

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

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Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Chip Ganassi

Mike Hull

Scott Dixon

Alex Palou

Kyffin Simpson

Chip Ganassi Racing Press Conference



the easiest way to put it. Instead of long-term thinking, me as the team owner or Mike as running things, our mindset goes from instead of being out in front of the team, we're out in front maybe only a day.

We just try to get -- like Mike said, we try to get the most out of every day, and that's what it's all about when you get here. You can't get out over your skis.

So far, it looks like it's been a safe month. That's a good thing.

You know, lots of talk about cars and what causes this and what causes that. We have a little different weight distribution in the cars this year, which makes for some interesting scenarios that we haven't dealt with before maybe. But it's all part of it. Everybody has the same set of marbles to work with.

So anyway, we're looking forward to it.

THE MODERATOR: Mike, for you, a little X's and O's. I know you stayed away from qual sims yesterday, so to that point today, how important is Fast Friday for you guys today?

MIKE HULL: It's important, being the master of the obvious. I think we do work on one day at a time, and we'll work hard today to be ready for tomorrow.

Chip said it the right way; we do focus on winning races so we can win a championship. For me personally, and I think for Chip Ganassi Racing, we want to win the Indianapolis 500, and that's what today is about, being ready for tomorrow, because people have won from the back, people have run from the middle, but frankly, the statistics tell us if you're not in the top 14 or 15, you're not going to win this race. We want to win the race.

Q. Scott, this is primarily for you but the other drivers may contribute to it, as well. Just with the added hybrid scenario this year, particularly here, are we going to see a different type of race play out in terms of deployment during the race when you're in terrific or not in traffic? Is that actually going to be a factor in the race do you think?

THE MODERATOR: We're now joined by Chip Ganassi, owner of Chip Ganassi Racing. Also joined by Mike Hull, managing director of Chip Ganassi Racing. Also here is the driver of the No. 8 Journey Rewards Chip Ganassi Racing Honda, Kyffin Simpson is here. Driver of the No. 9 PNC Bank Chip Ganassi Racing Honda, the six-time NTT INDYCAR Series champion and 2008 winner of the Indy 500, Scott Dixon. And driver of the No. 10 DHL Chip Ganassi Racing Honda, last week's winner of the SONSIO Grand Prix, three-time and reigning INDYCAR Series champion, Alex Palou.

Good morning to all of you guys today. A couple quick questions to Chip and Mike before we open it up to questions. Clearly another strong start to the season. No better way to celebrate 35 years there. What has stood out to you about 2025 and this race team?

CHIP GANASSI: Well, we've been having an okay year so far.

THE MODERATOR: What's stood out? Where do you start?

CHIP GANASSI: Well, obviously, believe me, it's as much as -- I don't want to say it's a surprise to us, but it's certainly a positive thing that we had no idea we could accomplish.

Still, we have a lot of season to go yet, but our focus has shifted away from the series to the race now. So we come into May like we have for the past 34 years or whatever, and you just take it one day at a time. We go from thinking about the championship to think about the race, I think, is



... when all is said, we're done.®

SCOTT DIXON: I think it definitely adds some variables. I think even in qualifying. I think there's more things that you can mess up. As far as determining the race outcome, it could really play a big part, especially if you go too early, you're sitting out front, you could be a bit of a sitting duck. And especially if everybody is kind of recharged and ready to go behind you.

The sequence of the last two, three laps could really alter how it plays. Also it opens up the issues of clipping or maybe options where the hybrid is not going to be working as it should, as well. We've seen that in other races.

I think you've really got to try to understand when to go and where to go and what's going to be the best play out. The other thing, too, is with cautions that we've seen close to the end of the race kind of changes it, as well.

I think the biggest thing that we've probably all learnt so far so you've got to be ready for change is probably the biggest thing. But I think it could ultimately change how the end of the race plays out.

Q. Coming down the straight here, do you notice the difference if you're in traffic and you use some of that harvested energy? Is it a noticeable gain that you get from it?

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, if it's working correctly, it's definitely a big gain. The issue is that everybody else has it, too, right, and strategies typically kind of end up being the same, and especially in the scenarios of race running. You're kind of recharging most of the time whether you're going into 1 or 3, depending on the traffic and how that works, as well. You're using it quite a lot.

But the way that the energy is, there's almost maybe too much. I think if you could only really deploy it once a lap, I think it could change it a little bit better, to where it's now I think everybody is kind of deploying out of 2, out of 4.

Q. Mike, this hybrid technology, we know it's heavier. From a preparation point of view, is it more difficult to set up the car, to prepare the car, or have you seen no difference to the previous car?

MIKE HULL: I think -- thanks for the question. I think what's interesting for me, from my perspective, it's certainly different from the journalistic perspective of racing. It is. Journalists work on themes. What is today's theme? Certainly it's hybrid. Race teams work on race craft. Race craft for us is how you win the race.

Hybrid has been introduced to us, and we're going to work

really hard to be ready for that theme from a race craft perspective. You guys are going to write a story about how hybrid affected the race. I think they're actually different. I think they're different.

Q. Easy and difficult technology in any kind of racing.

MIKE HULL: Yeah, I think that's right. But we try to make the difficult technology easy, if that answers your question.

Q. First of all, a couple for Alex. I'm kind of interested in how you absorb the success that you're having at the moment in the moment. Every celebration kind of seems as big as the last one you get out of the car. How much are you making sure you kind of actually enjoy it while it's happening?

ALEX PALOU: Yeah, it's fun. We take every win as if it's the first one and the last one. We don't know when the next one is going to be. You always want and work towards trying to be able to celebrate almost every race weekend. But the truth is that it's tough to win. You need every single piece to be perfect. Whenever we get that chance, we celebrate, and at least during that moment, we take it and enjoy it as much as possible and then switch to the next one.

Yeah, we enjoy every single win as if it's the first one and the last one.

Q. Obviously there's this perception that kind of a driver's career is almost incomplete if they don't win the 500. Does that resonate with you, despite your multiple championships, and how important is it to you that you do win the Indy 500?

ALEX PALOU: Absolutely, I agree. I think as an INDYCAR driver, if you've not won the Indy 500, you're not going to be 100 percent complete. Yeah, that's what we're working towards. I think we've been learning. We've been getting closer and closer and I feel more comfortable every time that we're on track. Hopefully we can change it soon.

Yeah, I mean, if my career ends in like 20 years and I've not won an Indy 500, it'll be for sure not a successful career.

Q. One for Scott: You mentioned yesterday after practice about the wind over qualifying weekend. How does wind impact things when you're going at those speeds, and how do you adapt to that in terms of setup and as a driver, as well?

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, I think wind obviously, it looks like it's going to be a little bit cooler, which is kind of a nice



situation. I think today is going to be pretty tough. It's got a little bit of wind and then it's going to be pretty hot.

It's easier just to miss things, I guess. If you're getting gusts, gears are a little bit harder to get right. It may change some of the hybrid strategy if you're getting a lot of limiter, you may regen more and deploy more throughout the run as opposed to other strategies that you had set in mind. I think it's just more variables. I think it will definitely be difficult. I think the degradation over the four laps is definitely up with the weight.

So yeah, I guess, like I said yesterday, I think it will just create opportunity for more mistakes, so you kind of have to be really dialed in.

Q. Chip and Mike, you guys have talked before about when you noticed Alex and how special he was and that he could probably make something of his career as a race car driver. Now that he's had this start to the season, what is it he's doing right, and why is he having this overwhelming success?

CHIP GANASSI: I think obviously he's doing what he's supposed to do. The team is doing what they're supposed to do. When it all comes together, I think Barry Wanser said it the best; he said, It's hard to get everything right. It's hard.

But when everything is right, you have some amount of success. But look, I feel bad for some other teams, not because we're beating them, but they haven't had a chance. Some of these guys are beating themselves, whether it's in the pits or they're having mechanical issues. We've been the benefit of that, also.

But obviously for four of the first five races, the 10 car has done everything right, not put a wheel wrong, got in and out of the pits, got through the start, had the right tire strategy, whatever you want to say. But it's hard to get everything right, believe me.

But that's what we've been working at for 35 years is to get everything right. It's down to the people on the team. Their kids are having a bad day in school. I hear it all.

But when you have everybody rowing the ship in the same direction, you're going to have some amount of success, and right now that's what's happening.

Like Alex said, though, we treat every one like it's our first win, and it could be our last. We want to enjoy the ones we do. But that's what we work at every day.

Q. I just want to clarify. You have employees who

come to you and tell you about their kids' bad day at school?

CHIP GANASSI: Yes.

Q. And what is the advice you give?

CHIP GANASSI: It's just part of it. It's part of -- these people have -- everybody has a family and everybody has things they're dealing with outside of their job that could affect their job. We try to minimize all that. Yeah.

Q. Back when you raced, Chip, qualifying rules were a lot different. You really had one attempt and you had to wait for the right time, you had to wait for the wind to die down, for the temperature to be right. You might be in line but you could pull out of line. Once you took that time, the only way you could remove it would be to remove the car and then go to a T car. Was that more stressful than what we have now where you have multiple attempts and you can actually tune on the car?

CHIP GANASSI: I would like to see it go back to that because the one thing that people forget back then, too, and we're talking about back then was in the '80s, in the early '80s, beginning in the early '80s up until the '90s it was like that. What people forget was these engines weren't as reliable then as they are now. You had guys -- I can't tell you how many times I sat here in the pit lane and watched some guy smoke the whole straightaway. I don't want to say it was an everyday occurrence but you'd see six or eight of those a month, and you don't see any of that anymore.

So that's what even made it more stressful. But these engines are reliable now. And when they're reliable, you can have rules like that that make it more -- would tighten things up a bit, I think. Believe me, practice would be a whole different thing.

I think they should look at that.

MIKE HULL: I mean, it almost goes back to how I answered Wolfgang's question, in a way. For me, I live about -- my life has always been about today. The rules that we live under today I think are as fair as they were then, although some people thought they were unfair.

I just remember coming here as a young -- I hate to say this, but as a young guy, and having 70 or 80 cars lined up to qualify. That's why they raced the way they raced then. That's why they could really only go for one time, because you had 80 cars lined up. Think about that. Today we're lucky if we have 30 cars lined up. So you have the liberty

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of being able to go again. So it's still about the show. The show is different today.

Do I like it? I agree with Chip; I don't like it. I don't like it. It's like this do-over thing. Why do you get to do it over again? Why aren't you ready the first time? I think that answers the question for me.

Q. Kyffin, we've heard from Alex and Scott, and to Chip's point earlier, everything is rowing in the same direction. You've had a nice season so far, a lot of positives. How has your week gone, and what are you looking forward to heading into qualifying this weekend?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, I think we've been really solid so far this season. We've felt really strong. We've made a lot of progress race to race.

I think as a group, the 8 car group is feeling really good going into the 500. We feel like we've got a lot of momentum. I think now it's just about putting it all together and just making sure that we execute.

Q. Chip, just a really quick question for you. On race day morning, Dario is going to be driving one of his Indy 500 winning cars from you guys. How special is that going to be for you, to see that back on track?

CHIP GANASSI: Yeah, really special. I was very pleased that for many years, our Indy-winning cars have been in our race shop sitting up there on the wall, and we've all seen those pictures of those cars up on the wall.

47 people a year would see them up there, and it was kind of a, hey, that's our Indy winners up there on the wall. But the fact of the matter is it dawned on me one day that they should be where other -- they should be among other Indy winners, and what a better place where they should be than the Indianapolis Motor Speedway museum. So I'm very happy that they're there now, or they will be soon, so everybody can enjoy them.

Other people should enjoy Dario's and Montoya's and Scott's successes, and to see them in this new facility there at the museum, it's really a special place. If you haven't been over there, I would encourage you to go see it. It's going to take this -- I think it's going to add a lot to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. It's going to add a lot to the race. It's going to add a lot to the community.

What a better place for those cars to be than among all the other winners so people can enjoy them.

THE MODERATOR: This race team has such great

history. We almost buried the lead. You guys did a partnership with Borchetta Bourbon in a very cool story, celebrating 35 years. How did that come about, Chip?

CHIP GANASSI: Yeah, we've known Scott for a while. We've done some things with him on and off throughout the years, so it's really good to be back together with him. I have no idea -- I had no idea, I look at like Kyffin and certainly Scott and Alex, and I -- when I was doing what they were doing, I never thought I'd be here 35 years later as a team owner.

I remember once saying, I can't imagine anybody wanting to own one of these cars, let alone having three of them. You know, so it's very, very special.

THE MODERATOR: We'll wrap up. Everyone will be available for brief one-on-ones. Good luck today on Fast Friday, and certainly good luck getting qualified.

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