

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

Tuesday, July 8, 2025

David Malukas

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, everyone. As everyone knows, it's a hectic month of July, and back to an oval this weekend for the NTT INDYCAR Series and the return to Iowa Speedway, the fastest short track on the planet, for the Sukup INDYCAR race weekend. Saturday it's the Synk 275 presented by Sukup, Sunday it's the Farm to Finish 275 presented by Sukup.

David Malukas returns there after leading a race-high 67 laps at Worldwide Technology Raceway, and before that a second-place finish at the 109th running of the Indianapolis 500 presented by Gainbridge. The driver of the No. 4 Clariance Technology Chevrolet for AJ Foyt Racing joins us this afternoon. David, thank you for your time.

DAVID MALUKAS: Thank you for having me. Very excited heading to Iowa.

Q. How much are you looking forward to getting back to the oval program this weekend?

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, I'm very excited. There's questions that we need to figure out for a road course setup and road course race strategies, but it's going to feel good. We can put that on hold and go back to a short oval environment that I know I've loved and the team is going to be doing pretty well at.

Q. To that point, you've had a couple of top 10s at Iowa and a second-row start just a couple years ago. How is racing at Iowa different than St. Louis or Milwaukee, certainly Nashville?

DAVID MALUKAS: Well, it feels like it's probably the shorter one out of the few when it comes to short ovals. It really takes that short into perspective.

I've always enjoyed it. The racing has just been chaotic. I think it's one of the very few races that you're passing so many cars and you don't even know what position you're in. You're just having a good time. I'm very excited to see how things are going to come out for us this year.

Q. I'm curious how much, if any, is there an unknown going into this weekend just with kind of uncertainty of what aero package and new right front tire?

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, obviously a lot of unknowns going into it. But the good news is everybody is kind of going to be in that same format, so we're going to have to kind of be battling each other on who can figure it out the quickest. But obviously all these changes are made for better racing at Iowa.

I'm excited to get into it and see how things are going to be. Hopefully fingers crossed the weather comes out for us because it looks like Friday there's going to be some rain, so hopefully that can go away by the time we get there.

Q. Would that mean a potentially bigger difference between race 1 and race 2 just as far as what people potentially learn about the car?

DAVID MALUKAS: Could be. Normally for Iowa in the past, anytime we've had double-headers, there's always is a big differential from race 1 and race 2. You already learn so much. With it being a lot of new questions needing to be answered, that could be very true, and it could be a bigger differential.

Q. David, at Mid-Ohio, you kept asking me about this famous gas station in Iowa, and I told you it was the world's largest truck stop in Wolcottville off I-80. Have you done any research on that since you do come from a very big trucking family?

DAVID MALUKAS: I haven't done more research but it seems like you're setting me up for something that I think you've done some more research on.

Q. I stop all the time; where else can you get a haircut and get a dentist visit? You've got to get a dentist visit at a truck stop, maybe get your teeth cleaned or whatever. To follow up on a question I asked you at Mid-Ohio, young guy, there's a lot of speculation going on about your future, and you're having a pretty good run here with AJ Foyt Racing. How do you compartmentalize the future from the present so you

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keep your focus?

DAVID MALUKAS: Well, I guess that's just no matter the rumors or no rumors, I think everybody is trying to strive to always live in the present instead of stressing about the past and the future. I've always gone about that no matter what the situation may be.

I've had a mental coach training me to always stay and live in the present, and as of right now, I'm with the AJ Foyt team and we're focused on our successes and what we've accomplished so far this season, and there's a lot more coming and a lot more results that's going to be here very soon.

We're learning so much every single race that goes by, and even from Mid-Ohio, I actually just came back from the shop earlier today, and there's a lot that we've already learned from that one race.

We're taking it a step at a time but we're always going on an upward trajectory.

Q. And the ability to be able to share some engineering information with Team Penske, you as a driver, how do you see that? What are the details that you see that might be different from when you joined the operation?

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, the more, the merrier. The more data that we can get, especially when it comes to as many drivers as possible, that's better for me, for my driving performance, and for us. It's a lot of good drivers that we can trust each other and try different setups and try to get a better result come after the short few practice sessions that we have in a weekend.

It's been my situation coming through 2024. I've seen a lot of different drivers in the paddock, pretty much half the field now, I've seen their different driving styles. So seeing all of that and putting it all in one giant pile to collect some data and make myself better, it comes out better in the end.

Q. Last year when NASCAR repaved the inside lanes in the turns, it helped their race, but it really hurt the INDYCAR race. Do you see any improvement in that, any potential improvement? You tested out there with a new package but a lot of drivers say the grip level is still going to be an issue when you get off one type of pavement on to the other.

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, we'll see. INDYCAR is trying to do everything that they can, so for us, we didn't do the test, so there's more unknowns for us. We're going to be going into it with a clean slate really and hopefully the results get

better.

Obviously Iowa used to be an incredible circuit for us with many, many passes, so hopefully with these changes and the new package that INDYCAR is working on, hopefully we can get back to the old ways.

Q. The team have had a turnaround in fortunes since Indianapolis 500; obviously Santino has got quite a few top 5s, and I know the results haven't quite gone your way at times, but generally it's been improved. I think you said spending time with the team during the month of May really helped you, but how do you think that's progressing to the team turning their form around so much in the last couple of races?

DAVID MALUKAS: You know, it's just coming into a new team and just even from my side being new, we've had a lot of new guys just join from the crew side, the mechanics, new engineering being switched around. There's a lot of new chemistry and builds that need to happen.

I always say month of May, when there's a new group of new guys, that always is a big turnaround for us because having a full month where you wake up every morning, you go to bed every night, you're always there with the crew, you're seeing the same guys, and you can learn on what I like from the car, what we need from the car.

It helps a lot, and obviously just even confidence overall, everybody has consistency of build, so that foundation is built in the month of May and you can finally work towards something for the rest of the season.

We have had that. Like you said, the races, things happen always in the races. That's what INDYCAR is. That's why no matter where you qualify you can always have a good result; one yellow here or there and the results can change. But we've been on an upward trajectory. We just keep getting quicker and quicker. Qualifying performances have been consistently better.

The trajectory is going up, so hopefully we can keep that going and start getting some better results come these races.

Q. You just mentioned about using a mental coach as part of your team these days. I know a lot of drivers are using mental coaches more than previously. What's the importance of having someone like that in your team, and how does that affect your development?

DAVID MALUKAS: I mean, it's incredibly important. When you talk with drivers all the time, they're always talking



about the physical and you see all these cuts of them in the gym working their arms, showing the triceps, biceps; yeah, we're getting strong.

Obviously that's always important, but I feel like the mental aspect hasn't really been spoken about too much. Like you said, I feel like that's something that's starting to trend more recently.

It's tough; you look at INDYCAR and motorsports in general, it's a sport where you're surrounded with fans and PR all the way until the very start of the race really. You get in the car five minutes and now you need to be focused, when I think in other sports you have time to go in the locker room, have time to recollect.

A lot of strategies that we do to switch into racing mode to get focused just because there's that very short period of time. I think it's very important. There's a lot that we can learn from it, and it's still kind of a new environment for me that I've gone into and I think the sport in general.

Q. David, we found out a few weeks ago you're a bit of a Football Manager player. Just wanted to find out how you're save is going; I heard you're with Nottingham Forest. How is that going and what's the target?

DAVID MALUKAS: I was with Forest, it was kind of impulsive just because I saw the good season that they had in the Prem this season, so I got to play with them. But starting with the Premier League team, I'm pretty sure if you've played, it gets a bit easy. After a few seasons I kind of dropped that one, and now I'm actually playing Dorking Wanderers from the National League South, so I'm trying to work them up into the Premier League, which has been a tough struggle but I'm in season three right now, but we're getting there. I'm still very much addicted. I'm putting in a lot of hours into that.

Anytime, the flying in between, those few hours on the plane, you can knock that out. It's pretty good.

Q. You mentioned it earlier, but we talked in April and you said the early part of the season the 14 car setups and kind of mindset as far as what they were working on and month of May you were going to transition to what you liked in the car. Has that happened since the month of May?

DAVID MALUKAS: Yes, it very much has. It's kind of gone exactly to what we spoke about. We're kind of building a car based off of the 14 setup and trying different directions and now we finally can say, okay, now this is David's setup, this is the No. 4 setup and we can build off

of that foundation and work from there.

We've just been on a really good trajectory. I think every session that we do, I think the one question that we really still need to figure out are the road courses.

We've made a big chunk at Road America, made a little bit more at Mid-Ohio. Other teams still seem to have a bit of an advantage for us. Laguna is going to be another big question mark that we need to figure out, but other than that, the car has been in a very good spot for us.

I'm just happy with the positive progression that we've been having, and hopefully we can continue going forward.

Q. Now that you have setups under you, you kind of have both philosophies on the car, what are your thoughts of AJ Foyt Racing 10 races in, now that you've been through road and street courses and ovals and superspeedways, what's your overall thoughts so far?

DAVID MALUKAS: As of right now, I think the car has been in -- if you look at Santino's results in the races, he's been on a really good trajectory. He's had good results when it comes to short ovals from a road course and from a street course. It's not where the car is just good in one circuit. We're making a car that's just built all around. That's what you need to have good performances here in INDYCAR and be performing in the championship.

I think we're starting to show things from that direction, and I'm just very excited to be a part of it.

The chemistry that the team has right now has been at an all-time high. I'm enjoying my time there, having a really good time with all the guys. Confidence, the team morale is high, so I think that's one of the basic things we need to work on when it comes to the team. So the basics are there, and we're starting to work up, and hopefully we can start working these finite details to have an ultimate car all around.

Q. There's another driver in the paddock that through his first 54 starts, similar stats to you, two runner-up finishes, top 5s, top 10s similar, and he won his 55th start, that driver is Josef Newgarden, and you're coming into your 55th start on Saturday. Do you believe this could be a potential breakout race-winning weekend for you?

DAVID MALUKAS: We'll see. Winning at INDYCAR, especially the time that we're at now, I think the level of drivers, it's at an all-time high.



Even I remember the first season you could go into qualifying and say, hmm, group 1, group 2, maybe we have a better group here, better group there. You go into qualifying now and we don't even look at what groups we're in; just knowing we have to go out and try. But when you look at the lineup, okay, that driver is very good, he's very good, he's very good, this guy is really good. Everybody is just incredible, so no matter who you're going up against, everyone is at their all-time high. They're just performing at an all-time peak. Going out now, it's very tough. Things need to really go your way. You need to have luck. You need to be at your ultimate performance, the best car to really get that win.

We'll see. Things need to come together for us. But do I think that we can get a good result out of this weekend? 100 percent. I think the team has been on that upward trajectory. Like I said, we're very positive, morale is high, and that's what you need to go out there and get a win.

Q. David, you're already in your fourth INDYCAR season at only age 23. When you look at where you are as a driver, it's not necessarily uncommon to see drivers like yourself get into the series at such a young age, you look at guys like Kyffin Simpson, but you already having that experience, how do you reap the benefits of having that experience that other drivers, your peers at that age, might not have had when they were 23 years old?

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, I mean, I think experience is king, especially with the skill being so high from all the drivers. I think the experience is where that's going to really come out and shine.

Looking at a positive from what has been a rough previous season of mine with 2024, I've already been with multiple different teams and felt different setups and seen a lot of different data from all different drivers.

Having that experience is what's going to make me a better driver at the end of the day, and still being 23, my mind is still fresh for learning and trying to absorb as much information as I can to make myself a better driver.

But when you look at these veteran drivers, Scott Dixon, Will Power, these guys that have been around for a long time, that experience is what comes in handy. You hit fuel codes, you hit all these numbers, they're able to just know off the top of their head because they've done it for such a long time.

That's what we're all trying to learn and trying to get better at, and obviously experience is going to be key for me.

Q. When you look at where David Malukas was in 2022 compared to where you are now, what would you tell your younger self? How do you think you've grown as a driver, and what advice do you think you'd give your younger self as a driver when you were just breaking into the series?

DAVID MALUKAS: Well, I mean, it's definitely patience, if I would tell something to my younger self. It would definitely be patience.

When you're a young driver, you want things to come quickly, get results no matter what it may be, and just seeing how these past two seasons have come out, I feel like I've matured 40 years in one really. It's been a big one for me.

I feel like I'm at a much better state when it comes to driving as I was when back in 2022, a lot less hotheaded and more kind of calculated when it comes to things I want to do. I'm already starting to build an understanding of how races are going to go, depending on the yellows and what situations are happening.

But yeah, if there's one word, I'd say that to have some patience. That's definitely very key for my younger self.

THE MODERATOR: Just imagine how wise you're going to be when you're, like, 28.

DAVID MALUKAS: I know, I'm just going to be so wise. Maybe my new nickname is going to have to be Yoda.

Q. One of the things I love about covering motorsports in Iowa is we've got the infield of dreams here. First of all, what would a win here in Iowa mean for you and for your career?

DAVID MALUKAS: I mean, it would be massive. It would be my first one for INDYCAR, so that would be obviously a big one. But it also would be a really good, I guess, turnaround point. We've been on this upward trajectory, like I've been saying, but when it comes to the races, things don't really play out with the yellows, whatever it may be. So a good qualifying performance can get kind of hidden away.

If we could come out with a win this weekend, that would be a big turnaround for us and make, I think, the confidence just skyrocket even higher than what it already is now. That would be fantastic.

Q. Unfortunately one of the things about covering motorsports here in Iowa the past couple years is that we have to keep asking INDYCAR drivers and NASCAR

drivers about the repave and what it did to the track. What do you think should be done to the track? Last year Scott Dixon talked about how when the track first opened it was pretty close, single-file kind of pack racing before it got to the place it was before this repave. What do you think should be done to it?

DAVID MALUKAS: Well, from my end, I just trust whatever INDYCAR is trying to do. Obviously the repavement is outside of our hands. We have to deal with the situation.

Going off of last year, things ended up being a little bit different than what they were, what they used to be. But I trust in INDYCAR, obviously this new package. Hopefully it's going to help. They're trying to do what they can. So we'll have to go out there, and hopefully things are going to be a little bit more toward what they used to be at Iowa.

Q. Despite being the shortest track on the calendar at .875 miles, the Iowa Speedway runs a lot like the superspeedway. Given how you did so great at the Indy 500 and at Gateway, do you feel like it gives you a good baseline heading into this weekend?

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, I mean, of course. We've had some good results when it comes to the ovals, just even before ovals have kind of been my spiel. I've kind of understood them a little bit more when it comes to the driving perspective, and there's a lot more opportunity when the races start to play out.

I think with a combination of, like you said, the results that we've been having and the good performances on top of this new package that INDYCAR is coming about, hopefully we can use all of that to look forward and go forward come Iowa.

Q. What are your hopes for this weekend given your performance at ovals?

DAVID MALUKAS: Well, obviously we want to continue this qualifying performance that we've been having, to be more on the top half. So as long as we can get through that, then it comes down to having good consistency in these races, making sure no mistakes from our end, have a consistent race, get a good result because I feel like our qualifying performances we've been there but kind of missing out here and there, these little kind of finite things that happen and kind of spiral us into losing a few spots. As long as we can keep up there, that will be a happy weekend for me.

Q. What TikTok trend or social media trend sums up your feelings heading into this weekend?

DAVID MALUKAS: Oh, boy. I think it's that Aura Farming video with the kid on the boat. That has kind of been the energy that we've been on. Schwartzman did an incredible job on that one. He beat us to it.

Yeah, that's definitely some of the energy that we'll be carrying, and hopefully we can have that confidence going into the race.

Q. Were you thinking that direction for a TikTok and Schwartzman beat you to it? How did that pan out?

DAVID MALUKAS: So we recorded practice 1, and we were thinking, okay, we'll just post it tomorrow, and then we do the debrief, everything, come out, and I go back into the bus and see that he's already recorded it. So I was like, he's kind of beaten us to it, I don't think we should post, but content guy was like, no, it's still okay, we'll post it, it's a little bit different. I was like okay, all right. They beat us to it. They did it better too. They get the props on that one.

Q. Obviously Iowa Speedway is one of the shortest tracks in the tri-oval. How does it differ in terms of your approach to driving and racing around it?

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, I mean, I think with Iowa actually being a short oval compared to let's say Gateway, Gateway Turn 1 and 2, 3 and 4 have a very big differential with the way the car setup is. Iowa I feel like between 1 and 2, 3 and 4 has a more similar feeling, so the racing tends to be very different in that perspective.

You end up having to be more consistent on both sides with setup. You don't need to be making big swings in between, which helps because it's a very short runway. By the time you're out of Turn 2 you're already into Turn 3.

I remember my first qualifying I did in Iowa I was just getting warmed up and I remember by the time I was ready to go and do some qualifying laps, I heard on the radio they were saying checkered flag. It went by a lot quicker than I was expecting.

There's a lot of key differences that we need to take into account going into the race.

Q. With INDYCAR announcing the races are going to be 275 laps this year, are you expecting any big differences coming into the race being that much longer?

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, normally any changes that they make for lap counts helps with trying to create different strategies, different perspectives.



I trust with INDYCAR's perspective that things should hopefully change. So I think with the combination of that, package change, they're clearly putting effort into making sure that Iowa comes back to being a strong race for us.

I trust them. I think it will definitely be different. We'll see what happens, and we'll wait until that time comes.

Q. This weekend is a chance to go back in the top 10 on the points between Santino, Scotty Mac and you. Can you talk a little bit about that?

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, it's a good opportunity. I feel like we've had a pretty good -- no matter what the situation is going to be, Ohio we had some really unlucky timings with things that played out, so we only came out with a P17 but we actually managed to salvage that a little bit from the situation we were initially in.

We've had these few races when things don't really play out for you, you try to salvage as many points as you can, so going into Iowa, we know short ovals the results are going to be there. We can be higher up.

We just need to make sure that in these races we can have clean pit stops. That's always a big deal for these ovals, and try to secure some points. Obviously points is always key for us. We want consistency, especially at a time like this. With everything being so close, maybe making a risky pass to try to go for some short-term success through a long-term perspective might go into play for a few passes.

Q. We spoke about the drivers' physical condition, but how important is it, no scratch on the car on Saturday because the second race will be 20 hours after the checkered flag.

DAVID MALUKAS: It's going to be -- yeah, I was actually already just talking with my trainer trying to figure out a recovery plan. It's going to be a very tight turnaround. The races are going to be longer. This package is probably going to be even heavier on the wheel. It's going to be a very tough challenge for all of us physically.

I think a lot of the preparation that we did in the off-season into this season, I think a lot of it's going to come down to this weekend. It's going to be our toughest weekend by far, I'm pretty sure, and it's going to be hot on top of all of it.

So you're having the trifecta of it -- it's going to be a tough race for sure. All the training we've prepared for, it's going to come down to this.

Q. The last one is a friendly reminder; how will be the qualifying lap 1 to the great race 1 and lap 2 the

Sunday grid?

DAVID MALUKAS: I mean, I think for the way this package is going to be and how short the oval is, tires pretty much come in right away. And having that short lap count, the tires end up being the same by the time the run is over. So consistency is going to be key between the two laps.

I don't think if you push so hard on the first lap that the second lap could slow down. I think people are going to be full push to two laps and securing those good lap times for the races.

Q. David, you talked about your success at ovals. Is there anything specific about Iowa that caters to your driving style?

DAVID MALUKAS: Hmm, I mean, I wouldn't say anything too specific. I think more of the perspective of short ovals. I think for me, it's always been, I like to say, a game of chess. When do you want to attack, when do you want to be defending. I think with Iowa always being more of an enticement of trying to push and make these runs, I think it can prefer a little bit more of my driving style of maybe not taking the attack initially, playing it a little bit more safe, and letting the guys ahead waste their tire life to where we can attack more later on. That could come into play when it comes for Iowa. But that's a little bit of a stretch. I wouldn't say there's anything specific.

Q. Team Penske has showed much success at Iowa in the past. Is there anything you can take away from this technical partnership heading into this race weekend?

DAVID MALUKAS: I mean, yeah, of course, for the partnership and just Foyt in general, I think the success has always been there for Iowa, so I'm very excited to see how that short oval car is going to be comparing when it comes to Iowa and we get there and see. But it definitely feels good going into Iowa knowing we're going to have a pretty good car.

Q. David, with over halfway done with the season, to this point do you think you've overexceeded your original expectations for the season?

DAVID MALUKAS: Have I overextended? Well, when it comes to the 500 I would say so for sure. That 500, going into that month of May, I wasn't expecting, especially missing out from the previous season. I don't think halfway through that month realizing that the car that the Foyt team has given me, I knew, okay, this is actually a good opportunity for us to be up there. They've given me a

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rocketship here. That one was a big excitement.

But I think when I look long-term from the season, it kind of went to how I was planning, being a little bit more trying to figure out our path in the first half. Once the month of May came around and we had that full month, confidence builds up and we understand what we need from the car, we can use that to start working on our setup and making sure that the car has better performances for the second half.

I feel like that trend has followed to what I expected.

Q. Your best finish here at Iowa is eighth. What really makes Iowa more challenging compared to some of the other ovals which you really exceed at overall in the season?

DAVID MALUKAS: Well, I just think with it being such a short oval and before the repave, after the repave, it's a chaotic race. Like I said, it's one of those races you go into it, green flag starts, you do one pit cycle, and you don't know what position you're in, what's going on, who's in front, who's behind. You're just enjoying it, just going round and round.

With all that chaos going on, to go on top of it and try to be pushing forward and making these moves, it gets tough. I think that's why for Iowa no matter how hard you push, it's going to come down to the wire for making sure that we can get a good result out of it.

Q. On a scale from 1 to 10, what is your confidence level, specifically with the new package INDYCAR is bringing to hopefully help with the product that we see this weekend at Iowa?

DAVID MALUKAS: I mean, it's tough for me to say. We didn't do the test with everybody else, so we're kind of going into it with really big question marks. But yeah, I mean, I don't know. We'll see.

I'm very 50/50. We'll see if INDYCAR can do it. Obviously, like I said, we didn't get any testing, so it's hard for me to put any perspective on it. We're going to be going into it blind.

Q. It seems that this first half of the season for you has been the best of your career, but the second one looks to be even better. Four ovals coming up. You love ovals; you have done amazingly in the past at the Toronto street circuit. Now that you are a few points shy of the top 10, now that you have this great first season, how do you see finishing the rest of the season?

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, that's a good question there. I think the second half of the season is going to be more of our stronger suit. Going off of even last year, I didn't really start driving the last season until right around this period. I went into Laguna, Mid-Ohio, now we're going into races that I'm only one year behind like everybody else.

We've had good results in the past. We have a very good street course car that I think we've done a good job finding. Short ovals is something that I've always enjoyed, found success in. Our car is very good.

Like I said, the last check box we really need to figure out is Laguna Seca, our road course car, so that's something we'll be focused on to make sure that we can get that right.

So I'm very excited to see the progress that we can make from that perspective.

But for the rest of the other races, we're looking for a lot more consistency up there. I think the second half is going to be a very good finishing for us.

Q. I was thinking during this press conference, something Dave remarked on is the fact that you don't have a lot of time to rest, that you have a very busy schedule right now, and there is a very important part of the season with five races in four weeks starting from Mid-Ohio. How challenging is the fact that you have to manage these weeks, not just only in the racing aspect but also in the mental aspect and in your life aspect? How demanding, how challenging is that part of the season, and how important is it to get the consistency in that part of the season?

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, good question. It's very easy to kind of get overrun with thoughts. Just even going off of Mid-Ohio, I just left the shop this morning trying to figure out strategies of what we can do when it comes to the post event at Mid-Ohio, how things went, and looking forward to Laguna. But now we kind of need to put that on hold, switch up and get ready for Iowa because that's coming up here in the next few days.

There's a lot of different aspects that we need to figure out from the mental aspect and from the mental side and even physical. I feel like with my trainer there's been more talks of how to recover than how to train this next month, especially with all the heat.

It's a new perspective on things, and we're trying to make sure we can capitalize because I think the better you can capitalize on the off days you're going to be better on the on days when you're racing.

I think the biggest shout-out goes out to the crew members



of all teams. Those guys are -- we still get to be a little bit spoiled and get to just relax, recover, say we're athletes and go into the sauna, cold plunge, and okay, yeah, but this is my recovery. Those guys, they worked their butts off all weekend, and then they go to the shop, flip the car around nonstop, have a little bit of food here and there, and jump back to the next race.

Those guys are nonstop on it. Yeah, it's going to be a tough month for us and the team. Big shout-out to everybody involved.

Q. Speaking of the season, we've seen an incredible performance from Alex Palou, who is the leader of the championship, a clear leader of the championship. How motivating is it for a driver to see a driver who excels from the rest of the drivers and to get to a level that Alex has right now? Also you had the opportunity to race against him in the Indy 500, to try to win the Indy 500 this year.

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, when it comes to being competitive in any aspect, if that's sports, when it comes to commercial products for consumers, if you make a product and there's just one company owning that product, it's not going to really excel forward. Competition is always good. It makes everybody better and it raises the whole field up.

So to be able to race with Palou when he's at this peak of racing that is kind of just smoking the field in a field that's already so strong and so powerful, he's just making everybody else better.

The amount of things that I learned just being with him the entire race when it comes to the 500 was massive, and at the age of 23 I can take a lot of that knowledge into making myself better and pushing forward.

I think that's happening from the entire field as a whole. Everybody is studying it. Everybody is trying to close that gap on him. Obviously he's been doing an incredible job this season, pulling far away from the rest of the pack.

All it's going to do is just make our competition that much better, which is insane to say because I do truly think this INDYCAR paddock is the best of the best it's been. Man, it's crazy to be competitive here.

Q. With so many back-to-back races this month, what's your secret to stay focused and performing at your best?

DAVID MALUKAS: Well, with a combination of my trainer and the mental coach, there's a lot really that we've been doing from a recovery aspect. Pretty much doing

everything that we can when it comes to resting from a physical standpoint, making sure that we can be fully recovered in the next few days, and hydration. It's not that you just drink water before the race and some electrolytes and you'll be good to go. A lot of your electrolytes and body absorption starts a few days even earlier, so doing a lot when it comes to that side of things.

And from a mental aspect, trying to be able to not think about the previous race that much. It's already hard that let's say you've had a bad race, bad races tend to stick with you a little bit harder. It's always hard to move on from that perspective.

So I think that's the big challenges, within the next few days, between all these races, if we have a bad one, if a mishap happens, to make sure we can do a full reset, don't think about the past, don't let the past race influence this race coming up, make sure we can be fully recharged, reset and go out there and give our 110 percent performance for the next one.

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