

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

Saturday, July 26, 2025

Pato O'Ward

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Joined by Pato O'Ward, who will start alongside Alex on the front row for tomorrow's race, driver of the No. 5 Arrow McLaren Chevrolet, with his third front row start of 2025. Very close out there --

PATO O'WARD: You think?

Q. No?

PATO O'WARD: No, I think it was not very close. We've definitely seen closer ones before. But it's my best start here, so I'll take that.

Yeah, I think Alex just did a really strong lap. My qualifying was a bit more scrappy, really, especially from Q2 to Q3. I found four-tenths but needed two more to be closer.

Yeah, we'll take that tomorrow.

Q. In the pursuit of a championship, though --

PATO O'WARD: Yeah, yeah, absolutely. It just makes it that much harder whenever the one that you're trying to beat is having as good of days or better. Yeah, it just makes us push even harder, and I think that's going to be a great opposition and view going into Turn 2.

Q. Following up on that, is it exciting to see Alex next to you? Beyond him getting the point for the pole, it's almost like --

PATO O'WARD: Oh, now it's 100? Yeah, we're obviously the only two that can win the championship now. And I'm the one that's chasing down pretty hard.

Much rather be next to each other than not, so usually if you're next to him, it means that you've been qualifying well because he seems to be the master this year at that, and we seem to be a little bit more of a stranger to the Fast Six.

Yeah, our Fast Six record this year is pretty good. We've only got two and we've got a pole and a second. So we'll

see what we can continue knocking off this year.

Q. Do you feel like there's more left in the car or do you feel like you've maxed it out?

PATO O'WARD: I was really happy with my Q3 to be honest. I thought it was going to be a little bit tighter than that. I didn't think it was going to be two-and-a-half-tenths. Yeah, I didn't have three-tenths to get Alex. We just maximized what we had, and like I said, it was a somewhat scrappy qualifying for me, so I was just happy that we were getting the transfers through and then were able to put down a pretty good clean lap in Q3.

Q. I have a technical question for you. You're the fastest of all the McLaren drivers. When your teammates are struggling with speed or going faster, in principle, can they adopt your setup and make the car more equal?

PATO O'WARD: They have my car. They copied it from yesterday. So yeah, all three cars are pretty much the same.

It's INDYCAR; it's tough; it's competitive. It really depends in the track. Sometimes you need a little bit -- figure it out a little bit more to be able to extract more from the car. I found myself in pretty tough positions this year, especially in qualifying as well.

I just think it's just the nature of how INDYCAR goes, unless you're the 10 car.

Q. In spite of the fact we didn't have the morning practice, did that help you or hurt you?

PATO O'WARD: I think it was fine. It did help that we rolled off strong yesterday. But yeah, I think it should be -- there should be a rule we don't book anything before 10:00 a.m. around here because it's always a problem. It was a very non-gentle morning for no reason.

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