

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

Sunday, June 1, 2025

### Colton Herta

#### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Joined by Colton Herta, driver of the No. 26 Gainbridge Honda for Andretti Global with Curb Agajanian who led 11 laps this afternoon. Best finish of the season, obviously 19th career podium for you. Colton, maybe take us through what was kind of chaotic there in the last 20 laps or so.

COLTON HERTA: Yeah, really the whole race. Yeah, very difficult track. Very difficult to get everything right today.

I think we ended up choosing the right strategy, and I was happy with how we did everything with the tires. Yeah, our Gainbridge Honda was fast, and yeah, wish we could get two more positions, but maybe in two weeks.

**Q. Colton, really nice start at the start of the race. Everybody was able to get through; a lot of times at this race that doesn't happen. Were you a little surprised that the first lap went without any incident?**

COLTON HERTA: The idea was to pack everybody up as much as I could. I'd like to say it was for the fans, but it was to try to stop that from happening and have to deal with restarts as the leader.

I figured if everybody is packed up, everyone would be moving slower into Turn 1 and it would be harder to create chaos, and it seemed like it worked.

**Q. For the most part, there was mayhem but there was also a lot of periods where there was great racing. Do you think drivers are getting the hang of this racetrack a little bit better in year 3?**

COLTON HERTA: I don't know. Everything around me was fine, but I don't know about everybody else. It looked like most of the cautions were from some pretty big mistakes and not really just straight wheel-to-wheel contact a lot of the times. I would say, yeah, probably then.

**Q. You said yesterday that you needed Sundays to go well and execute well. Are you pleased with today?**

COLTON HERTA: Yes. The type of season that we've had up until this point, it's been really hard. It's sucked, and I think anybody on the Gainbridge car will tell you that, that we haven't been happy with how everything has been going.

Yes, I would have loved to win. It does feel bad when you start first and you lose positions. But with how our season has gone, I think we're happy with the podium, and we just need to keep it rolling.

**Q. This is the first time since Mid-Ohio 2020 where it's three U.S.-born drivers on the podium. Does that matter?**

COLTON HERTA: It was an Andretti sweep that day, too. I believe I won. I remember that one.

It doesn't matter. I think it's cool, especially with a series that has become so international on the driver side. You think back to early IRL, if you told people then that more than half the series was going to be international drivers, I think people would gasp. But it's great; I think we're getting walks of life in the series, and it really just amps the competitiveness up and brings the best drivers.

**Q. You mentioned to us on Friday that you couldn't really think too much about the championship and Palou yet because you had some other drivers between him and you to make up before there. On a race when he crashes out, finishes 25th, how much more important is executing and getting everything clean on this race and finishing on the podium for you guys?**

COLTON HERTA: Yeah, you have to be able to take the maximum amount of points on that guy, and I think we were going to do it today even if he finished where he was. I think we were strong enough to hold him off, and I think we would have kept him behind, so we would have knocked down the points lead a little bit. But I think it helps everybody else out in the championship a lot when he goes out like that. It's unfortunate for him, but we really need some mistakes from him or misfortune to be able to catch him.

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**Q. You said earlier the track was difficult; what do you mean was difficult? Was it a grip situation or was it different than the days before?**

COLTON HERTA: I think it's just brutal with the bumps. It's just a difficult track to get right, to not hit anything on its own, and then when you add 26 other cars out there, it makes it even more difficult.

**Q. Shortly before the finish of the race, Will Power launched an attack. Did you expect it?**

COLTON HERTA: I knew he had 20 seconds Push-to-Pass. I was out. But I was trimmed and he wasn't. So I knew that was going to help a little bit. I knew having Honda power was going to help a little bit.

I wasn't too worried. It seemed like everything worked out. But yeah, he was really strong at the end, but it took everything for me to stop him from coming.

**Q. I was watching the broadcast on the rooftop, and I heard them say that you had a difficulty with your car somewhere around the last 20 laps. I was wondering, with those difficulties, did you have to change any of your strategies that you had previously planned for the race or were there already plans set in place to help you in case of an accident like that?**

COLTON HERTA: Honestly, I don't know what they would have been talking about on the broadcast. The car was okay and we didn't have any problems. I think maybe the difficulty would have been from trying to get around the guys that got the lucky yellow. It seemed like we were a lot faster than them, and that was probably the most difficult part of the race was trying to get through those guys and get back on the podium.

**Q. I think you pulled in to pit about lap 11 or 12 and I heard that Kirkwood left out in front of you. Do you think if you would have gotten out of there quicker or chose to go in a little later, do you think you would have kept the lead ahead of him and taken first place?**

COLTON HERTA: I came out ahead of him. Nolan dive-bombed me pretty much in Turn 4 and hip-checked me into the wall basically, which kind of slowed me down a lot, and that's what allowed Kirkwood around me. But we did come out of the pits ahead of him, which is great.

The guys did a great job. The strategy was great. Our boys were solid, even on the yellow flag pit stop. We were so close to beating Will out. I was happy with how everything went.

**Q. After Kyle finishes ahead of you in a race, do you talk to your dad, and what do you talk about?**

COLTON HERTA: I tell him to pit him. Pit him on the race strategy, otherwise trying to help him out. I'm his son.

**Q. Louis Foster had a pretty weird-looking suspension failure. Obviously maybe a little bit too soon to say exactly what it was. On the TV broadcast he said the bumps might have been a factor. Are the bumps to the point where it could be a safety issue, or if there's a specific part of the track you would want to see repaved, what would it be?**

COLTON HERTA: No repaving. Until we're bad with bumps, no repaving. Make it worse; take a jackhammer to the place. I don't think it's a safety aspect. The cars are incredibly strong, so whatever happened to him, I would suspect it was a mileaged-out part or maybe he had contact at some point that weakened it. But it would be awfully strange for it to just fail, especially from the bumps that we have here.

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