

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

Thursday, May 22, 2025

**David Malukas**

**Christian Lundgaard**

**Marcus Ericsson**

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We'll continue with row 3. Starting ninth, Marcus Ericsson. Starting eighth, making his fourth start in the 500, Christian Lundgaard. Starting seventh, putting on another oval show, David Malukas.

Marcus, couple days away. You said this is like a Swedish summer.

MARCUS ERICSSON: Swedish summer. Going to go for a swim later (smiling).

THE MODERATOR: How much are you looking forward to getting back in the car tomorrow?

MARCUS ERICSSON: Yeah, I'm really looking forward to it. It's been a good month for us so far. It will be interesting with these cooler temps to see what it does for cars. I'm sure some people are going to be feeling better and some the other way with just being so cool.

Even the open test was warm in April. It's a bit of a curveball ball I think for everyone.

Yeah, it's going to be interesting how our car goes. Our car has been the best the cooler it goes. I think it will be good for us.

THE MODERATOR: Christian, what about you guys, what do you expect the conditions to do to your car?

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: Yeah, I feel like we've been very conscious about this kind of the entire month, what does the car need for certain conditions. If it's colder, if it's warmer... I feel like we have a pretty good idea, pretty good baseline for any condition possible.

Obviously we haven't really prepared for the rain. I don't think any of us have. But no, I think we'll be good. I think we've been good so far this month. We get another go at it

tomorrow, then we'll be ready for race day.

THE MODERATOR: David, how much are you looking forward getting back in the car for Sunday?

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, it feels really good. We've had a lot of really hot days to start off this month. I think the car is going to have a big transition coming for Friday. Very excited to get back into it and learn more on the setup heading for the race since it's going to be cooler temperatures. Got one more, but it's going to be a very important session for us.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

**Q. Do you guys go through and talk about family that's here this weekend, having your support system here?**

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, I guess I'll start.

I have actually a lot of my friends, 'cause in my growing-up years, going through puberty, I actually grew up in England. I spent a few years there. That's kind of where I had the interest in soccer, football, what it's called internationally. A lot of my friends from England are going to be coming over. It's actually their first time coming to the States.

Obviously my girlfriend is going to be coming, my family, my sister. It's kind of going to be a good family reunion at the same time.

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: I think Marcus and I were just talking about it prior to the press conference here, who is filling up the house at home while we're staying at the track.

My entire family will be here. It will be the first time my brother will be here for the 500. Pretty excited for him. I got some friends here, as well. The girlfriend's family is from around here, so they've been here before. I think they'll get a little different view, more from the inside.

So yeah...

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MARCUS ERICSSON: Yeah, no, I have all my family coming out today actually. Mom and dad and brothers, better halves, some other friends coming as well. It's going to be a busy, busy weekend. A lot of guests, family and friends here, which is great.

Last time my whole family was out to the 500 was 2022. That helped out, so hoping something similar this weekend.

**Q. Marcus, aggressive front row. A lot of experience in row 2. When you're looking forward going into one, are you expecting something that we haven't seen with the aggressive drivers?**

MARCUS ERICSSON: I mean, I hope it goes better for me through turn one than last year. That would be nice.

Yeah, I don't know. I mean, it's a long race. I think we just have to sort of get through the first couple laps and get going.

But us in row 3 is the young guns. Me and my young competitors here (smiling). I think we'll be fine. I think we'll be fine. I think we put ourselves in a good spot.

Yeah, I think starting from row 3 is also a perfect spot. It's a good spot to just hang out there and be in the top group, let other people run up front and burn fuel. We can just hang out a couple spots back, then get going in the race.

THE MODERATOR: You're the old guy in the row.

MARCUS ERICSSON: That's what I was trying to say, I'm with the young guns. I might also be considered a young gun because of that.

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: I do think actually David and I are the two youngest on the grid.

DAVID MALUKAS: Not anymore, no. Kyffin is younger.

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: Our debut year, we were the two youngest.

DAVID MALUKAS: There you go, yeah (laughter).

**Q. David, I've lived in Chicago the past couple years, so I have to ask, with you being from Chicago, fans are always looking for new Chicago-born athletes to embrace. Does the notoriety that would come with being an Indy 500 champion provide you with any additional motivation?**

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, of course. I mean, we also have

a few Chicagoans on the car. My mechanic Nick, as well. We always are having that cheer of the Chicagoan home.

A fan also gave me a Chicago flag, so we're going to have that hung up leading up to the 500 in the garage, too. There's definitely that city strength that we have.

It would be very cool to bring that home, to go back to Chicago. I would love to do that.

**Q. David, there's very little history anymore of the old Indy 500 and the new Indy 500 in the sense of historical figures like AJ Foyt. When you were a kid, with all due respect, what did you know about AJ Foyt? How is it different racing for somebody like him as opposed to some of the other leadership you've had?**

DAVID MALUKAS: I think growing up, I always had that period that I wanted to be a part of history in some way. Those deep thoughts, what is the point of life. For me it was in that perspective. Growing up I always used to watch racing from INDYCAR, F1, NASCAR. I got heavily involved in it at a young age. Me and my dad would always go on the weekends.

To be here at the Indy 500, this is already a dream of mine, of course. To do it with my name side by side with AJ Foyt Racing, probably one of the most historical drivers when it comes to a big name. You say that name anywhere, people will know of it. To have my name side by side, I don't think there's any way better to be a part of history and achieve what my dreams are.

THE MODERATOR: Ice cream is not bad in the garage, too?

DAVID MALUKAS: Very good ice cream. I think the Drumsticks are the favorite. I see a lot of those.

**Q. How was your day yesterday with Bubba Watson?**

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: It was pretty cool. We ended up chipping marshmallows in each other's mouths. I only stayed on the side with the club. Kyle got to try to catch one of Bubba's chips. It was a cool experience.

As we all know, he's a lefty. He took Scotty Mac's driver and hit it over the snake pit as a left-hander. Obviously we know Scott is a right-hander. It was pretty cool to see what he's capable of doing.

It was a cool experience just to kind of get to pick his brain a little bit. I brought my girlfriend around. Obviously she's a golfer. I know she tried to pick his brain a little bit on



what his best shot he ever hit. I was expecting it to be the one out of the woods at Augusta. Interestingly enough he said it was a tee shot at Augusta on the same final round. Didn't stand up to his eye, hit the shot he wanted to, it worked out. I thought that was an interesting question.

**Q. How does it help to talk with another professional athlete helping you with your approach to racing?**

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: I mean, first of all, he's a lot better at golf than I am. That's for sure. Again, I know he's self-taught. He's never taken a golf lesson in his entire life. At the end of the day I feel like it's the same way I grew up. Even though I had a dad that used to race, but you have to go out there and learn by doing.

I saw a little familiarity in that. It's just kind of learning. It's always fun to pick athletes' brains on how they approach things. Obviously when you reach a certain level, do you feel the same kind of pressure in this situation that I do. How do you approach it, and what is your thought process, how do you get away from it.

I know when you're over the ball in golf, the lie is never going to be the same shot by shot, where for us the corners don't change. Yes, the wind changes, but the corner doesn't. Obviously the car doesn't change from corner to corner.

I always find it kind of interesting to ask those questions.

**Q. Marcus, you've obviously gotten deep with the Pacers. What were you doing last night? How has it been enjoyable following this team closely?**

MARCUS ERICSSON: Yeah, we had a cookout last night at my engineer's house, Olivier. He was doing burgers for the whole 28 crew. We were having a great time. I was also watching the game and eating burgers. Yeah, it was a fun night.

Yeah, that ending was insane. To be 14 down with less than three minutes to go, manage to win it, yeah, very exciting to watch that. It's not the first time this Playoffs. It's a comeback team it seems like.

I said that before. When we win on Sunday, I want to go to the game, bring the Borg-Warner Trophy and be celebrating on court whilst the game is there.

**Q. Starting seventh and eighth, how much encouragement does it give for both of you leading up to Sunday's main event?**

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, I mean, I'm really excited. Like

Marcus said earlier, this is a really good starting row, row 3. It's where we want to be.

I was talking to A.J. as well previously. He said he won a race from the seventh position at some point. I feel like it's a very good spot, especially coming from the previous years. The team is very strong. It's a very good car. Our traffic running has been impressive. I'm very excited heading into Sunday.

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: Yeah, I mean, I think ultimately you want to start the race as far forward as you can from the get-go. It's a little bit of a different situation from what I've previously been in. Quite excited for that.

I know the Arrow McLaren cars were around this area last year. At least I have a lot of good video and information to look at. At the end of the day, as Marcus said, it's a good place to start. Again, we're around the cars. We want to fight. Let the fight kind of start early on and make sure we all get to the end.

**Q. Christian, you have T.K. with you, you have the videos, good teammates to lean on. What kind of adjustments have you made, if any, to your driving style on the oval?**

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: I don't think the driving style is particularly different. I think there is a lot of the same things going on. I mean, in my opinion, I knew going into this year that I was going to be in a car that was naturally faster. I think I have a lot to learn just from understanding and racing different people than what I'm used to.

I'm starting 20 positions further up this year than I was last year, which is obviously a massive gain. But at the end of the day, it's the same for road courses and street courses. You can have a bad qualifying but still race your way to the front, depending on how the race goes.

I know I'm in a car that's fast enough to win the race. I just have to put myself in the right situation at the right time and learn from the other drivers. I have that. I mean, Pato has been fighting for the race win the past few years going into the leading laps. I have all the information I need. I just need to take advantage of it.

**Q. What is the best advice T.K. has given you?**

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: Take it as it comes.

**Q. Marcus, it's probably fair to say your last year's Indy 500 couldn't have gone much worse than it did. After having such a bad month last year, did anything change from a mentality standpoint?**

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MARCUS ERICSSON: Yeah, I mean, last year was a bit of a nightmare to say the least. I think I learned a few things from it. I approached it a little bit different this year, a bit more patience, just taking it step by step, sort of building up for race day. I think that's what happened last year. We tried to push a bit too early. If you go wrong here, it's usually a big one, which happened for us. Really set us back and made that month really tougher.

This year has been really good, a really solid month so far. We've just been really taking it step by step, feeling good in the car. I had a really solid qualifying weekend.

Reminds me a lot about '22 when we won the race, being solid in the practice, feeling happy with the car, solid qualifying. Yeah a lot of good feelings going into this race weekend.

**Q. David, I'm fascinated about your background in England, where you grew up, why you were there.**

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, for my karting years I lived there. If you're familiar with the area, you're going to be surprised. I actually lived most of my time in Grimsby, and then partly in Leeds, Manchester, and London. So I've been a little bit from middle to south, but kind of all over through there.

**Q. David, has A.J. given you any advice?**

DAVID MALUKAS: He's given me a lot of good stories from his past races and events that have happened to him.

When it comes to advice, I mean, it's so hard to give advice for the 500. Things kind of just happen as it is. I think it's just as anybody always says, it's a long race, so just keep the head down and don't do anything too silly to start and save it for the end.

THE MODERATOR: What's your favorite Foyt story?

DAVID MALUKAS: I can't say any stories.

THE MODERATOR: None at all?

DAVID MALUKAS: Absolutely not, no.

**Q. Marcus, this year marks the last year of what has become the greatest day in racing with Monaco moving to June in '26. As someone who has raced at Monaco in the past, what are your thoughts on that decision?**

MARCUS ERICSSON: Yeah, I mean, it's probably a good

thing because you can sort of focus fully on one of the races, where before it was the ultimate racing day where people could watch Monaco in the morning and then the Indy 500 during the day.

Yeah, I don't know. Plus or minuses to it. More focus on the 500 I guess with it not being interfered by the Monaco Grand Prix. It's still a bigger race, the 500, so we'll be okay.

THE MODERATOR: Guys, have a great day tomorrow, even better day on Sunday.

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