed. I think it's just a natural thing that you have.

But the whole other package takes a long time to get unless you're Palou, like some of those guys that just mature and they work that out very early.

Q. (Indiscernible).

WILL POWER: Yeah, I mean, you're fast. I was fast from

the outset, from when you're a kid, but it's the other stuff that is hard to put together.

Q. Just to put a bow on the pregame conversation, FOX, you're looking at 20 to 30 million people that are probably looking at that.

WILL POWER: Yeah, that's great.

Q. I know the off-season after the 2023 season you were incredibly busy doing all sorts of testing, helping out with development of the hybrid. How different has this off-season that we've just nearly undergone been for you? Has it been a lot more low key? What have you been up to since you were on the racetrack in Nashville?

WILL POWER: Yeah, it's been nothing like last off-season, like you say. I think they've restricted testing too much. To just have one day before we start racing I think is too far -- I feel like we should at least have sort of three days spaced out or something like that.

You know, all you can do is get as fit as you can and sort of do all the homework you can do without driving a car really, without driving INDYCARs. Obviously there's other things you can do. We have the simulator and so on that you can do work on. But yeah, it's hard.

It's the same for everyone. It is. Except for the guys that are just coming in, and they probably get a little bit more testing. But yeah, it's just the way pretty much all of motorsports has headed to save costs.

Running a simulator is also -- yeah, I think if you're spending a lot of money on a sim, it would be nice just to spend some of that on actual true track testing.

Q. I know you announced today that you signed on with A14 Management with Fernando Alonso and Oriol Servia. From what I understand, it's the first time in your career that you've had someone representing you from a manager/agent perspective. Why was that important to you and what are you excited about getting to link up with Fernando and Oriol?

WILL POWER: Yeah, I was teammates with Oriol in 2008 and he's been a very good friend of mine for years. I have a lot of respect for Fernando. He has a lot of contacts in Europe, which if you want to get in a team that can win Le Mans or something like that, that's very handy for me. Oriol is at every INDYCAR race, so he's around.

But also I don't want to think about anything but driving, and yeah, they're -- I've usually done it myself, but at the

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

end of the day it's all about performance and enjoying driving and not thinking about the other stuff. That's kind of why I did that.

Q. I don't want to assume this, but I know there's been a lot of talk about what you may be doing beyond 2025. Was it specifically important to get that settled and have someone else deal with that for you as you enter a 2025 contract year with Team Penske, which I think we all know could get -- typically gets taken care of fairly early in the season?

WILL POWER: Yeah, some of that. Maybe I should have had a manager a long time ago. I think it's just generally now, every driver has one. It's just what drivers -- drivers focus on what they do, and they have a guy taking care of even business stuff for you.

It's many things, yeah.

Q. Helio is going to be running the 500 and of course has a provisional for that now. Is that something you want to do in the future given your partnership with Penske knowing you're guaranteed for a spot now if you'd like to?

WILL POWER: For what?

Q. The Daytona 500.

WILL POWER: Yeah, I mean, certainly open to any of those things that I haven't done, yeah, to do at some point. It's not really on my radar at present. I'm so focused on just specifically INDYCAR, to be ultra competitive at that. Some of that stuff I really like to watch and would love to do.

Q. Talking about Josef going for three in a row, Alex going for three in a row, you're also going for three championships. You're the only one not named Alex Palou to win a championship since 2021, and we talked in Nashville and thought you maybe you should've been a little more conservative in areas, but you were going to go back and look at it. What is your thought process as we get closer to the season? How do you temper that aggression? Do you try to go back to that blueprint from your last championship or do you have to be aggressive to win this thing still?

WILL POWER: It's that sweet spot of a balance. Definitely when I look at some of those moves, when I think about Toronto, that was just worth sitting there. There's no question in my mind. The thing that sort of suckered me into doing something like that is I had done that move multiple times even in that race because people have to

brake a bit early and you're kind of put in a position where they have to lift out.

But that's that sweet spot where you're sitting in fifth and Palou is behind you at that point, you should be sitting there. That was a mistake. They're the things that you've got to weigh up. It's just walking that tightrope perfectly. I think if you're too conservative in this current field you won't get the performance you need to get the points. The field is too stacked. There will be too many people filling those gaps where you've just sort of let off a little bit.

It's become harder to put that together. But yeah, I would say for our speed in the second half or the last quarter of the season, we had the potential to win like three more races or something, and it just didn't happen.

I would say Palou didn't have the outright speed and performance that those guys were sort of a little bit on the back foot, and it was sort of there for us as a team for the taking. We didn't do it, and the team provided everything we needed to do that, and it didn't happen. So yeah, certainly reflecting on that stuff.

Q. Last year is also the first year you didn't win a pole. A couple years ago you didn't get a win and then you stormed back. I know it's just a pole but also that's an extra championship point. How important is it to get back to winning poles this coming season?

WILL POWER: Yeah, I think you put yourself in a great position if you win poles. You qualify in the top 6, you put yourself in a really good position. I wasn't heavily focused on that. I really wasn't. In some respects I didn't want to get poles on ovals because I think it kind of in some ways hurts you a little bit at times, just being out front in nice clean air. Car feels great, then you get put back and it takes you another sort of stint to get your head around a car in dirty air. So there's some good and bad in that.

But for sure on road courses qualifying at the very front is a big deal, which I was sort of getting more top 6s than '23.

But yeah, it's hard to get poles these days. It really is. No one is like pumping out multi-poles in a year anymore. It's very difficult.

Very race focused. I have been more recently. But yeah, you can't -- like I said, you can say all these things, but you cannot leave anything on the table in this series anymore. There's no place where you can go, well, be a bit conservative here; those positions will be filled anytime you are basically.

Q. I know you mentioned doing Le Mans at some point



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WILL POWER: Yeah.

Q. But your INDYCAR performance was still really good. What is the timeline for you? Do you want to keep doing INDYCAR as long as you can?

WILL POWER: I think I could be absolutely competitive for another five years if I wanted.

Q. Is that the goal then to keep doing INDYCAR?

WILL POWER: It's absolutely the goal, yeah, to definitely keep rolling while I'm really competitive. I was like very competitive last year. I won three races and seven podiums. No one else in the field but McLaughlin did that. So I'm still performance really high.

Yeah, if I wasn't performing, I wouldn't want to do it. I'm still learning. It's crazy, but you're still learning stuff.

Q. Your longevity as a driver speaks for itself, the tremendous success you've had and continue to have. I can't remember a time, though, when you weren't driving for Verizon. The relationship, talk about what that's been like for you individually, not just for Team Penske, and how proud you must be of that.

WILL POWER: Yeah, I feel like I've been very fortunate in that respect, to have kept Verizon as a sponsor for -- I think we're for 16 years now.

Yeah, it's hard to do that in this sport, and there's been a couple of different CEOs in that time. I've ended up having good relationships with all of them and sort of keeping them engaged in racing.

Yeah, I think a lot of that is the team that I drive for. Roger is a class act, obviously, and an organization that is sponsored like that would want to be associated with -- when I look at it, for me signing with Penske full time in 2010 or getting my foot in the door in 2009 was just a pivotal moment in my career. Just set me up to be able to have these performances and keep a sponsor like Verizon for that long.

Yeah, I'm certainly reflective of how fortunate I am of being in a situation of driving for a team that will give you a car, that can win week in and week out and keeping that sponsor for that long.

Yeah, pretty cool. I can't be more thankful to Roger for giving me the chance that he's given me over the years.

Q. Will, it sounds like you're really passionate about Le Mans. Has that been a key reason for the management change? It seems like you're super keen to get over there and try and win that race.

WILL POWER: Yeah, I would love to have a shot at winning that race. I've won the Indy 500, and when I think about those sort of opportunities, someone like Fernando Alonso certainly has a lot of good contacts in Europe.

Yeah, it's a very cool event that I haven't been able to do yet. It's definitely, definitely on the radar.

Q. I know you said you intend to continue in INDYCAR for another five or so years. Are you happy at Team Penske, and is that where you would like to do that? From the outside I can't see you driving for another team, but what are your hopes and how do you hope that plays out?

WILL POWER: Yeah, like I said, I've been very lucky to drive for a team like Penske. There isn't a better team in the series right now. The performance and the crews you're given, everything. That's ultimately the goal.

Q. Wanted to ask, have you been a bit annoyed by the rumors that David Malukas is just standing by ready to take over your seat in 2026 or 2027?

WILL POWER: Yeah, no, I keep getting told that by various people. Yeah, yeah, honestly I haven't been told anything by the team from that side of things. Yeah, I'm sure there might be some truth to that, I suppose, if it's out there.

But yeah, I do hear that. Yeah, we'll see what happens. It's one of those things, huh? It's good to have someone knocking at the door.

Q. When do you feel you need to make your decision by in terms of when you order your two new attack dogs, Alonso and Serbia, to go after something else?

WILL POWER: Yeah, and talk about contract terms and all that. Those guys will do what's best for me at the time and that they're able to. They both have very good contacts and so on. So we'll see how it all plays out.

Q. As a multi-time winner and two-time champion, presumably it is your right to call the shots as to when you wish to end your career, right?

WILL POWER: Well, yeah, I mean, if I understand your question, it isn't my choice, obviously, because I don't own the team. It always become complicated. Obviously a lot

of things that play into that.

But at the end of the day if you're winning races and you're very strong, that's the best defense you have against any of that stuff.

Honestly, the way I performed last year, if you did the same this year -- winning three races in a season in INDYCAR now is very, very difficult. The champion only won two, I believe. That's difficult to do, and if you're doing that, you probably should be driving in that series. You deserve a seat.

Q. Verizon must have been fairly pleased with their results with you over the last however many years, 15?

WILL POWER: Yeah, I've had some -- yep. Won a 500, a couple of championships, a lot of races, a lot of poles. I've kept those guys on board, and I think companies like that want winners.

Obviously being associated with Roger Penske, and well, and that organization is a big part of it, too.

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