

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

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Scott Borchetta

Anne Fischgrund

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome. Announced earlier this morning, a new name for what has become an exciting Nashville tradition. This year's NTT INDYCAR Series race now known as the Borchetta Bourbon Music City Grand Prix, Labor Day Weekend at Nashville Superspeedway, the season finale for the NTT INDYCAR Series and INDY NXT by Firestone, and tickets are also now on sale as the countdown continues to championship Sunday, available right now at www.MusicCityGP.com.

Joining us today, founder of Big Machine and Borchetta Bourbon, Scott Borchetta joins us, and the president of the newly named Borchetta Bourbon Music City Grand Prix in Anne Fischgrund. Welcome to you both.

Scott, every year the Borchetta Bourbon brand grows. Last month there was the partnership with Chip Ganassi Racing. It's a brand that makes really big milestones more visible, let's call it, in INDYCAR racing, and this certainly sounds like one of those, doesn't it, Scott?

SCOTT BORCHETTA: Yeah, absolutely. Thank you for that, Dave. The Borchetta Bourbon was born out of the Grand Prix. We've had our distillery for 10 years now, and we were trying to figure out what the right entry was for our bourbon, so with the first Big Machine Music City Grand Prix, that was the first iteration of Borchetta Bourbon, and I think most of you know I'm on the board of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway museum. So we donate proceeds from each bottle to the museum, and the first year of the bourbon release had the Marmon Wasp on it.

Each year we honor a new driver or team or family. The second one was the Unser family. The third one was Mario Andretti. The fourth one was AJ Foyt. This year we're partnered with Chip Ganassi Racing for the 35th anniversary, and thanks to Chip and Alex, we drove right into Victory Lane at the Indy 500, so we're off to an incredible start.

THE MODERATOR: Keeping the good vibe alive. Anne, for you, this race is a tradition that's now into its fifth year. Almost hard to believe it's been five years already. How does this new name strengthen this collaboration and partnership, certainly in a great city like Nashville.

ANNE FISCHGRUND: We couldn't have a better partner than Scott and his team, whether it's the Big Machine name or the Borchetta Bourbon name. Scott's roots are here in Nashville. The businesses are here in Nashville.

Scott is beyond passionate about racing, as you just heard, and so having someone like Scott and his team behind this event not only this year but for the past four years has made a huge impact, and we're looking forward to continuing that strength and that tradition as we continue on with now the Borchetta Bourbon Music City Grand Prix.

THE MODERATOR: Scott, do you know someone that's collected all of the bottles, outside of yourself and the family?

SCOTT BORCHETTA: Many people. Even during the month of May -- this is the first time we've launched in May. Usually we wait until our Grand Prix, but because of working with Chip, I think this is really the new platform and template that we'll use moving forward. We already know what we're going to do for next year for the bourbon, and it's going to be extraordinary.

It's just all come together. Also, too, I want to touch on all the excitement that we had from the month of May really encouraged us to come back to Anne and to Penske Entertainment and INDYCAR and say we'd really like to change the name because there's such momentum and it's absolutely driven by everything that's happened this past May.

THE MODERATOR: It goes along with FOX and obviously the on-track competition has been exciting for you and the brand, right, Scott?

SCOTT BORCHETTA: Absolutely. I think, too, Big Machine, it's a lot of things, but to a certain extent, the title was innocuous. It wasn't Big Machine Records, it wasn't Big Machine Distillery, it wasn't Big Machine Racing. I



wanted that brand out there.

But now that we had this momentum with one of our core brands, it made all the sense to really focus on our product.

Q. What does it do for you as an individual in terms of the momentum that INDYCAR is currently seeing right now?

SCOTT BORCHETTA: Yeah, thank you. All of you know this. I'm very passionate about our sport. I think everything that's happened with FOX, when you talk to Eric Shanks or Gottlieb or any of those guys, they're so passionate about it. Eric is from Indiana.

To see what they're doing, something that I've been very bullish about for years, and I go back to Chip and everything that they used to do with Target in the '90s. They made Alex Zanardi and Jimmy Vasser stars. We have some of the greatest athletes in the world, and this gives us an opportunity to reimagine how to make stars out of them.

For me personally, just to be involved, this is something I've always wanted to be part of, and now that I've got a relationship with Penske and INDYCAR and so many of the teams, for me it's really a dream come true. I grew up loving racing, loving INDYCAR, and for us to continue to be embedded in a part of the sport, of the fabric of the sport, I'm very proud of it, and I look forward to a lot of great things.

Again, to take all this momentum and kind of really launch our brand on a national level, it all makes sense, and the timing is perfect.

Q. For yourself and from the organizer point of view, how big is it for you guys and how important is it, as Scott mentioned, with momentum from the Indy 500?

ANNE FISCHGRUND: It's very important to use a brand to not only support the event but also to welcome the community as well as the INDYCAR fans from across the country and world. We're excited to be hosting the championship races, not only for the NTT INDYCAR Series but also for INDY NXT by Firestone.

So having all those individual things come together in one place is going to be a very magical race weekend. It's going to take a lot of time here in the next three months to make sure all the branding is updated, all the stories are aligned.

Scott mentioned this change; this change happened in a matter of days from a vision that he had, and we're excited

to make that all come to fruition so his brand and the Penske Entertainment brand with Borchetta Bourbon Music City Grand Prix will roll off the tongue at some point for everyone naturally, can come together and celebrate whoever we're crowning in both victory circles, not only for the races but also for the championships.

SCOTT BORCHETTA: And I really want to highlight how open INDYCAR was to this change. We dropped this on Anne on Thursday, and so we got this crazy idea, and we've got certain assets ready to go. That's how quickly they turned and pivoted and agreed to do this.

Again, enormous thanks to Anne and everybody at INDYCAR and Penske.

ANNE FISCHGRUND: It seems fitting, though. We had the conversation in the bourbon barrel room.

SCOTT BORCHETTA: We did. It had to be in person. That was the only way we were going to convince you.

THE MODERATOR: Anne, if we've learned nothing about Scott over the years, once he has an idea it's full throttle all the way.

ANNE FISCHGRUND: Yes, there's no question, absolutely.

THE MODERATOR: Hop on board or you're left behind.

ANNE FISCHGRUND: You can't ask for a partner with better passion, that's for sure.

Q. For Scott, last year when you were the promoter, you did an outstanding job with all the billboards that I saw around Tennessee and the Nashville area. What are the assets that you get now by having Penske Entertainment as the promoter? You play a role now as the sponsor. If you could talk about the differences or if you pretty much look at it as you're a partner rather than the sponsor.

SCOTT BORCHETTA: Yeah, you know, we've always felt like we've been partners with them from day one. So even when we were the title sponsor with the prior administration, we treated this race like it was our own, and we've always been in the trenches of it. We're not just, hey, put a decal on it and we'll see you at the racetrack.

It's very important to us that this is successful and we've build out a great template that we've passed on to Anne, and we're getting -- now that especially for Nashville Superspeedway with the Cup weekend in their rear view, you'll see all the assets going at full speed immediately.



We learned so much about this market, even though I've been here forever. When you turn the turrets and all of a sudden it's on you to understand what it takes to sell a ticket and how to reach that customer, we learned so much, and we're sharing all that with Anne to make sure that we're all successful and continue to build this great event.

But it's a loud market, and we can't take anything for granted here. On any night of any day of any week of any month of any year, you're in Music City, and there's something to do. So we've got to be really specific and have great intent and really be remarkable with everything we do around the Grand Prix.

Q. As you said, it is a loud market, and the way Alex Palou's season has gone, there's a chance that the championship could be wrapped up before the championship race. Do you have any creative ideas what to do in that aspect, maybe turn it in more to a championship celebration than a championship race?

SCOTT BORCHETTA: Absolutely. I think we need to celebrate what Alex is doing. This is Michael Schumacher time. This is Senna time. This is Jeff Gordon time. So if he has to clinch in Portland, which is possible, we've got to make sure people come and see one of the greatest of all time. This guy is on the precipice of four championships in five years. You just put the biggest crown jewel in that crown, and you don't want to miss this guy. He's just a little bit better than everybody else.

We all know this. Those cars are pretty much the same, start to finish. There's little variances here and there. But for him to be that remarkably better than everybody else -- if you watch the 500 celebration on the Monday night post-500, every driver, from the mic, from the podium said, Alex, we study you. We're trying to figure it out. So you don't want to miss this guy.

Yeah, he probably will clinch, so we're already prepared for that. You don't want to miss it. It's still going to be a showdown. It's still the battle of Music City. You've still got to see this race.

Q. Anne, what do you take from working with Scott, the fact that he's a very creative guy, a very driven guy? You work for one of the most driven people --

SCOTT BORCHETTA: Poor Anne. She's in between me and Roger. Good God.

Q. What do you learn from the creative level from working with a guy like Scott?

ANNE FISCHGRUND: As I mentioned earlier, Scott's passion is driving so much of this momentum, and we're going to dive right in. To Scott's point about how we market and message this, it's going to change between now and the last weekend in August.

It is going to be focused on ticket sales, as they are up and running and ready to go. It's going to be selling the stories that we need to connect with the passionate INDYCAR fans, and also the creative and the stories we need to be loud in this market.

It is busy, as Scott said. There's always something going on, and we want to make sure that your Labor Day plans are with us at Nashville Superspeedway.

SCOTT BORCHETTA: It's going to be a party. Don't forget that.

ANNE FISCHGRUND: Exactly, it's going to be a party. More announcements to come, more exciting things, but we can't wait to creatively pool our resources together to sell this message and ensure that everyone who comes out to that racetrack is going to have an amazing time and continue to build on the momentum that we've seen over the last few years.

THE MODERATOR: You talk about how loud it is in Nashville. Scott, do you want to get into Big Machine 20, the massive party on Broadway on that Friday night?

SCOTT BORCHETTA: Yeah, absolutely. So Big Machine records turns 20 this year on September 1st, so the culmination of the championship race being on Labor Day weekend culminates in this incredible celebration for us. So today we announced Big Machine 20.

So if you attended last year our Friday night event where we had Brantley Gilbert and the world's largest album release party, we had over 118,000 people downtown on Broadway. This year we announced Riley Green, Sheryl Crow, Brett Young, but I'm literally going to have the very first stars we ever signed perform, as well. A woman named Danielle Peck, who's now a DJ on Sirius XM, was our very first single. She's going to come and perform that. Jack Ingram, a great Texas artist, he had our very first No. 1. He's going to come and perform that. The Band Perry are going to come back and do "If I Die Young."

It's going to be an incredible celebration of Big Machine Records on that Friday night, and again, we'll be shutting down Broadway, and it will be a knock-down, drag-out rock-and-roll party in the streets. It's going to be incredible.



Q. For both Scott and Anne, I'm wondering, second year this race has moved to the oval at Nashville Superspeedway. With this move, the sponsorship move you talked about, how important momentum is in terms of selling tickets, trying to get fans to the track? Do you feel there can be more momentum behind this event with it being the second year you're going to a facility, having this race last year and not a brand new event on an oval, switching from the road course to the oval? Do you feel there's more momentum in that, going to the oval for the second year in a row?

SCOTT BORCHETTA: Yeah, when it comes to live events, familiarity is key. It was Mount Everest last year to get the race moved from downtown, which was never going to happen, and I think all of you know that. Had we tried to stay downtown, we would have been the most embarrassed promoter of all time because the race could not happen. The mayor made it very clear if there was a Titans game on our race day, we're not racing.

First off, that started in late February of last year, so we turned everything that we had to enter really entertaining people with the idea and educating them with the idea and the new prospect and reality that we are now racing at the Nashville Superspeedway.

So one of the things that -- hey, I love the road circuit and I hope that it comes back, but as far as a fan experience, being able to navigate the Nashville Superspeedway is so easy, and I had many fans tell me that as much as they enjoyed the downtown race, they were able to get into the pits easier. The traffic was better. The parking was better. The overall fan experience I think was actually better for them. So that gets out. People talk.

If it was terrible, oh, my God, Anne and I would go, I don't know what we're going to do. But the reality is now we've educated them. We've had a very successful event there and there's a familiarity there and that breeds a comfort and going, okay, I know what I'm going to get and I'm going to get a great experience and a great race.

ANNE FISCHGRUND: I completely agree. I think consistency is key. We know in the near future we will be at Nashville Superspeedway, which brings consistency to the fan, to the experience, that we will continue to grow off of, not only with what the Grand Prix did last year but also key learnings and the fan experience that Nashville Superspeedway puts in place for all of their events.

We don't want to recreate the wheel. We want customers to know where they're going to be parking, know how to get tickets, know how to enter the venue, know how to access the garages, all of those key things that make the

INDYCAR experience what it is. We're going to be as clear as we possibly can, provide as much information on our website, on our social channels, communicate out early and often because we want to have a successful race there, and in order to have a successful race, that means customers knowing where to go, how to get the information, and knowing the same thing year over year over year. So hopefully creating that consistency for the best customer experience we can possibly create.

SCOTT BORCHETTA: There were a couple things we hit on last year that really worked. Having the driver introductions out in the middle of the fan zone, the drivers loved it, the fans freaked out, so we'll definitely be doing that again. We're working on our music activations, and Anne is not ready to announce this, but something that I don't think that's ever been done before.

There's a lot of really great things entertainment-wise that are going to be happening at the superspeedway.

ANNE FISCHGRUND: Always here for the adventure.

THE MODERATOR: To add to that, Scott, I know you're obviously a huge race fan. Think about the on-track passes we had in that race. It was an INDYCAR track record in Nashville, 653 on track, and then for position, top 10, top 5. It was a tremendous race.

SCOTT BORCHETTA: Yeah, it really was. Outside of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, this is the next fastest track. This is the highest speed. They're touching 200 miles an hour at this 1.5-mile oval, which is insane. The racing was fantastic. Everybody was worried, man, we haven't raced there since 2008, what's the track surface going to be like, are we going to be able to pass. All those questions were answered with a resounding yes.

Q. Scott, I recall you last year being fairly noncommittal what would happen after 2027 when the stadium reworks had been complete whether INDYCAR would return downtown or you would stick at the superspeedway. Now we're a year on, do you have any idea what's going to happen at that stage in a couple years' time?

SCOTT BORCHETTA: Yeah, I can tell you there's a lot of interest in the race returning downtown. The mayor is absolutely in favor of it. There's a lot of development going on, not just the stadium but we refer to that part of Nashville as the East Bank, and there's a huge development happening all across that area in the East Bank.

So what we're trying to do is have conversations to build it

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

into the infrastructure. If we do this right -- the vision has always been, let's be the Monaco of the south. So we've got a lot of work to do, but the conversations are ongoing, and that's my hope.

Q. Concerning the Hispanic community, I had the opportunity to be at the Indy 500 and I know the winner said there's a lot more Hispanic community supporting the Indy 500. My goal is to see the same thing in Music City. Do you have any plans to push the Hispanic community to go to the event?

ANNE FISCHGRUND: Thank you, very, I'm happy to address this. With the transition between Big Machine's management of the event and Penske Entertainment taking on the management of the event, we are quickly diving into what our community efforts look like to support this year's race.

We are recently hiring a few individuals to join the team to focus on this particular topic as we want to build momentum in the community, how we get involved and how we can welcome all people. The it doesn't matter your background, to the racetrack. That includes donations in certain markets and opportunities, how we can engage with drivers and assets at activations and community festivals. So we are quickly diving into that. While we don't have this exact answer at this moment, we can't wait to continue to build momentum and fandom within the communities that are around middle Tennessee.

SCOTT BORCHETTA: And in addition, we've made a great effort every year to include Hispanic race fans. We've bought Hispanic radio. We've gone over to areas in Nashville that are largely Hispanic areas.

Obviously with Pato, we gave him a chunk of tickets to give away. It's super important to us, and this isn't new, by the way. This is something we've always been very bullish about, and it's not going to stop now.

Honestly, if you have any ideas, please don't hesitate. We want every idea and every opportunity to include the Hispanic community in our race.

Q. Scott, talk about how you originally got involved in the bourbon business itself, maybe the background behind all that?

SCOTT BORCHETTA: Yeah, it's a great story because it started at the Indy 500. It started in 2011, and we were on the great Dan Wheldon's car that day and had an extraordinary day. But it led to a relationship with Diageo and Crown Royal. For those of you who follow that closely, that was a year where Diageo didn't get their deal done for

the NASCAR race, which had been the Crown Royal Your Hero's Name Here 400.

So the team at Indianapolis Motor Speedway came to us and said, hey, if you guys can come and put on a show, bring some of your biggest acts, we'll trade you out for the naming rights. So that was the first Big Machine Brickyard 400. We brought Rascal Flatts and The Band Perry and Thomas Rhett and Brantley Gilbert and a put on a show and a half, and it was massive.

Then the deal with Diageo and Crown Royal was renewed, and they reached out and said, hey, stay with us. So it became the Crown Royal Your Hero's Name Here powered by Big Machine.

But that was the relationship. So a couple years into that -- that was a wonderful relationship. They sponsored a bunch of our tours, and we're having a meeting a few years in, and I said, hey, we're a Tennessee label; I'd love to have a Tennessee whiskey.

Well, nothing ever came of that, but that was where the idea was planted, and a couple years after that the opportunity to acquire the Tenn South distillery in Lynnville, Tennessee, came open and we went down and met with them. The products were great. They weren't necessarily marketers, but they were great creators, and it's like, well, we know a thing or two about marketing, so let's take this thing over.

But it was, again, born at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

THE MODERATOR: The market is really good. The bourbon might even be better. I'm just going to throw it out there.

Q. The importance that FOX Sports and also Penske Entertainment have stressed about having the season end before the NFL starts, before big college football starts. You discovered last year middle of September, tough to get a good TV rating when you're up against the NFL. How important is your race date, starting the week before the NFL season starts? How important is that to you, Scott?

SCOTT BORCHETTA: I think it's everything. All of us have been trying to figure out how to get out of the way of the locomotive known as the NFL. So not only are we out of the way, we have the biggest NFL network as our turbocharger. Just imagine what they're going to do to use this not only as the finale for the INDYCAR championship but also to launch the NFL. That next Thursday is the kickoff.



I think it's a perfect merging. The timing couldn't be better, and I think with the perfect partner to make the biggest noise.

Q. How do you explain the fans that are die-hard race fans? If it was up to them, they'd be racing until the end of October, early November. In today's media landscape, that's really not that feasible.

SCOTT BORCHETTA: Yeah, I mean, it's like we've touched on a couple times. It's a loud world. There's just stuff. We have to do more than appeal to just the race fan. We have to appeal to the entertainment fan. This gives us a lot of oxygen to not have a lot of competition that weekend.

Yeah, there will be a Cup race that weekend, but as far as this being all the stakes, regardless of if somebody has clinched the championship or not, we're still crowning the championship here and you're still at the second fastest speedway oval in INDYCAR.

I think we go back and forth on this all day. We're still going to watch F1. We're still going to watch NASCAR. All those knuckleheads like us who can't get enough of this stuff, we'll find it. But we've got to do better than that. We can't just go to the people who will search us out. We have to make it really easy and really entertaining.

ANNE FISCHGRUND: Scott said most of what I was going to touch on. But what we haven't talked about today is how much FOX has put into this partnership, and we've seen the growth race after race. A few major events have gotten in the way and been paired up on the same timing as some of our races earlier this year, but they have put such an effort into their advertising plans, in their marketing endeavors, their partnership not only with INDYCAR but also the race promoters, and so I'm really excited to see the momentum continue throughout the season and coming here to Nashville at the end of the season.

Q. Scott, not necessarily about your race but you're a big-time race fan and you're also an entertainer, what was your reaction when you saw Will Power, where he pushed Kyle Kirkwood along the track in Detroit last Friday? That's probably going to go down in somebody's highlight reel for the season.

SCOTT BORCHETTA: Well, I'd love to tell you that I've never done that before myself, but I've done that before. Get the hell out of the way, man.

So while he's on a much bigger stage than I've ever been on, I understand the frustration. That's Will Power. Will

wears his heart on his sleeve, and the guy always wants to go fast. Not that we encourage that kind of behavior, but bring it, man. It's elbows out. These guys want to win. They want to win every practice. They want to win qualifying. They want to win every race. Those are the drivers we want in the series. Get the hell out of the way; I'm coming through.

THE MODERATOR: Obviously it's been a very busy day with the announcement of the Borchetta Bourbon Music City Grand Prix and of course, Scott, Big Machine 20, as well. We appreciate you hopping on here in short order. Scott and Anne, thank you so much.

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