

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

Saturday, March 1, 2025

**Mark Miles**

**Eric Shanks**

**J. Douglas Boles**

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We wanted to offer up this special opportunity ahead of a big weekend. It's hard to call tomorrow the start of this era given the great promotional efforts that have taken place up until now. Certainly Super Bowl LIX and two practice sessions under the belt as well.

Tomorrow is the first broadcast of INDYCAR on Fox, noon eastern, with the leading race of the 2025 NTT INDYCAR Series Championship and the Firestone Grand Prix of St. Petersburg presented by RP Funding. The first of all 17 races on the NTT INDYCAR schedule to be broadcast. Reminder that NTT INDYCAR SERIES is the only premiere motorsports series in North America with all races broadcast on network television, but you knew that already.

Joining us this afternoon on the far right Doug Boles, president of INDYCAR and Indianapolis Motor Speedway. In the middle Eric Shanks, CEO of FOX Sports, and to your left, Mark Miles, President and CEO of Penske Entertainment Corp.

Mark, we'll lead with you. Just kind of your perspective on where INDYCAR is today after a very busy offseason and certainly kicking things off in beautiful St. Petersburg, Florida, as well.

MARK MILES: It's a real pleasure to be up here with Doug Boles and with Eric Shanks. It's a special delight to be up here with Eric Shanks, the reasons for which are undoubtedly already clear, but maybe even more so after our little program today.

I got the question, but I want to start by thanking the mayor and the administration and the officials of St. Petersburg, Florida. I think this is, like, 21 years, and it just somehow seems to get better every year. The whole paddock and all of us can't wait to get you down here and to kick off the season. We could kick it off a lot of places, but this is so special.

It feels like the fans here, the community here, the businesses here just keep growing in their enthusiasm for the event making it more special. Green Savoree, our promoters, do an incredible job. Again, it just keeps getting better.

Last year we were here talking about record attendance. This year it's definitely greater than last year. They have to keep adding more suites because they have trouble keeping up with the demand for suites. Doug keeps track of it every day on a weekend. The merch sales are way up already this year over last year. All systems go. We're just very, very happy to be here, and I suspect you are as well.

So your question was, where is INDYCAR, and how are we doing? I think we're in a really good place. We've said this before. INDYCAR has had a number of years of consistent sort of single digit growth. We didn't take that for granted, but we are completely sure, completely convinced that now it's rapid growth. There's a whole other level of trajectory for INDYCAR going forward. There's lots of reasons for that.

Eric and Fox are foundational. They're the most important reason for our optimism going forward. You all follow the sport closely, so you have seen it. First of all, it's their platforms. Fox reaches everybody. To have all of our races on network so all of our fans know where to look, and then to have the support of FS1 and 2 for all the rest of the practice and qualifying is the most fan-friendly thing I can imagine us doing. We are sure that that will help us grow our fan base and our audience.

Beyond that, we're seeing so many things. The creative for the spots that are kind of the most spectacular part of the incredible amount of promotion that's happened are off the charts. They were a little cutting-edge, shall we say, for our historical culture, and everybody just loved it, as far as I could see. So we love those spots. We love the emphasis on making our most probably best-known drivers heroes and more better known. The quality of the spots was great.

Then, of course, they've been everywhere, especially including the Super Bowl. So I don't know how you could



do any more to really put us out there, and that's about cross-promoting to other platforms, other sports, broadening the fan base, which is terrific.

Then there's the production. I don't want to steal any of Eric's thunder. I'm not sure what he is going to talk about, but the investments and the creativity and the passion for making what the audience sees more compelling, even more compelling, telling the stories better is off the charts. So whether it's investments in the drones, which are particularly well-suited to show this place off with the yachts in the marinas and being right in the town, the pointers which add really great clarity, I think, for our viewers, and so much more.

And we've invested. INDYCAR through IMS Productions has made a very substantial investment in new technology so we can be at the forefront of what's best in television. It just goes on. How about the activation with drivers and cologne I am not putting on out there? You guys are creative. You're not waiting for us to ask you to do something, and we're trying to keep up. We can't tell you how much we appreciate Fox. That's first and foremost in the list of things.

We've talked before about our strategy, which is you are now seeing, related to the way we want to develop our schedule. We want great partners, powerful partners in the sports marketplace, in the media marketplaces for the development of our events, and we want to be opportunistic in controlling and promoting some of the events ourselves.

So the best example, the first, is the joint venture with the Cowboys and the Rangers. Cannot wait to get to Arlington, although we will have to wait another year, but it's going to be off the charts, I'm sure. Then our purchase of Long Beach and our promotion of other events gives us control, the ability to invest more, and to have really more influence on the caliber and the placement of our events. So I think that's really important.

The third thing is Fox is helping us get in front of new fans, a wider array of fans, and led by Alex Damron and our marketing team, INDYCAR is investing in more digital, more content, making sure that we have the opportunities, lots of opportunities, to further engage these new fans in our sport.

Finally, we are excited about the car, which we will roll out, the new car, in the '27/'28 time frame. I'm sure we'll have the opportunity to talk more about that, but we think it's going to be great for our racing, attractive to our fans, more safe, and just check a lot of boxes we think about our future growth.

So that's how we feel about where INDYCAR is right now.

THE MODERATOR: Well put. Exactly. Eric, welcome. Nice T-shirt. Looking strong. For you, just to be the new home of INDYCAR, the excitement, this is personal for you. Maybe you can get into that a little bit and maybe give us a glimpse of what fans can expect from the first broadcast tomorrow.

ERIC SHANKS: Yeah, sure, just a big thanks to Mark and Doug for allowing us to be a part of this. It's a real honor to be able to kick off the season. As Mark said, it's rare that you are able to become a new partner at a time when they're already seeing massive green shoots of growth, and hopefully we can pour a little bit of ethanol onto what is already happening and bring everything that Fox has to bear.

It's something that you actually believe in, right, and you know that when you are able to elevate the stars and bring it to new fans, but also the hard-core fans, you know, these stars are ready to shine. That's really all we were able to do is start to build on what is already happening.

What the Penskes have done with owning the series and owning the speedway, there was just an enormous amount of momentum already. Then this partnership, which has really kind of been -- we've taken a few swings at being partners over the years, and the stars aligned now. With other things that were happening, we were able to put every race on broadcast television, which I think is going to make a big different. Consistency for fans and simplicity for fans, it means a lot. I think we're going to start to see all of that bear fruit.

THE MODERATOR: Wait for it to play out here in 2025 for sure. Doug, I know you've been busy these last couple of weeks. Maybe just talk about what the job has been like and maybe list a couple of priorities you've had the last 14 days or so.

J. DOUGLAS BOLES: Thanks, Dave. It's been 19 days. I don't think I've slept in the last 19 days, which is fantastic.

First, I want to add to what Mark said. As I'm sitting here, I remember the first time I came to this race, which was in 2005 as the Chief Operating Officer and part owner of Panther Racing, and I was on the pit stand. We were thinking about the first time that the INDYCARs, or back then the Indy Racing League, was going to actually fuel on the right side of the car because everything we had done up to that point was on the left side of the car. To think how far this event has come in 20 years, 21 running for this event. I see faces around here that I think were there at



the beginning. (Indiscernible) and Marshall Pruett, those of us who were here really from the very beginning of it.

It's amazing to walk around town here at night and see how the city has embraced this event. Tim Green and Kevin Savoree have done such a great job of moving this forward. I talked to Kevin earlier today. Things just continue to go really well.

Really for the last 19 days I've been trying to reconnect with people that I obviously knew, but really trying to build a different kind of relationship. Having been the President of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway since 2013, I really worked with our teams and our drivers as sort of the promoter function. How are we building the greatest race in the world and making it bigger now? Now the job is how do you take the greatest racing series in the world and make it bigger?

Thinking through the marketing side with them, thinking through the promotional side with them, but at the same time working with team managers, owners, trying to understand how can we together collectively as one big organization move forward? We have a great opportunity with respect to where we are with Fox, kicking things off this weekend, but how do we take that momentum, leverage it?

The other thing for me is just really trying to create a pipeline where we can get great information from the teams, ways that we can help the teams execute better, some of the concerns that they have so we can make those better. It's just been a great dialogue. I haven't had a conversation yet that I haven't walked away from and thought, you know what, we do have the greatest owners and teams on the face of the earth.

Together this paddock is going to do some pretty amazing things. I'm really looking forward to it.

THE MODERATOR: With that, we'll open it up for questions.

**Q. This is for Mr. Shanks. We've seen what a tremendous job Fox has done promoting the start of the INDYCAR SERIES on Fox. What do you have in store for us to promote your first Indianapolis 500?**

ERIC SHANKS: Yeah, I think our goal with particularly how we have dug into INDYCAR and this partnership is figuring out how to make the hard-core fans more passionate, but also make the product approachable to new fans?

As you guys can imagine, open-wheel racing is cool, but

you really kind of got to work to attach yourself to it. So we're doing simple things, like every 15 minutes telling you what the rules are, right, because it's kind of complicated. We are deploying new technology to take you places that you haven't been before, but then also simple things like who is in what car? We put transponders in the car along with INDYCAR that for the first time you can actually -- like during practice on a wide shot you see who is who. These cars all kind of look the same, and they don't have big numbers.

Then it really all comes down to the drivers. You take Alex, Josef, Pato, Marcus, Rossi. They have not said no to us yet, right, of doing anything. When these guys are all in and they think that they're with somebody that truly has their brand at heart, highlighting their personalities along with new technology, making it approachable, and we're going to learn as we go. Yesterday's broadcast was different than today's.

Then to answer your question about the 500 itself, we clearly know that it's the crowned jewel of all of motorsports, but we also wanted to make sure that our focus is not just on Indy. So you see what we're doing here. You're going to see what we're doing at Thermal, Long Beach, as it goes out. But we are going to blow the doors off of Indy. We're going to bring everything that Fox has to bear.

We have personalities that we probably haven't announced yet, but there will be an enormous amount of Fox personalities and non-Fox personalities doing everything that you could imagine there.

We're going to be cross-promoting with our other sports, and I think we have a two and a half hour pre-race show that day. You can imagine bringing Tom Rinaldi's storytelling to bear. Telling stories that hopefully you either haven't heard before or we're going to tell them in a way you haven't heard before. So keeping in mind that we want to elevate the whole series, we've got a big team already working on Indy.

**Q. From a real estate standpoint, the mobile home park, you were definitely ahead of the curve.**

ERIC SHANKS: We're definitely ahead of the curve. I'm waiting for the price to go up so that they actually give me a fair price if they ever want to buy it.

And we're getting new swag. This is the new swag for INDYCAR on Fox. "Fastest racing on earth," and then like a concert tour, we've got all of the stops on the back with the "Kick Start My Heart" Tour. That's our theme for the year. I think Vince Neil is actually going to be here

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tomorrow, which is going to be awesome.

Then, yeah, if anybody wants to stop by the Trackside Lodge at Indy, we'll have new swag for you there too. It's not real until you have T-shirts, right?

**Q. Every year I ask drivers and athletes, Have you set goals? Have you done that numbers-wise? Have you played this out for one year, multiple years, about what you expect and what you would ultimately hope?**

ERIC SHANKS: Yeah, I think I've learned a long time ago not to make predictions. You know, we all who grew up at the track, just remember mid-'80s to mid-'90s, and whether it's TV ratings or just the feel of the sport, I think that's our goal is to get the feel of the sport, that it's capturing the nation's attention at the times for our big tent pole events.

Ratings aside, can you walk down the street and talk to people about Josef and Pato? Can you strike up a conversation? I think that's, at the end of the day, a huge win at the end of the first few years.

**Q. Doug, what's been the process for you taking over as President of INDYCAR from Jay Frye?**

J. DOUGLAS BOLES: I think the biggest challenge for me or the thing I've been focused on the most was just getting into the paddock, into the transporters, into the shops and getting a chance to really sit down with owners and team managers and some of those decision-makers in the constituency that we need so badly, those teams, and understanding where they are, what we can do to help.

One of the things I think is a little bit of a differentiator for me than Jay -- I mean, Jay's focus was on the comp and ops side. That a piece that rolls up to me now, but the other side of it is how can I quickly help the teams from a commercial standpoint? Obviously the Fox piece is a big help from that. But how can we help there?

The other thing on acclamation from me for the series is touching base with our promoters. Literally the first call I may when this announcement was made to Kevin and Kim to say, Hey, how do we help make sure that the St. Petersburg race isn't just the kickoff race, but it's a kickoff event, and it really sets the tone for where the speedway is?

So a lot of it right now is still continuing to listen, to learn, to make small changes where I can that are sort of instant wins for us. Then just trying to keep everybody together as we go from race to race.

I mean, this is a really important weekend. Chris asked

about goals, and one of my goals for this weekend is how do we ensure that our team and the Fox team -- we've done a lot of stuff together. We've done a lot of preparing together. This is literally the fifth that we've been in the heat of battle together, and we are working side-by-side.

So if we get out of this weekend and we got out of yesterday in a fantastic space. We had a dinner last night to think through where we were. We had the Fox team with the race control folks thinking through all those rules. For me the biggest goal out of this weekend is to get out of this weekend where the relationship that we think is going to be so strong in practice is as strong as we think it's going to be. So far all indications are we're working together in a way that we're going to just move these things forward.

It's a whole bunch of things that I'm trying to get my hands around. Like I said, it's just the 19th day, you about the I feel like it's been a good one for me so far.

**Q. This is for the gentleman from Fox. A couple of drivers said that Fox is letting the drivers be drivers and not so rigid. Can you expand on how you're letting the drivers show off their personalities, driving styles, et cetera?**

ERIC SHANKS: Yeah. Kevin, it's an interesting question. I'm not sure that we're letting anybody do anything. Each team, each driver themselves has their own story really and kind of their own brand. I think it's up to us to figure out, okay, this is kind of the role that you play. Like, this is who we think you are, and then asking questions, telling stories, hopefully that reinforce that.

Quite honestly, a lot of it comes down to building that trust, and we've been with these guys a very short amount of time. So building that trust between our producers and honestly with their sponsors. Sometimes sponsors and teams kind of have their own personalities, right, and mix that in.

A lot of that trust comes with success and making sure that over a long period of time we're able to -- every driver has a great personality. We just have to figure out exactly who they are and what they do.

The really cool thing about this series is it really is all about the driver. The cars are so similar, and there's an enormous amount of engineering that goes into these things, but at the end of the day it's how aggressive, how smart, how strategic are these drivers. These drivers are elevated more than any other series in the world probably.

**Q. I'll start with Eric and Mark. You guys were asked**

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**sports**



**something kind of similar earlier, but how would you guys characterize a successful year one in this relationship?**

ERIC SHANKS: Well, I think a couple of things. The ratings we obviously want to be up, right? We have a multiple thousand person fan insights panel. So we want to start to see, all right, are the fan insights that we have, are they starting to turn for approachability? Are the hard-cores loving it?

Honestly, what I would love to see is the relationship with Fox help teams get new sponsors, help the league get new sponsors because that's what sets us off on this flywheel, right, is economic success. Every sponsor that comes on then uses their voice to actually market the sport as well, and I'm kind of hearing this from teams too. They're hearing better conversations with people either wanting to buy in or sponsor, because they believe in the trajectory that these guys have built and the media trajectory as well.

So the ratings are going to be the ratings. I think because every broadcast is on Fox -- I mean, I saw some numbers last year on Peacock that were pretty bad. So we're definitely going to do better I think on average, but that's just the first part of the story. The real part of the story is what does that do to the sport, right?

MARK MILES: Doug sort of said some of this. I think the starting point is that these teams which have kind of figured out how to work together so well really deliver and continue to get better and be more seamless in every aspect of the relationship.

We had this dinner last night. Everything you can think of that's in sports marketing.

ERIC SHANKS: Did you get your golf cart back, by the way?

MARK MILES: Oh, thanks (laughing).

ERIC SHANKS: His golf cart got towed because he double-parked in front of the restaurant.

MARK MILES: You know, this is a long season, Eric (laughing). Yeah, well, Alexis put him up to that, I'm quite sure.

Anyway, where was I? Yes, they're getting it back, and I haven't been charged with my criminal activity as far as I know.

No, to make these two teams that are formidable really execute together. There are so many ideas, but it all takes

great talent, meaning in our organizations, executing well. That's hard, right? To some extent, you're in L.A., and we're largely in Indianapolis. You have other things to do. We have some other things to tend to.

So I think that is sort of job one, making these teams a team. There's just zero hiccups or speed bumps so far. I have no question that that's going to be more than doable, and I think you'll see results of that where their marketing ideas and our promoters are more integrated. The same with the teams, et cetera.

I have the same answer with respect to the number. There isn't a number as far as we're concerned. Up is good. You know, never say it's in the bag, but I think that there will be growth, for sure. We'll see how high is up.

It's also this thing about them broadening our audience. Not just the numbers. Then us grabbing those new fans and making them great fans, while keeping the ones we've had for generations really. So it's all those things that won't surprise you.

**Q. Eric, obviously we saw the three drivers on the commercials that have run countless times on Fox channels, and we're starting to see drivers appear on FOX Sports talk shows over the last couple of days. In what ways as the season gets going will you and FOX Sports play into how drivers are part of your network outside of the Friday to Sunday race weekend?**

ERIC SHANKS: Yeah, definitely taking time out of our talk shows. We're totally integrated with Fox News. I think you said we're going to have a hit every hour in the morning on Fox News. You'll see more coverage probably in social and online. We have three complete social media teams down here this weekend that are going to be publishing everything today and tomorrow.

Then you'll start to see crossover with some of our other events, like in the All-Star game. LIV actually has an event in Indy, and so we're trying to figure out what the cross-promotion between LIV golfers at the motor speedway to promote their event and also promote the 500. What fun things can we do with LIV golfers at the track and then our own personalities?

It's a bit of a work in progress, but it's super fun because you've got the drivers kind of raising their hand now to do stuff. We'll take full advantage of that as it goes, but as far as kind of the meat and potatoes, we've got that kind of -- that machine is starting to be in place. I think what you'll see around the 500 is much more of all of our local stations all over the country really dive in and our marketing team will be working with each of them.

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The other thing with the 500 that I'm working on really hard with these guys is I really want to turn the Indy 500 into more of a Kentucky Derby day from a wagering standpoint. It's hard to understand how to wager on motorsports. You just kind of don't get it, but on Kentucky Derby day even if you don't know anything about horseracing, you put down an exacta or a trifecta, you got win, place, show. How can we figure out how to get that type of broad attention around an event that honestly kind of feels a lot like horseracing that day? That kind of stuff we're working on as well and hopefully have an announcement in the near future.

**Q. The last couple of months there's been news about Fox's direct-to-consumer streaming plans. What can you tell us about where that is and when something like that might be online here in the near future?**

ERIC SHANKS: So we did announce that customers will be able to buy a Fox package, like an ala carte Fox package, similar to what others have had. I don't think that we've announced when it will be, but because of all the work that we did for Vinu, we have a big tech stack kind of ready to go. You can imagine when most things launch in this country, right?

So it will be available. I don't think we've set price yet, but it will be the full package of your local station, Fox News, all the FOX Sports channels in one place. Yep.

**Q. This is for Mark and Doug. Mark, earlier you were talking about this is all about broadening INDYCAR's audience. Is there any desire to broadening to more of an international audience by adding more international circuits in the future?**

MARK MILES: I can take that, Doug. We want to grow our fan base internationally. At this point we're not looking to race outside of North America. Not to confuse North America with other international. We're working hard on Mexico, and I hope that happens. We can have something to say about that this year.

Listen, to have more teams. PREMA is amazing. What a great addition to the series. More drivers, more sponsors from abroad, greater audiences, reach, and revenue from our international media licensing. All that is responsible and doable given the kind of reach and fan base that we already have. It's a lot to start from.

**Q. Eric, interesting scenario coming here in a few months where NASCAR gets handed off to its next broadcaster for the year. Tell us about the transition point, because not too long, we're going to have INDYCAR as your main motor racing property. How do**

**you anticipate handling that? Do we get a lot more promotion? What happens?**

ERIC SHANKS: Yeah. Well, tomorrow is actually kind of a really cool day because it's the first time that we're going to take INDYCAR and lead straight into NASCAR at COTA. As much as we're talking about INDYCAR here, I do think that sometimes that's going to be reversed. Sometimes NASCAR will lead into INDYCAR. I think these two properties have the ability to elevate each other to talk to both fans. Who knows where that leads in the future with events and things like that.

Tomorrow is going to be an interesting test, right? There's probably going to be, like, 45 minutes in between checkered flag and green flag, which would be really cool.

As you know, I think we only go through the middle of May with NASCAR now, and then yeah, you turn into full-on INDYCAR while NASCAR goes to various other places. Yeah, you'll have the heart of the baseball season, so around the All-Star game. Yeah, that shelf space will free up, and at least from a Fox perspective, it will be INDYCAR and then kind of our other UFL and baseball and other spring and summer sports to promote and cross-promote Indy.

**Q. Eric, you are going to blow the doors off of the Indy 500. Your network has the Super Bowl, the Daytona 500, the World Series. You do a lot of big events. How do you blow the doors off the Indy 500 when you are already putting forth such great production?**

ERIC SHANKS: Yeah, I don't think he's here today, but it came down to this race. It was Bill Richards who produces our Fox NFL Sunday and Super Bowl pre-games. He is down here this weekend. I will tell you, we've already been shooting for the Indy 500 for months. We will have an added talent line-up in addition to the Fox personalities. We've got some things that we're talking about for the pre-race ceremonies that I think could be very cool.

With blowing the doors off, it really is, at least for us, like do you walk away feeling like you made new memories for people, and that's what we do with the Super Bowl pregame, with World Series pre-games. Do we feel like there's somebody that's 10 years old and somebody that's 80 years old that walked away from that day feeling like we made a burned in memory in their minds? Those memorable moments are what you do with features or stunts or people or colliding of worlds or things that we do in the pre-race that make you walk away going, Wow, that's different than what I've seen before.

That's kind of what we're planning, and we won't know until

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we get closer exactly what's going to hand, but those are the goals is to create memories for people of lifetime. The real memories are what happens during the race. Me going to 20-some Indy 500s, the memories are what happens in the race and making sure that you are able to take those things that happen on the track and hopefully elevate them into even bigger memories, you know.

**Q. The team owners, they love your enthusiasm, and they talk endlessly that Eric is so invested and involved in this, and he's going to bring INDYCAR to the next level. Where does your passion come from? Is it because you're an Indiana guy and Hoosiers just love the speedway and INDYCAR? Do you feel a great responsibility because everyone believes that you are going to do some great things for the series?**

ERIC SHANKS: Well, I think that's probably where it came from. All of us look back and say, you know, where did I get a little bit of an inkling of the start, and it honestly was at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. My first-ever internship was for GTE Motorsports at the Indy 500. I got to be an intern at Indy for a whole summer. I was, like, Holy crap, this is amazing. That was the first thing that triggered me.

Then I will say I was at Rahal Letterman Partner Summit last week in Indy or two weeks ago in Indy with Doug, and they put David Letterman up on the screen. I remember, David Letterman is kind of the reason I wanted to get into TV, because if a kid from Indiana can do what he did, why not? Just seeing him up there and seeing him be attached and he is as passionate about this sport today, it is kind of cool that it comes full circle.

I would say you wouldn't have the passion for it if you didn't already see the growth. The Penske ownership, Mark, Doug, the entire team, the drivers, you kind of feel like there's a wave here that you are starting to get up on the surf board, and you are going to go with it. If we can get this team together like these guys have talked about, the wave is going to be really big.

**Q. Last one is for Doug. Congratulations on your second full-time job. You already had a full-time job. How do you do two jobs now?**

J. DOUGLAS BOLES: Well, first of all, I don't sleep. That's the first thing. First of all, the thing that we really did is we had to take a deep look at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. We've got great, talented people at the speedway. So how do we organize enough that the team there can execute and allow me the freedom to spend 80% of my time working alongside these guys and the team owners and the drivers as we think about how we're going

to grow the NTT INDYCAR SERIES.

We have a great team at home, and they just have to get comfortable with not having me there every moment for every single decision. So far that's all gone really well. Obviously May I'll be there, so that will be helpful. At the same time I have to let go. That's maybe the biggest challenge is just letting go of some of the things where I might have been involved in.

So I'm checking emails. I get texts if something comes up, but for the most part I'm able to step away. They know the most important thing is diving into the NTT INDYCAR SERIES. That's really how we're doing it.

Got great people at the NTT INDYCAR SERIES. Mark Sibla has taken the comp and ops, so I'm not deep there. Race control is going to be Kyle. He's going to worry about that. I'm not going to go to race control, so I can stay sort of 10,000 feet instead of down in the trenches. I think that's definitely going to be helpful.

Then my goal is just to really alongside these guys just continue to grow. I do want to say the one thing you asked how he is going to blow this out of the water. First of all, as soon as the announcement was made, I started getting text messages and calls from Eric with ideas of how are he we going to grow this sport. It's been amazing and middle-of-the-night stuff.

Then I had an opportunity to go to Fox a couple of times. We had a really cool planning meeting at Fox where we actually sat through an earthquake, which was crazy. You guys didn't bother us, and Mark and I were, like, What's going on with the building here?

Then we went out for the Michael Strahan announcement, and I went out because the announcement was related to the speedway, but I really went out because I wanted to say, Is this really Eric Shanks, or is this the entire organization? From Bill Richards and everybody, Pam Miller, everybody is bought in on this. This is not just Eric. So we are fortunate to have Eric leading it. We're more fortunate to have an entire group of people who believe in this property, believe in this product, and think are going to grow it.

The other thing I think that's going to help blow it out, and Eric talked about it a little bit, when you say, Hey, how about leveraging some of these other relationships you have, whether it's Fox News, Fox News Nation, the local affiliates, it actually happens where before when we would talk to somebody and say, Hey, what about doing this? Well, that's a different division. You couldn't get the conversation. So to have an entire organization bought

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into the NTT INDYCAR SERIES I think is really what's going to help us blow the whole series and the 500 out of the water.

THE MODERATOR: A question from our friends from Brazil: How will the new technology help enhance international broadcasting?

ERIC SHANKS: How is technology going to enhance? My old boss, David Hill, had a great line, and I feel the same way, where you can work on a graphics package and technology and audio and all these things. He was so proud of this new package that he was going to launch on cricket, and he called his mom afterwards, and he said, Mom, what did you think of the broadcast? She said, Your announcer's tie was crooked. I couldn't pay attention to anything else that you did.

We have thrown a bunch of technology at this series that you'll see throughout the season, but I would say it's pretty simple. It's people talking to people. The booth that we have together, Will and Hinch and Townsend and then pit reporters that we have here this week, I think I am so excited about just the camaraderie and the energy and the passion that they have and already kind of just being on the inside of this sport. That's first and foremost is the people talking to people.

I would say everything that we've done technology-wise here is to make the sport more approachable. As much as it's easy for me to watch, I just put myself in fans who are trying to get into this, and first and foremost, they need to know the rules, so we're going to have a lot of technology to show the car and what the rules are and the impact of that, but then also just who is in what car, right? So I think that will go a long way highlighting how easy it is to attach yourself to the drivers and to this sport.

Then, you know, this is like a drone's playground out here. Aerial coverage, drones, everything that we're going to do is going to make it sexy and then hopefully more approachable.

**Q. Eric, I noticed yesterday one of the first things that we saw when the practice broadcast came on was the booth guys and some more relaxed attire, not in the suit, tie format that I think we have grown used to for years and years. What was the decision behind that? Why did you want these guys to look a little bit more relaxed?**

ERIC SHANKS: I have kind of one simple rule. It is that if you are on TV, you got to look better than the guy watching you who is sitting on the couch. You'll see the guys in ties at some point. Will has obviously his own very special

style, which is cool, but as long as it's put together and it looks top-notch. It can be more modern, but you're not going to see -- you're definitely going to see the guys put together and have a plan for how they look with each other, but the thinking is that's kind of who they are and they're more comfortable and they're still looking great. Sometimes they'll be more formal than others.

**Q. I know we might be getting a bit ahead of ourselves, but when we look at the 2026 INDYCAR schedule, I know a big thing you'll have next summer is the World Cup that I'm sure will take up a lot of bandwidth on your airwaves. How are you going about trying to balance an INDYCAR schedule that is so busy in that summer stretch along with several weeks of World Cup?**

ERIC SHANKS: I think that one is going to be huge.

We're going to have an audience for that World Cup that's going to break all records. It's definitely going to help INDYCAR.

Being able to work with our scheduling department to maintain that consistency as much as possible on the Fox Broadcast Network is something that the guys are in lockstep with and also making sure that we maintain momentum. We're going to have a great kickoff this weekend, and then we're taking a few weeks off.

So in the World Cup year the scheduling department is working together to figure out how to work to maximize the World Cup audience, but then also hopefully maintain that momentum and get us going and keeping it going once we start.

'26 is also the Arlington race, which is before the World Cup starts. You know, Dallas hosts eight or nine events, so I think this is going to be in and out before that shuts that down. We are taking that into account.

I would have to imagine going into '26, going into '27, the schedule is just going to keep getting better every year the longer that we have to plan for it.

ERIC SHANKS: We went from T-shirts all the way to the booth clothing today, which was great.

**Q. Does the booth wear the T-shirts?**

ERIC SHANKS: Do you think they should? Maybe for qualifying if I get out there in time.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks for your time.





