

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

Friday, July 4, 2025

Colton Herta

Will Power

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, everyone. Wrapping up today's practice session ahead of Sunday's Honda Indy 200 at Mid-Ohio presented by the all new 2026 Passport.

Will Power will be joining us shortly. Currently joined by Colton Herta, who once again is in the No. 26 Gainbridge Honda for Andretti Global with Curb Agajanian. The 2020 Race to the Winner here at Mid-Ohio, 2023 pole winner as well. He was third quick overall in that Group 2 session.

Good start to the weekend for you. How would you break it down?

COLTON HERTA: It was pretty messy, but I think good to get through stuff. Hello? Is it working?

THE MODERATOR: We hear you.

COLTON HERTA: Why do you get the one that's so loud?

THE MODERATOR: I'm swallowing the microphone.

COLTON HERTA: What was I saying? Sorry.

I think it was productive. Pretty messy from me with an off, and then I backed into the wall at turn 6, 7 -- 6. So could have been a little bit better from my side of things, but it was still productive.

THE MODERATOR: Maybe just talk about the momentum the team has coming into this weekend, and certainly it's a busy stretch with five races in four weeks.

COLTON HERTA: I like it, though. I love driving the car, so any time we get more of a chance to do that is better in my book. So I'm excited for this upcoming stretch.

Obviously, like you said, it's going to be hard on a lot of people. For me, I love every time we get into the car. So I'm excited for it and excited for this weekend.

THE MODERATOR: Joined by Will Power as well, back at the No. 12 Verizon Team Penske Chevrolet, the 2021 Race 1 winner here at Mid-Ohio, five-time pole winner as well, quickest in the all-car session to lead off this practice session. What did you learn?

WILL POWER: Actually, the car was pretty good. Yeah, didn't get a good run on reds, but hopefully in a good window.

THE MODERATOR: Sounds like Josef had a strong car as well. Maybe it's shaping up for a good week for Team Penske perhaps?

WILL POWER: Could be.

Q. Will, Team Penske today announced their organizational lineup, a lot of guys you've worked with in the past. How do you feel about having Jonathan Diuguid at the top with Travis Law?

WILL POWER: Two quality people. They've been there as long as I have, longer, so very quality guys.

Q. Also the fact that a guy that you knew very well is back, Kyle Moyer, he's working with Arrow McLaren. From a personal standpoint, how happy do you feel to see him back with an INDYCAR team?

WILL POWER: Yeah, I think everyone's happy to see him in the paddock. Everyone knows Kyle is very good at what he does, and he's a great guy. I'm happy to see him in the paddock.

Q. Question for both of you. What was the biggest challenge that you faced on track today?

WILL POWER: Probably people backing off, simply. It's incredible, yeah.

COLTON HERTA: I think, yeah, it's very annoying in these sessions, especially when you know you're fast and you just have nothing to show for it. It's frustrating. I don't know, it is what it is.



It's a little bit better with these sessions, but even for the beginning of the session, then you just don't really get laps. So you're kind of guessing the last half of the track, where to put it and how much speed to roll when you get the reds on. It definitely disrupts the flow of your work progress for sure.

Q. It looked like all the spins out there were due to rear grip issues. Was there anything different about the rear grip today that was causing that, or is it just how it comes off this track?

COLTON HERTA: When I lost it, yeah, it was just the rear right from turning. I don't know, it just seemed like overall maybe a little bit low grip and really unforgiving. If you kind of charged in too hard or you really over slipped one end of the car, it seemed like a lot worse than normal.

So it is, I think, maybe a little bit more challenging than before. I'm not sure why. That's the way I feel.

WILL POWER: It's really hard to catch the car once it gets to a certain point. With that weight, it just, phew, just keeps going. You keep sliding, and then you get to the edge of the dirtiest part of the line. Had it happen at Elkhart Lake, just so much weight to control and catch.

Q. For both of you, just with the change in the banking in turn 4, how much of a difference, if any, did that make?

WILL POWER: It didn't feel that different. I think there's probably less of a chance to pass on the outside now because there's no bank in there. It was honestly pretty similar to me.

COLTON HERTA: Same.

Q. I just also wanted to ask how your Iowa test went, and what are the challenges next week on the doubleheader weekend now?

WILL POWER: The challenge is being able to hold on for a stint. They've just added so much downforce. It's so stuck that it's actually painful. I did half stint, and I'm like, man, I didn't know if I could actually continue. Like I think there's going to be people like stopping just because it's so painful. It's too much, too much grip.

COLTON HERTA: Yeah, I agree. It's going to be extremely physical. Maybe that changes in the race. Maybe people save fuel a little bit more. The race pace will slow down from what we're doing at the test, but how much -- because we have to do it twice. It's going to be a rough one.

Q. I've got one for both the boys actually. It's kind of a follow-on about the changes that have been made to the track. Is that going to make passing or defending better? I've heard some comments that maybe that makes it more of a defending type series of corners rather than passing opportunities. Will it limit passing around this track?

WILL POWER: Turn 4, is that what you mean?

Q. Yes.

WILL POWER: It might take away the outside pass there, yeah. It will be interesting to see. Maybe there's some deg this year. I think there will be, which always creates quicker racing.

COLTON HERTA: Yeah, I think the banking does promote that outside pass a little bit more, but it also is -- I feel like it's maybe a slightly slower corner. So I don't know, it's a give and take. I don't think it changes too much.

Q. Just quickly for Will, do we feel that maybe this weekend might be the first Chevy breakthrough of the season, where it's been dominated by Honda so much this year? Do we feel that maybe Chevy is on a more level playing field here after today's practice?

WILL POWER: No, this is a Honda track, so I have zero -- I don't know. I don't know. Maybe we -- I don't know. I would have said like four races ago we were going to win one. It's a bit shocking that we haven't. It's very difficult to say. We'll do our best.

Q. At Road America it was such an exciting race and a lot of places to pass with on the long straightaways. You don't quite have that here, but now they've added 10 laps to the race to 90 laps. I'm just wondering if that would kind of force everyone to maybe do three pit stops? Are you going to be able to just go full bore the whole time and not save a lot of fuel?

COLTON HERTA: No, it's not going to force everybody to do three stops. It's splitting. There will be -- it's tough because these races, they kind of suck when you qualify up front because you have to choose the right strategy, and if you don't choose it, then you end up at the back. It reminds me of how Belle Isle was. It was a very lucky race to win, unless it was fully green. There's so many ways to get caught in the yellow. That's what this race will turn into.

It's probably split between the two stop into three stop, maybe favoring -- probably favoring the three stop a little bit more, I think. It just gives opportunities for, if you qualify

well and you're on the wrong strategy, it could burn you pretty big.

He's probably been burned by that the most out of anybody in INDYCAR that I've seen from yellows and stuff, like from 2012 and 2013.

WILL POWER: 15 more wins.

COLTON HERTA: Yeah, honestly, that might be a little light.

WILL POWER: That's the other side of it. He's the one that benefits.

COLTON HERTA: I think, if you're somebody who qualifies up front, which I like to think I qualify up front a lot out here, it hurts you a little bit more. For the viewers, I think it will make the race a little bit more interesting. Maybe tougher to follow, but more interesting for the outcome.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks for coming out. Appreciate your time. Good luck tomorrow in qualifying.

The next NTT INDYCAR Series on track tomorrow morning 10:30 eastern time, qualifying at 2:30. Both available in the United States on FS1. Thanks, everyone. Have a great rest of your night.

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