

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

Thursday, May 22, 2025

### Will Power

### Rinus VeeKay

#### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Starting 33rd, he was the winner of the 2018 Indianapolis 500, driver of the No. 12 Verizon Team Penske Chevrolet, good morning, Will Power.

Starting 31st, starting his sixth Indy 500 driving the No. 18 askROI Honda for Dale Coyne Racing, Rinus VeeKay.

Will, start off for you. Obviously you're looking forward to getting out on the racetrack tomorrow. A couple of hours of practice before the race on Sunday. How crucial will those two hours be for you?

WILL POWER: I think because of the temperature it will be interesting. I think it's going to matter. It certainly changes the car a lot. It's very sensitive around this place to wind and temperature. It will be interesting to see how that feels.

I kind of feel like it helps everyone. It's a bit more grip for everyone, a bit more downforce, less tire deg. I feel like it will be a race similar to last year where the cool track temps created a lot of close racing and epic restarts and so on.

THE MODERATOR: Knock on wood, the weather looked pretty good for Sunday right now too. It looked like all the rain may be heading south, which is good. Rinus, for you. I know the disappointment certainly, I guess, over the weekend, but you're in the show. Now you look forward to the race. What will you guys be working on tomorrow?

RINUS VEEKAY: Yeah, definitely going to be working on the race car, making sure it's good in cold temperatures.

I felt pretty good on Monday, so at least I think we have good speed in the car. Better than qualifying. We can race our way forward a little bit. Hopefully the cool temperatures help us, but definitely, yeah, we will need to find a happy balance on starting position and how we want to start on Sunday.

THE MODERATOR: It's been a good season for you. Hopefully that continues on Sunday. We'll open it up for questions.

**Q. Will, you've been with Tim Cindric, Ron, and Kyle for a long time. Roger had to make the decision that he made, but for you personally these were more than just people you worked with. They were your friends. They've been to your house, up at the lake. Just how sad is it for you to see that these great careers now have this happen to them?**

WILL POWER: Yeah, it's kind of a shock and a pity. They're all extremely good at their job. Yeah, it was just the pressure from outside. I guess Roger had to make a tough decision, but I can tell you these were very credible people. They really were. As you know, the infraction was very minor. It wasn't a performance gain. Yeah.

I called Ron. Obviously he's on my car. I didn't get him. But yeah, I feel bad for everyone involved in that situation. I really do. It's just a tough -- I don't know what else to say. They're all extremely good people, great at their job, won a lot of races, championships, created an incredible team.

Yeah, a real pity.

**Q. Talking to Rick Mears the other night, he said you can win the Indy 500 from any seat in the house, so obviously that's the mindset you both have. If you could just describe how challenging it's going to be to have a fast car coming up from the back?**

WILL POWER: Yeah, it's certainly tougher these days with the very tight field, but absolutely possible. Obviously depending on where yellows fall and so on, you can certainly find yourself in a really good spot.

The car is good. The car is fast. It feels like it's good in traffic. I have started back there before. Yeah, so looking for a very, very clean, good day. Good, solid day.

RINUS VEEKAY: I think for us, in general, we don't really have the pace that Will has and Josef has. So I'm going to try to stay with them. I think realistically I'm going to be fighting for the mid-field, which I think that's the pace we



have. That's how strong I feel.

So it's going to be a weird race, of course, and then a guy that has never raced on an oval starting from pole and then those guys, the three Indy 500 wins starting in the last row, there's going to be a lot happening.

I think for the show there will be much happening, especially with the temperatures. I'll just try to stay with them and move forward.

**Q. Will, did you have any input, or did you lobby for anybody to be your strategist for this weekend and/or are you going to lobby for anyone specific going forward?**

WILL POWER: Have they --

**Q. They've announced it.**

WILL POWER: Roger asked what he would like, and he asked my engineer and all the engineers, What's the best way to do this? They're all very capable people on each car. I think it wouldn't have mattered who they went with. I got Jonathan Diuguid, who is extremely experienced and has been an engineer and run INDYCARs before.

I think between Dave and Jonathan, those two guys are incredibly smart and understand strategy, everything. It's a very strong group for all three cars.

**Q. Obviously when things were going on on Sunday, there seemed to be other teams telling INDYCAR about what you all were doing. There was a lot of talk about did they tip off INDYCAR? Are you angry at other teams? Are you upset? Do you come in here with a kind of chip on your shoulder after what happened on Sunday?**

WILL POWER: Yeah, no, I don't know what I'm allowed to say, but I know what happened. Obviously, yeah, you want to -- I just want to do a good job for all the guys on the team on Sunday. That's sort of the main -- I'm just very focused on the race. Not really out to get anyone.

It's the circumstance that it is, and we're all very motivated to have a good day, sort of try to put this stuff behind us. Yeah, you know, news cycles move pretty quick, so if you can throw a win in there, that would certainly be a good way to move forward, yeah.

**Q. Will, I know we all learned about this yesterday morning at about 10:40 via email. How did you find out about the news and the decisions that Roger had made?**

WILL POWER: Yeah, I was called in to see Roger at RP1 there. Yeah, that's how I found out. Jonathan and Bud in there as well, and spoke to the drivers, yeah.

**Q. You said, I think, in your initial comments -- you said you felt like Roger either was forced to make this or had external pressures to make this. How did your -- I know it's a private conversation, but how did your conversation with Roger go, and what did he say to you to explain why he felt like he was having to make these moves?**

WILL POWER: I know it was very tough for him. He said that. It's obviously a very tough decision to make. He said he didn't sleep the night before because he had to make a very hard decision.

I feel bad for him. He's in a very tough spot in that situation. Yeah, it wasn't really a long conversation with us. He just explained what happened. You could tell it was heavy on him. Tough, tough for him to have to do that.

**Q. Will, is it hard for you being swept up in this, in something that you didn't do that to the car?**

WILL POWER: Yeah, I mean, man, I've been around long enough to shut that stuff out and still focus on the thing that you're here to do, and that's to get the absolute most out of the car. You still have to do your homework. You can't be distracted by all this. My main focus is Sunday, and that's true. I'm not too swept up in it. I've got plenty of time after the race to think about that, but we're coming up on the biggest race of the year for us.

Yeah, I think everyone -- I feel like everyone on the team is positive and very motivated. I think being the driver you need to show that this is not affecting you, and you're very focused on the job at hand, and I am. I am. I haven't allowed too much emotional stress to take away energy that I need on Sunday.

Tough situation, but we still got a job to do.

**Q. You touched a little bit on how it felt like it was heavy for Roger. What kind of impact do you think this could have on him? Obviously he cares a lot about his integrity and credibility.**

WILL POWER: I think Roger moves forward very quickly. I know him over the years, he makes decisions. He moves forward. Doesn't dwell on it. Starts looking at what is absolutely best for the team and everyone to move forward. That's Roger. That's why he's so successful.



He's not going to sit and spend a month worrying about what happened. I think he's how can we fix this and let's move forward and make sure it doesn't happen again.

**Q. I don't know if there is such a thing as being extra motivated because I know how highly motivated you guys always are, but is there any sense of that this weekend, that you guys have to really pull together and that this is an opportunity to rise like you never have before?**

WILL POWER: I think it just kind of makes you lock in. You know, yeah, I think everyone is just locked in on the job. People have to step up now because we're missing some key individuals, and that can be motivating for people. Like, all right, I've got to take on more work and responsibility. You know, that's all of us in the team right now.

I think you get the best out of people in those situations. No one is ever ready for that. That's why competition is so good. I think that's what always gets the best out of me is tough situations. You see how good you really are.

**Q. Will, we know you can be an emotional guy. How quickly did you kind of get over this and start looking forward? What is the driver's reaction? I know Monday we were out here for the photo. What's been the other competitors that you go up against -- what's been their reaction to this?**

WILL POWER: I actually haven't seen any of them. Yeah, I haven't really talked to them. Everyone kind of goes home for a couple of days.

Man, I've been focused on the job, just doing all the homework I need to do. Obviously my engineer is more busy now. He has more obligations. But, you know, we have to be very good with finding time to sit down and make sure we don't weaken the program or our potential for this weekend.

Yeah, everyone is positive in the team. They understand this is the biggest race of the year, and we want to have a great result. Yeah, it's just an incredible number of circumstances that just you would never have dreamed of would play out like this. It's just crazy. That's Indianapolis. You just never know, man.

Look, PREMA turns up first year on pole and two of our cars are on the back row. Scotty crashed in practice with probably the car for pole. That's Indy. A lot of pressure. So much effort goes in, and these sort of things happen, you know?

In some ways, having been around so long, it's not that shocking. Like, oh, my God. These things happen. Strange things -- like the year we almost didn't make the field. Just things you wouldn't think. This place just throws real curveballs at you. That's just the way it is. It's a very daunting, tough race to win, and the consequences are big when you make a mistake on and off the track.

Yeah, I guess that's what makes it so special.

**Q. Rinus, having never started below seventh before, is there any thought that maybe the start could be easier from the back given that no one is going to run you over, you can kind of take it at your own pace instead of having to worry about going too fast or too slow?**

RINUS VEEKAY: Yeah, I think there's definitely a different mindset going into the race now. I've always had the feeling like I had one obligation, and that was to win with Ed Carpenter Racing because this was the place that had a race-winning car or a car capable to win.

I think for now I'm starting on the back row. I can kind of take it easy and build the race like any other INDYCAR race. It's one of 17 for me now during the season. I'm just going to race it like that.

I feel like I've always been very nervous for this race. It's always been my kind of one shot that I had that year. I can just be relaxed and maximize what we have because that's what we've done all year with Dale Coyne Racing. We've maximized, which was P19, but we've also maximized something that was almost a podium.

I think if we do that again, this race can be crazy. It might turn into something really good.

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