

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

Sunday, April 13, 2025

Alex Palou

Christian Lundgaard

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, everyone. We wrap-up the 50th edition of the Acura Grand Prix of Long Beach. We are currently joined by the third-place finishing driver in Christian Lundgaard. Back-to-back podium finishes. Fifth career podium.

Christian, just your thoughts on another podium to start 2025 for you.

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: Yeah, awesome day. I told the team this morning, even before warm-up, Let's try to go aggressive, and let's see what we can do. We have the most tires of everybody. We had two sets of alts, three sets of new primaries. So I think all options were open for us today.

We went off strategy compared to what we expected most of the field to do. We were the first primary tire runner in the field. I think that showed that we had the pace, too, today. I think we made up a lot of pace on those pit cycles. The clean air, took advantage of the clear air.

Really happy to reward the guys. Yeah, they had to bring a new car back into play, the old lady, as they called her. We took the car in qualifying yesterday. So for everybody to rebuild a car and put it out on track this morning, she ran effortless today. I'm extremely happy for everybody.

THE MODERATOR: Third in points, 46 behind your pal Alex Palou. Strong start for you in the 2025 campaign.

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: No, absolutely. I was very vocal in the off-season that I wanted to get off to a strong start with Arrow McLaren. I think we've clearly done that. I've never been higher in the championship than where I am now. We've done a good job.

We started sort of conservative in St. Petersburg. I think today we showed what we really can be and where we're supposed to be fighting. Two back-to-back podiums, unlike this guy who decides to either win or finish second in

every race. But we'll beat him someday, I hope.

THE MODERATOR: Alex Palou joins us, driver of the No. 10 DHL Chip Ganassi Racing Honda, with his first runner-up finish since Portland last year. 34th career podium. Now 34-point lead in the championship.

Alex, your thoughts on a second-place finish at Long Beach.

ALEX PALOU: Yeah, I'm not disappointed.

THE MODERATOR: You'll take it?

ALEX PALOU: 100%. I'm super happy to be here. I think it's been a great weekend. We really didn't have that ultimate speed that the 27 car had. Kyle, they did an awesome job throughout the weekend, qualifying and the race.

He was managing. Every time I was having like a small chance, he just had a little bit more pace. So yeah, shame that we couldn't really make it more interesting for the fans, but I'm super happy to be here.

Yeah, it was a great day.

THE MODERATOR: That time the 27 was coming out of the pits. You knew that was the moment for you to get around him. That was the chance, right?

ALEX PALOU: Yeah, it was during the last pit stop. We had great pit stop. I think they had quite a slow one. It was pretty close. I thought I was going to have a chance, but then my tires were not 100% either. Just had a big oversteer out of five and couldn't really go on power to get a good exit. He was safe from there, so yeah.

THE MODERATOR: We'll go ahead with questions.

Q. Christian, did the car feel as good as the one you had yesterday?

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: Yeah, I mean, I think the car felt the same. What was interesting about qualifying yesterday was I didn't feel the bump in turn nine braking

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throughout the entire qualifying until I certainly felt it. Ended up in the wall. I think it was very consistent throughout the race. Even though it's been two chassis, it's been very consistent throughout the week.

ALEX PALOU: Different chassis?

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: Yeah, we tubbed it.

ALEX PALOU: Shit.

Q. Do you know, was the decision to change chassis, swap out the tub, was that difficult? Were they like, We could run this one, but it may not be as good?

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: No. Fortunately and unfortunately, Dallara built some very strong parts. The endplate made a dent on the chassis. It was a big hit, but the end plate was fine basically, but the chassis wasn't, so we had to change it. It was a call straightaway. We changed the chassis. The guys were back home by 10 last night.

Q. Most of the lead changes at the front took place because of pitting. No one passed somebody else on the track. Was that frustrating? Would you like to see more able to pass guys on the track when your car is stronger?

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: I mean, I would have liked to be able to fight with Alex and Kyle at some point. We started a little far too back. Obviously we were on a completely different strategy than both of them were on. We made the most of our strategy and ended on the podium from 12.

ALEX PALOU: Yeah, at the end of the day it's a street course. When you have a fast car starting up front and not many cars out of position, it's tough to overtake on track. It's always going to be tough.

But I think, yeah, Power moved from 13th to fourth or fifth. So that's pretty awesome. And also him, yeah, it's tough. It's always going to be tough to overtake on street courses.

THE MODERATOR: 169 on-track passes this afternoon. Six leaders. Nine lead changes, which is the most since 2012 here.

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: And we ran without a yellow flag.

THE MODERATOR: For the second straight race.

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: It was weird. I was driving

with 10 laps to go, and I'm like, Have we have a yellow this race? Two in a row. Good job.

THE MODERATOR: First time that happened since 2020, the harvest races at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway road course. No pressure for Barber, I'm just saying.

More questions for podium finishers.

Q. Is there a reason we've only had one yellow flag lap in the last three races?

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: I mean, personally I think the hybrid weight makes it difficult to be close. Why there's not really yellows, I don't know. But I think there's less kind of close racing in that sense because of the hybrid, in my opinion. Obviously it might be completely for a different reason. I don't know.

ALEX PALOU: I don't know. I just think it's coincidence. You'll see Barber we can have five.

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: Don't jinx it now.

ALEX PALOU: I mean, it's going to happen. I don't know if it's going to be Barber or Indy road course. It's going to happen. Don't you worry (smiling).

THE MODERATOR: Even between local yellows, we had three all season.

ALEX PALOU: I think one of the reasons is now we can start the car. Before, as soon as you could see a car out and parked, you would have to throw the yellow. Now you can wait a little bit and probably restart the car. Thermal would have been a yellow flag with McLaughlin and Devlin stalling. I think that's probably helping on the yellows.

I think it's actually better, right? You don't want to put a yellow on lap one just because somebody stalled, so...

Q. Christian, you did make a move to get onto the podium late. Was that purely your push-to-pass, taking advantage of that?

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: Believe it or not, I actually ran out of push-to-pass kind of leading up to that overtake. I looked at the dash at lap 42, and I had 109 seconds left. I knew that was kind of good because that was around halfway mark. I'd used around my 100 seconds halfway through the race. I forgot about it. I forgot about my push-to-pass.

Probably with 15 laps to go, I still had 84 seconds. That came in handy at the end. Obviously I didn't really think I

was going to be able to go get Felix. I mean, Alex, Felix and Kyle just seemed stronger kind of in the beginning of the stint. I think we came back to them at the end of the stint where I think we had a little more pace than they did.

Back marker certainly helped, right? It was good.

Q. There's a few new guys, not normally up-front people. Sting Ray, Kiffin Simpson, up front for a long time. Was that a surprise?

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: I think I saw three cars all race that I was fighting, yeah. No. I barely even saw this guy, so...

ALEX PALOU: Pit exit. It was almost close.

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: Was it?

ALEX PALOU: No, but it was almost close.

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: If that's your definition of close...

ALEX PALOU: We saw each other. I saw you.

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: Did you?

ALEX PALOU: Yeah.

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: Wow.

Q. Alex, in the media bullpen session the other day there was a lot of talk about the possibility of you becoming one of only a few guys to win the first three races of an INDYCAR season. You came close. How disappointing is it to not get that?

ALEX PALOU: In a way obviously it's disappointing because you know you cannot do it again this year. On another way, it's amazing to be the only person that had that chance and almost got it, so...

Honestly, I'm super happy to be here. Like, I don't get used to wins, although some people might think that we do. Super tough to win in INDYCAR. Every podium, every top-five finish is welcome.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you. We'll see you in a couple weeks.

ALEX PALOU: Thank you.

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: Thank you.