

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

Friday, May 23, 2025

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Luke Mason

Chad Gordon

Clint Cummings

Keenan Watson

Sean O'Hara

Tom Jones

Caitlyn Brown

Shaun Rinaman

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: What wants to speak for the group?

LUKE MASON: From my end, I don't do anything, I just sit back and -- no one wants to talk, so I've been summoned to talk in front of everyone. For me, it just fills you with so much confidence going into a race when you've got these guys behind you, just nailing stop after stop. There's a reason why they're back-to-back pit stop champions. They just proved it there.

I guess it shows the depth that we've got at that shop, as well, that in the final we're up against our teammate, the 12 car, and both teams doing 10-second stops there just to prove that this matters. What we do at Team Penske, pit stops matter, and these guys practice -- I guarantee you they practice more than anyone back at the shop.

They're in the shop before I am. They're already doing stops. And the fact that they had keep doing it and keep backing it up and backing it up, and going into Sunday it just fills you with so much confidence that we might be starting on the back row but these guys are going to get us fast bullets every time and we're just going to creep our way forward and we're going to have shot on Sunday to win this thing and go back-to-back just like we did in that pit stop comp right there.

Q. It's a field of 14 and it comes down to two Team Penske cars at the end, going winner take all at the end. What's it like to face a bunch of guys and ladies that you know pretty well?

CHAD GORDON: Honestly it took the pressure off because at that point it's fun, especially this week. There's been a pretty dramatic rise in team camaraderie, so when we got to the final round, we shook hands before every single stop with those guys down there because whichever car wins, we all win.

Q. I have a question for the team. Anyone can answer. What is the group text chat like these days? What do you guys doing during the month of May? What do you say in your group text?

CHAD GORDON: It's very, very professional, very professional.

THE MODERATOR: Wrapping up the 2025 Oscar Mayer \$150,000 Pit Stop Challenge, introducing the champions here in 2025, Josef Newgarden in the No. 2 Shell V-Power Nitro+ Team Penske Chevrolet, and of course the 2 crew. It's Josef's third pit stop challenge win and second straight for Team Penske. It is their 20th pit stop challenge title. Luke Mason is the strategist. Chad Gordon is the crew chief. Who wants to speak for the group and introduce everybody else?

LUKE MASON: I supposed we can do introductions.

CLINT CUMMINGS: I'm Clint Cummings, I'm the fueler.

KEENAN WATSON: Keenan Watson, outside rear.

SEAN O'HARA: I'm Sean O'Hara, I'm inside rear.

TOM JONES: Tom Jones, air jack.

CAITLYN BROWN: Caitlyn Brown, inside front.

CHAD GORDON: Chad Gordon, chief mechanic and outside front.

SHAUN RINAMAN: Shaun Rinaman, pit stop coach.



CAITLYN BROWN: There's no jokes, no fun, just all serious.

Q. For Shaun, your dad was going over the wall, I believe, when he was 61. To come from a family that perfected this great art, how important is that to you, and what are some of the lessons that you learned that you impart upon these guys that make them the best of the best on pit stops?

SHAUN RINAMAN: Well, he's actually here. He didn't come upstairs, but I told him to come on up and show his face.

Really what I got from him was the hard work. He would constantly just stop after stop after stop, and a lot of the guys on pit lane ask me, what are you guys doing differently. It's these guys. They put the work in. They bought into the culture that we have, and they love it. It's like Luke said, they're in it 6:45 and we start practicing, and we go hard.

Nate, who's not here, is our strength and conditioning coach. He's a big part of what these guys do. Next year we're bringing him for sure. But Nate is a huge impact on these guys, as well.

Q. For any of you who want to answer, the guy who handed me the microphone has to do his job right because it's a pretty precise business of when to stop and when to go. How important is the timing of all that?

LUKE MASON: I'm pretty sure he missed his box every time if you ask these guys. I think it was --

CHAD GORDON: He's usually within reason except for Toronto.

Q. A lot of people see what Josef does as pretty risky business, but you guys are pretty risky, too, because you could have another car run over the back of your foot. There's all kinds of things that can happen on a pit stop. How do you overcome that mental challenge of just going out there and getting the job done without any fear?

TOM JONES: I think at first, your first few stops there is that fear, but the more you do it, the more confidence you get, the more zoned in you get on what you're doing that you kind of have blinders on. You forget there's anyone around you until if something happens, it's unfortunate, but you're strictly focused on your job. So it's there, but during a stop, I don't think we feel it.

CHAD GORDON: As an outside front, you have to be cognizant of all of it just because you're already there on the ground and you're kind of a sitting duck so you have to be aware of what's going on around you, but once the car turns into the box, it's like you just kind of block it out and get the job done.

Q. Since he had to ask what's on the group text chain, how come Josef isn't on the group text chain?

SEAN O'HARA: He's definitely on it. He's the biggest instigator on it.

CLINT CUMMINGS: A liability is what that is.

Q. He doesn't read it or doesn't keep up with it?

CAITLYN BROWN: He can't read, yeah.

Q. For Luke, can you kind of -- fastest in practice today and win this; is either one bigger than the other?

LUKE MASON: No, right now this is about this group up here just winning the pit stop competition. For me, I said I get to sit back and just get to watch them go to work, and you're just very proud of your group when they can put three, four stops together like that.

Practice is great. As you know, everyone can do a fast lap in practice. You saw that timing. I believe we've got a fast car so you don't want to be bad in practice, but today and this afternoon is all about these guys up here doing the job.

Q. When it comes to inspiring the next generation who want to get into INDYCAR, what was your path to becoming a crew member?

TOM JONES: As a former student, it's just being flexible, know what you're good at but know that there's other opportunities, too. For me I was on the NASCAR side, saw an opportunity to jump to the INDYCAR side, and went over there and had been 10 years since I went over the wall and jumped right back in and fell in love with it again.

You've got to put the hard work and dedication but also be flexible and open to everything around you because you never know when the door is going to open.

Q. As far as other paths that other people have taken, is there any recommendations of one to follow in order to get into it? To a lot of people, I feel like motorsports is very closed off. Is there anything that you have seen that's kind of an open door to getting into motorsports?



CAITLYN BROWN: I think for me, I kind of had my sights set on one thing, and once I realized that you have to take any opportunity you can get, it kind of opens many more doors for you. You realize what options are out there, and sometimes something better for you is down there.

For me, moving down to North Carolina, kind of having my sights set on NASCAR and then having the opportunity to go INDYCAR racing made me realize that that's something I want to do, and you get so much more involved on this side, too.

SEAN O'HARA: From that perspective, I'm originally from north pole, Alaska. All the way up there I took a huge shot to come all the way down to North Carolina to try to get a job anywhere. I started as an intern at Penske in 2014, started after that very shortly part time. Been working with INDYCAR and everybody on that Indy side of Penske. For me, sometimes you've just got to take that leap and trust that it'll go.

Q. I remember most of the faces, but there are two new guys to the crew from last year. Is it consistency, or is it finding the right spot to do again and again and again?

SHAUN RINAMAN: It's Chick-Fil-A. This year I told these guys, we've started getting a little more competitive at the shop, and Chick-Fil-A seems to be the winning ticket to get the best out of these guys. Our first week that we did Chick-Fil-A, we've got our timing system there at the shop, and I think we were all green maybe out of 30 stops. There might have been two or three red stops out of the whole day. I went back to management, I said, I'm doing Chick-Fil-A as much as possible.

Q. I don't remember the first year that you guys won, second time you see you guys winning, this third time I see you more up to it, more happy. What more changes in order for you to be in this state?

CAITLYN BROWN: I think we have nothing to lose at this point. The opportunity is there, and we're all ready to go take it. Kind of going back to when the car comes in how to block that fear out, we kind of have no fear at the opportunity that lays before us on Sunday.

I think we all just -- that pressure is off us to go in it, and we're just going after it with everything we've got.

Q. Just wanted to get some comments on how loud you think things would have got in Greg Dixon's living room.

LUKE MASON: We need to check on the health of Greg, to be honest. I haven't heard from him yet, so we need to make sure he's still alive and hasn't keeled over, but I'm sure he would have raised the roof of that house, and I know he's coming this weekend, and we're all excited to see him. I'm sure you'll hear him before we see him.

Q. Going up against Will Power's crew, you know -- you work with them. You probably do practices with them, so you know how did they are. How much is that interteam rivalry -- I don't mean that in a bad way, but you know how good they are, so what's that like when you've got to face them in the finals?

CHAD GORDON: You automatically know it's going to be tough, but it's certainly not a rivalry. Our rivals are everybody else here this week.

Q. We've been asking your driver for a month about extra pressure or motivation to win three in a row. How do you all feel? Do you feel any extra pressure or motivation to try to make history on Sunday?

LUKE MASON: Great question. No one has ever done it, so there is no pressure. No one is expecting us to do it. It's never been done. Look at this group here. Look at our driver. We've just proven we've got the fastest crew on pit lane. I think I've got the best driver driving my race car. I think the reality is I think this week we've showed we've got the fastest car and we've got nothing to lose on Sunday, so we're going for No. 3, and I think it goes for everyone here that we're excited at the opportunity to create history.

If it happens, it happens. If it doesn't, it doesn't. But it's going to be a good show on Sunday, us coming through the field from the back. It's going to be awesome to watch.

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