

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

Sunday, May 4, 2025

Christian Lundgaard

Scott McLaughlin

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We are joined now by Scott McLaughlin, his first podium of the season. Scott led three of the 90 laps this afternoon. It's his 20th podium of his career, third straight podium at Barber.

Christian Lundgaard with a race-high 16 passes on the track today. Second in the NTT INDYCAR SERIES points standings.

Christian, your thoughts, a busy afternoon for you, have to be happy with another podium to start this year.

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: Yeah, absolutely. I think the progression we made since the Sebring test earlier this year, it's been moving forward and going in the right direction. The team has been doing an awesome job.

The pace in the car is there, and it's just about execution. We didn't really execute in qualifying yesterday, so we were frustrated and wanted to make up for it. We did today.

THE MODERATOR: Some of the passes out there, which did you enjoy the most?

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: I mean, I enjoyed the pass on Scottie Mac here, but I really did enjoy the one I had on Pato into five, around the same pit sequence. It was kind of all three cars, the 5, the 12 and Scott coming out sort of like a lap after each other. I pitted before them. I had warm tires. It was just kind of chipping one off at the time.

I had a great time out there, for sure.

THE MODERATOR: Scott, another podium for you at Barber Motorsports Park. Your thoughts on a third-place finish?

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: I think we were just third place today. Didn't quite have the pace from the get-go really. From lap two I tried to push Alex. He just had a lot of

speed.

Yeah, I just didn't feel I had much grip. But the car was still okay. It was still pretty fast. Just wasn't as quick as the front guys, front two.

Hey, it's good points. We got to just keep keeping on and being at the front as much as we can. That was a solid race for us from the pace we had. If you want to build a championship campaign, that's how you have to do it.

THE MODERATOR: Third straight all-green race this season. As physically demanding as this racecourse is, it's amazing.

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: Yeah. But I think we all feel pretty good like now. It's just like match fitness. All your muscles are going. If this is the first race of the year, it would be pretty hard.

I think ultimately very surprised by INDYCAR that we have no yellows right now. It's a credit to the racing, credit to clean racing that we're having, and obviously the hybrid. We're able to restart when we spin or something like that, so...

THE MODERATOR: Christian, you agree?

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: Absolutely.

THE MODERATOR: We'll open it up for questions.

Q. Scott, you said something on pit lane that as long as you keep executing, eventually you'll catch up with Alex. How frustrating is it to know you're out there doing as good as you can, and he's just doing that much better?

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: It's not frustrating. At the end of the day you can only do as much as you can. I mean, I'm driving the thing as fast as I can. Christian is doing the same thing. Alex is doing the best job he can. That turns out to be a really good job and solid. We all know it was going to be that way.

When a guy is at the top of his game, all you can do is try

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to be at the top of yours. We had a third-place car and we came in third. That's all we can do. Nothing more, nothing less. I learnt that when I was racing Supercars, championship campaigns. You just got to be there.

It is all swings and roundabouts. We'll be strong at places he won't. Just got to capitalize.

Q. Any other season, you'd be the story of the season so far. Alex is on fire. How do you put that in perspective?

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: Yeah, I mean, I think it's just about putting that aside and focusing on yourself. The 10 car is doing a great job. We've seen that in years in the past.

I would say we're trying to raise our own bar, and we're doing so. We're performing better and better. On top of that, I had a team change. Getting to know a bunch of new people, getting to work with a bunch of new people. It's a different car to drive.

I'm very pleased with the job that I've done so far, the work that we've done. I mean, I don't think I could have dreamed of three podiums in four races, four first races.

Q. Scott, on lap two you were within half a second of Alex Palou. By lap four, you had fallen back to two seconds. What happened there?

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: Just pace purely. That was it. I just didn't have enough pace.

I mean, at the end of the day I pushed him, then sort of settled into a rhythm. Ideally I wanted to stay in that two-second bracket. Alex just had really good speed there, yeah.

Q. Christian, what was your thought process with the power move on Scott McLaughlin on lap 43?

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: Yeah, I mean, ultimately you're just trying to get by. It's a pit sequence. It's the one real opportunity you have, 'cause as soon as everybody settles in, you need to rely on people making a mistake and you can't do that.

It was about doing it when it counted. I was close enough to Scottie. I think we all know as soon as we get to the high speed on cold new tires, we'll kind of bottom out. I pitted a couple of laps before, so I'd gone through that. When I caught Scott there, I knew game was on. I knew he was going to work for it, but always clean racing with Scott.

Q. Scott, for the future races, you and your team, do you have any idea how to break the dominance of Alex, which areas you have to improve the car?

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: Pure speed, man. I think those guys are executing. They're just knocking good lap times out, qualifying well, then executing in the race. Great strategy.

Props to Barry and the team that they run on the 10 car. They're doing a great job. Obviously they've got a really good driver. I think Alex is one of the best racing car drivers I've ever come across. He's the whole deal. That doesn't mean we can't beat him, as I said.

Yeah, we know where we can improve, different facets that I can't really expose. Ultimately I think if we just keep knocking on the door. Everyone has a bad race at some point. You got to try and keep knocking on the door there.

Like I said, the people on the 10 car, Barry, Alex, all the guys, they're doing a fantastic job. All you can do is just sort of be there, if you can.

Q. Christian, you said earlier the biggest change in your performance has been the team change. What behind the scenes has really allowed you to step up your game this year?

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: I think ultimately not a lot is really different from my own approach. I would say it's keeping things very simple and just focus on what you can control, master the basics really.

I think the car is purely faster than what I've been doing for the past three years. I think we've seen that just purely from the results across the last three years.

But no, it's just good and nice to see it come into reality, really just executing when we have the pace. I think we've done so. I think we got more out of Long Beach than we anticipated waking up Sunday morning. At the end of the day that's how you fight for championships.

Q. Christian, you said your car wasn't as good as the test. The team made some changes last night. At what point did you know, or did you know, that those changes made a huge difference and could get you on the podium?

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: I'd say straightaway in warm-up this morning. I've been battling with the same balance issue all weekend. We had an issue on the car in P1, which kind of forced us not to be able to really try much

in P1. So we didn't get to try some things that we wanted to try. We were kind of stuck for the rest of the weekend with what we had, because there was a bunch of other stuff we needed to test. It kind of decreased in our list of things we wanted to try.

I said last night we need to do something if I want to have a good race car. We did it for warm-up this morning. It was just clearly better. I said that was probably one of the biggest game changers I've had in a car. It's a relatively small change. A little surprising for us.

The car felt at least a lot better.

Q. Scott, I don't have an Alex Palou question.

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: You can (smiling).

Q. In advance of this event you went to the Children's Hospital in this community. Talk about how emotional, inspiring that was, how you felt when you got home and hugged your own child?

SCOTT McLAUGHLIN: That was really like I guess a sobering experience, realizing how lucky we do have it. At the same time how many angels work in that hospital. It's an amazing thing. The kids were so positive. The kids that I met.

Anything that you can do as a racing driver, as a role model or anyone, you're kind of like a Super Hero at that point when you come in and hang out and play Hot Wheels, play Mario Kart. I'm quite good at Mario Kart I might add.

I had a great time. I would like to do that again. It was a really cool thing. Yeah, I think you just appreciate the people that work in the hospital. As much as the kids are going through, they have amazing people that look after them. The Children's Hospital of Alabama do a fantastic job with that.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, guys.

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