

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

Sunday, March 2, 2025

**Scott Dixon**

**Josef Newgarden**

Press Conference



eighth podium at St. Pete, 143 career podiums, which extends his already INDYCAR Series record. We heard you on TV saying you didn't have any radio. Was that the entire race or just towards the later --

THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to the VISIT St. Pete/Clearwater Media Center, wrapping up the Firestone Grand Prix of St. Petersburg presented by RP Funding. Our champion this year, Alex Palou, will be joining us momentarily, as will his teammate Scott Dixon.

But we're joined now by Josef Newgarden driving the No. 2 PPG Team Penske Chevrolet with his fourth podium here at St. Pete, 59th career podium, one behind the great Johnny Rutherford for his 17th all time. Josef led two laps today.

How would you describe the start to 2025? I'm sure if they would have told you ahead of time you'd get a podium finish, you might take that, although you'd love a win?

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Yeah, it was a good day. A podium is always solid. I think I said that on Friday when I was in here that ultimately we need a good day just to get points on the board. That's kind of going to be most important for this weekend, so we accomplished that.

Can't be too dissatisfied. I think we had some miscues in the race today for sure. Just a couple fueling-wise. But the team still did a stellar job. It starts with the foundation of a fast car, and we certainly had that all weekend, and it definitely felt like it was intact in the race.

Very solid overall, just wish we could have capitalized on the positioning. We were in a good position today to challenge for the win and misstepped a little bit, but really proud of the team and the way they started. Built awesome cars. We can go on with that and feel confident at least to challenge for wins in the future.

Putting good points on the board is always the key, so we can leave here with a solid result.

THE MODERATOR: We welcome in Scott Dixon, driver of the No. 9 Chip Ganassi Racing PNC Bank Honda, who led five laps today. Fifth runner-up finish here at St. Pete,

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, no radio for the entire race. It was kind of tough just to see what we were doing, kind of mileage-wise. I knew it was going to be a lot tighter, obviously; once the first caution happened, it was going to be a strict kind of two-stopper.

Kind of worked on the warm-up laps and kind of for the first 10 and that was about it, but ultimately cost us the race, I think, with not coming in when I should have, I think, with about maybe the same lap as Alex. We caught that traffic with about five or six cars and lost about two or three seconds on that in lap, so that was a bit of a nightmare.

Yeah, I don't know. Car was good. I think pit stops were really good. I think all around, we had good speed.

I think anytime that we had clean air, we could definitely stretch out, but spent most of the race in dirty air. It's kind of the first time I've ever done a whole race without a radio, so that was interesting. Glad we got some good points and a nice one, too, for the team.

**Q. A bit old-school, all told?**

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, needed like a lap board out there or something.

**Q. Scott, did you just know how to pit? Did they signal to you or did your fuel gauge --**

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, you have a fuel light so you can run -- you know when the car is going to run out. I didn't know if they could hear me, so I was just telling them I'm just go to run to the light and see what happens. Ultimately I think for me, it was just one lap too long. I should have pitted maybe when I saw the 10 car coming in.

**Q. You're not required to have a spotter here on a road course, so did you miss not having somebody in your ear, or do you not want anybody in your ear anyway?**

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SCOTT DIXON: I was hoping -- well, it's nice in the race, right, just to understand who's doing what, what strategy everybody is on. Even when you start to catch -- I think when I caught Rossi and maybe Lundgaard, I kept trying to ask, how many laps have they got to go before we can get some clean air and kind of push because it's very tough to just get a pass going here.

None of that information -- I just had to kind of guesstimate that they were maybe five or six laps offset from us, which it seemed like the 20 was, but the 7 wasn't. He went a couple laps more.

Yeah, it makes it difficult because especially with mileage, for us on the IMSA side or sports car side, you kind of have a pretty good gauge for understanding where you need to be, but with this thing you have no idea.

**Q. How are you going to beat Palou for the title?**

SCOTT DIXON: Get a radio that works, I think, would be good.

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: I'm sorry, that is an incredible question. It's round 1. I know this is your first race here, but it's round 1, dude. Let's see how it goes.

**Q. The physical difficulties out there, how was the track, alternate rubber, et cetera?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Very similar to last year, I would say. I don't know how everyone else feels, but to me it felt similar track conditions, good temperature, great track build. Kind of typical St. Pete. It just grips up like crazy here in the race. Certainly throughout the weekend and in the race it kind of takes another level throughout each stint.

Pretty straightforward. Felt like typical St. Pete. You've just got to get the cycling correct and get yourself in position. Obviously didn't have as much chaos with a lot of restarts. Sometimes that can jumble things up. Really just had a pretty straightforward day. Just needed to get the cycles right.

**Q. Scott, do you think Firestone -- INDYCAR may want to have Firestone come back a step? A tire you can't even get 10 laps out kind of defeats of purpose of having a second tire, doesn't it?**

SCOTT DIXON: No, I think that's good. It's got to be difficult. I think some cars could maybe get 20 laps, some maybe 10. I never got to experience it because I was kind of done and dusted after the restart. I was switched out. I think I needed one or two laps on the green and only half a lap on green on track. I don't know, I never really got to

experience it.

It's good. You've got to have degradation. I think if you had a race that went from green to checker, that would have definitely spiced it up, whereas in the past it wouldn't have. I think it's good.

**Q. Scott, at a track like St. Petersburg where the overcut is traditionally the favored move, what made the undercut work so well compared to the overcut for your teammate Alex Palou?**

SCOTT DIXON: The traffic. I caught about five or six cars on my in lap. I think I lost about two or three seconds just on my in lap. They did the right thing; they could see the traffic coming. I had no communication, so didn't know. I'm sure they were trying to call me in, but as soon as you catch them, the undercut is going to be pretty strong, especially if you pop out into clear track.

**Q. For both of you, Scott, I know this is your fifth time finishing runner-up here, eight total podiums. When you come into this race weekend, does it matter anymore that you haven't yet won on this track? Is it one that would really mean a lot to finally get a win at, at some point in the next couple years?**

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, I'm pretty pissed off. We had a good race going and we didn't get it done. So it doesn't feel good, that's for sure.

**Q. Josef, what were you going through the last lap or two when you started to fall away from Alex?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: I mean, we just had fuel miscues today two times. The second one we were just -- we had a shift that was unexpected with a lap to go, and we just had to hit the emergency button, which was unfortunate. We kind of started that last lap like half emergency mode, and then they said, you just have to pull the chute here. Like just finish.

Yeah, it happens. It's unfortunate.

To have miscues like that and to still finish third I think is a great day in a lot of ways. Really pleased to come out of here with points. Obviously there's a lot more that could have been.

**Q. Knowing you were returning to this track after winning and then having the win stripped away last spring, would a win have meant any more? Were you any more motivated coming into this weekend?**

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: No.



