

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

Sunday, May 25, 2025

David Malukas

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Also joined by third-place finishing driver in David Malukas, driver of the No. 4 Clariance Technologies Chevrolet for AJ Foyt Enterprises, his best career finish at the Indianapolis 500, starting from seventh, best career finish in the NTT INDYCAR Series since second place at Worldwide Technology Raceway a couple years ago in 2022. The other day I said, ovals, you and ovals, something about you and ovals.

DAVID MALUKAS: I love them, yeah. I mean, at least -- we've been having a lot of success on short ovals, but at least finally we could say pretty good success here at the 500.

But yeah, bittersweet ending, but what a good race.

Q. You said on TV you were tearing up coming in after the race.

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, all those yellow flags, seeing our position of the car and how good we were, I mean, we had it at the end there. Definitely picturing it, and man, we gave it our all in those last -- I think it was about 15 to go, and we turned it up and I was just hanging on for dear life trying to get something out of it. Those two lap cars kind of came in and ruined the fun for us and chose this winner. That's just kind of how this track goes.

Q. Obviously it's bittersweet, but what does this result do for you guys kind of going forward for the rest of the season?

DAVID MALUKAS: It's very good. You've got to look at it from a positive standpoint. The guys did an incredible job from start to finish. And that's not speaking about the race, it's speaking about this month.

As soon as we unloaded the car, we've put the car in the right direction, and never took a blindside. Our path was clear, and it kind of led to getting this P3 finish. That comes down to them. It was from the engineers and mechanics, just an incredible job.

And I think we needed it. If I look at it from a championship standpoint and the season as a whole, we got a little bit of a rough start. So I think this has been a very good month for us to boost morale and lead us for the rest of the season.

Q. I think your team has a technical cooperation or alliance with Penske. Is it fair to say that maybe your car are nearly identical like the Penske cars?

DAVID MALUKAS: No, I don't think it's fair. I think it's an AJ Foyt car. Those are the guys that are working on it, and it's the AJ Foyt team. So all the credit goes to AJ Foyt. That's what I'm driving. That's what's on my suit.

Q. Does it feel like this has been a bit of a breakthrough for you, or do you feel like this is the best car you've had so far at the speedway and that's the explanation for the result today?

DAVID MALUKAS: For sure. It's a little bit of a breakthrough. This is third time here but kind of three and a half seasons, fourth season, I don't know how you put that, but I've definitely matured a lot since the last time I was here. But it's an incredible car. I think we've always had the maximum success we could out of the cars, but everything lined up for us, from the team to the guys.

Q. Do you think that the yellow flag at the end kind of threw you off a little bit?

DAVID MALUKAS: I mean, not really. I think we all kind of -- are you talking about the one right at the end, like the checkered flag? No, because we were coming out of Turn 4 so there wasn't really much left to it at the end there. It was going to be the end.

But yeah, it was more leading up before that when we filtered back out after the last pit stop is where things got out of our hand, where the two lappers came in and Palou was able to time a run and sneak behind them and able to take their tow and obviously get his lucky win there.

Q. The start to this race was sort of all over the place. You had the delay, you had the McLaughlin crash before you started recording laps. You record some

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laps under yellow, you have the Andretti crash, you have rain. How hard is it to get into a rhythm, especially for a 500-mile race, with that kind of a start, and when did you feel that you and in general most of these guys started to settle in?

DAVID MALUKAS: Actually I think the rain delay in the beginning helped us. We were having some fitting issues so that rain delay gave us some time to get things sorted out. Before the race even started I had to pee so bad, and all these delays, it just made it so much worse. I just kept thinking about it. Then finally the green flag drops, I was able to focus on the race and immediately it was caution again. I'm like, man, we need to just go or I'm going to piss myself in this car. So yeah.

Q. Can you maybe put into words what it means to you to have this result today just in terms of everything that you've gone through over the past two years? The journey you've been on has been pretty incredible. I imagine today feels like a turning point or at least something really good to happen to you after a pretty difficult time.

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, I mean, this past year that I've had has been the toughest year I think of my life really. It was a lot of different emotions, roller coasters. And if I look back one year ago today, I wasn't even in INDYCAR anymore. I didn't have a left hand and I was up here in the media center just being a fan. And I could say one year later that I'm back in the 500 and not just back but I'm fighting for the win, which is incredible to say.

It's been an insane year. It's always going to be a year of maturity for me. I've aged -- although it was a year, I feel like I've aged 10. Everything happens for a reason and I'm taking all this knowledge and everything I've learned in the past year and all the hardships and going to put it into more success in the future.

Q. Talk through, from a team standpoint, Santino started off the month pretty slow, trying to find that balance in the car. You were pretty solid all month long. Talk through how two top 10s builds up morale for the team.

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, I think as a season as a whole we've had so many unfortunate events and they tend to topple, and morale is such a big deal when it comes to team unity and having performance out of it. We were just in a very unfortunate spot and things kept not going in our favor and it was really putting everybody down.

But this month was very necessary for us. If we just look outside of the 500 and the championship, we really needed

this. And I think it's going to be a big turning point for the team and for everybody that we can be there and things can go our way if we just have some luck.

The morale is very high in the team. Even though we were still P3, man, it's an incredible time. So many things can go wrong in that race, and everything went forward for us and the crew did an insane job on the pit stops, the engineers, incredible time and gave me a great car and strategists were on point.

A lot, a lot of positives to take out of it, and we're going to push into results for the rest of the season.

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