

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

Sunday, July 27, 2025

Christian Lundgaard

Colton Herta

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Wrapping up today's Java House Grand Prix of Monterrey. We are now joined by the second- and third-place finishing drivers. Coming home second, Christian Lundgaard, driver of the No. 7 Arrow McLaren Chevrolet with his second runner-up finish of 2025. Fifth podium here of the season. Fifteen on-track passes. That's a race high for Christian today in what is now his eighth career podium.

Colton Herta also joins us, driver of the No. 26 Gainbridge Honda for Andretti Global with Curb-Agajanian. Second podium of the season, 20th career podium, and fourth podium here at Laguna Seca.

Christian, really one of the stories between you two was the second exchange and the second stint getting out in front of Colton. What was key in that one?

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: I think with the amount of deg that we had, the alternates weren't -- they were lasting from a pace perspective, but again, balance was very tough at the end of stints, and I knew that from my own first stint.

Really it was just a very similar race for me compared to Barber. Used the undercut and attack. Obviously it worked. I knew I had to surprise him. So I did it into 11 instead of waiting for the main straights.

Always fun racing.

THE MODERATOR: Colton, congratulations on the podium here at a track that I know you love so much. Just your thoughts on a podium here and that battle you had with Christian coming out of turn 11.

COLTON HERTA: Yeah, it was fun. At the end of the race, too. I think it was -- I kept him on his toes at the end. Unfortunately, he got by me in that pit exchange. It's fun. When you get to race here, when you have deg like we did, and it opens up lines and allows more raceability, it makes this place a lot of fun.

For me, this is my favorite racetrack in the country, and it really is a treasure every moment that we get to bring INDYCAR here. It's a super track. It deserves INDYCAR, and really it needs INDYCAR. We go well together.

Love racing INDYCARs here. Love the ability that the track kind of weathered and opened up lines, and now you can race here a lot better than the last two years. I think it shows it's earned its spot on the calendar this year.

THE MODERATOR: Shades of 2022 and maybe earlier than that, right?

COLTON HERTA: For sure.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. Christian, at the last restart when the last yellow came out, the gap to Palou was only 0.3 seconds. You were thinking then there would be a realistic chance to catch him after the restart?

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: I mean, yes and no. I would say he had a pace advantage. I was really struggling on the last stint. We were on a used set of alternates that we knew we had to run longer than we've run the other two new alternates stints.

I knew it was going to be tough, but, I mean, I was just trying to keep it on the track, in all honesty, and stay ahead of Colton. It just made it a lot tougher having to keep Colton behind as well.

Q. Christian, could you kind of go into a little bit more detail on the strategy choice today? You kind of did something different than everybody else. It seemed to work out.

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: You know, I think it was a big question mark going into the race. I think it was one of those weekends where it's very tough to really decide the strategy because you had to decide it last night right after warmup, which we call cool-down when it's on Saturday evening.



You have all night to sleep on it, and you don't -- I mean, you know already Saturday night what people are going to start on, but you don't know if it's going to be a red race. You don't know if it's going to be a prime race. And specifically this weekend, with the lack of running we've had, not running P2, it's been extra hard.

The 7 car did it last year. Obviously when I wasn't in the car. They made it work. We were very determined to try to do something different and kind of do something similar. Obviously it worked out today, but we also knew that the undercut would work.

I wasn't quite expecting to be on the used alts at the end. I would much more prefer that to be the second to last stint, you know, have a new set at the end. It's easy to complain after the fact, but looking at us finishing second from seventh is certainly great.

Q. Colton, you started up at the front. You kind of got to observe Alex Palou very closely. What was the difference in pace with him in his driving in his car versus the rest of the field today?

COLTON HERTA: I think we could compete with him. Obviously the first stint, the tire offset, you saw how big of an offset it was. We were reeling him in when we were on the other side of it, and at the end on the restarts I felt just as strong as him.

He didn't really pull away from us too much. I felt like I had his pace, but again, having his pace and being able to do it the whole race and overcuts and undercuts, it's a different thing.

Again, they drove a really good race, and they were very fast, but I think we had similar pace. We were close. Maybe not enough to overtake, but definitely a step in the right direction.

Q. For the two of you, just kind of describe the difference in feel between a new set of reds and a used set of reds during this race, because that seemed to make a pretty big difference.

COLTON HERTA: I think the overall grip is similar. Like when you are on the new or the used, when you get like that third or fourth lap peak, it's a similar feeling.

Then those kind of minor twitches or minor snaps, they happen sooner than the new tires. Really it's just kind of -- the pace just kind of degrades evenly, I think, with the new reds, but it's just below it the whole time after, like, lap four.

All those little minor twitches that you hope to feel on lap

10 or lap 12, on the new reds you feel it on, like, lap 6 or lap 7. When you feel that, you think, oh, boy, this could go really wrong.

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: Yeah, I mean, I think it's very similar, from my point of view. It's kind of just an offset, right? They do have a memory, in a sense. If you've had an understeer or an oversteer balance the first time you run the tires, that's kind of the balance you're going to have the second time you run it. I think all of us were more on the oversteer side, and it's not necessarily a fun track to have oversteer at.

Q. During Rinus VeeKay's sort of accident in turn 3, the series delayed the caution to give an opportunity for the frontrunners to pit. Do you think that's the right thing for the series to do, to delay cautions to let everybody pit? Or do you think that's just the nature of the danger zone, and by staying out you do get penalized for it?

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: I think there are pros and cons to it in a sense. I mean, I was definitely driving around thinking, why is there a car sideways -- well, technically backwards going into the corkscrew, and we're green for two laps? Yes, there's a local yellow, but if someone isn't really paying attention, changing a switch on the steering wheel, it can go terribly wrong.

The one with VeeKay in turn 3 I think was more fair in a sense because you see him parked in the gravel. You're not really going to end up there unless you really aren't paying attention. I think INDYCAR in a sense has been consistent with that. Not necessarily to say that I agree with it, but I do appreciate that they are consistent with it.

Q. Colton, same for you.

COLTON HERTA: Yeah, they should keep it open as long -- they should keep the pits open as long as they can and allow the leaders to pit at every opportunity. I think it's not fair to be one of the faster ones and qualify well and have your day screwed by a yellow. It's happened to everybody in this series. But when you run up at the front more consistently, it burns you more often.

It's something that I think is a real plus from INDYCAR. I think it's fair, and I think it should continue to happen.

Q. Alex took another victory of the series, and you two both remain winless. How does it feel when you are having consistently strong weekends, week in and week out, and you are having good seasons, but you aren't able to get to victory lane just because the same guy is winning every week?



COLTON HERTA: Just have to do better.

Q. Christian, anything else?

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: Sorry, I wasn't paying attention.

Q. Alex has won pretty much the majority of races this year, and you're having quite a lot of good weekends, a lot of podiums this season, but you can't really get the upper hand on him. How do you think you can turn it around and he can be beaten?

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: I think what's very interesting with the 10 car is even though they're having bad weekends, they still come out ahead, right? That's what's super frustrating for all of us.

Even if he makes a mistake, the team makes a mistake, they make it up somehow, which I feel like we're all kind of struggling to do in a sense. They're there every single time. You have to give them kudos for being that competitive every time, and they've raised the bar. I think we've all said that before.

I thought I had a tremendously good start to the season, and I was still way behind the 10 car in the championship after five races, and I had three podiums. The only difference is he won four out of those.

Q. I know you were pretty unhappy after Friday. How do you think you were able to turn it around this weekend to bring in a pretty strong result?

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: Yeah, I think it's very interesting for me. I sat in this very chair with Colton after practice one, and I was probably the least happy driver on the grid leaving practice one.

We turned it around somehow without a practice two. The car was really good in qualifying, and we got hurt by a yellow in the Fast 12. That hurt us from advancing into the Firestone Fast Six.

In a sense, I think that helped us today. We had two sets of new alternate tires, which I think helped our strategy.

Q. When you are able to take a weekend where you weren't happy on Friday and deliver this result with a second-place finish, even though you didn't win the race, how happy are you, and how fulfilled do you feel what you were able to accomplish today?

CHRISTIAN LUNDGAARD: You know, that's the thing,

right? I love coming to Laguna Seca. Obviously I've been faster in the past. I got to race here before the pavement, and I raced here with the new pavement. I think it produced very different racing.

I think we also remember how big of a chaos 2023 was with, I guess, turn 11 with all the yellows that happened. I wanted to really showcase the racing that this track can produce. I was very frustrated after P1, and we just kept our head in it and focused on trying to make the car better.

It's a very similar situation to what we had in Toronto last weekend. We just weren't able to turn it around. It kind of feels like a win for us on the 7 car, but we have to do it every single weekend. That's what the 10 car is doing, and that's what we need to do better, but I guess that's what everybody needs to do better.

Q. Colton, it looked like, other than the lead, there were some lively moments throughout the race where there was some good, hard racing. How did it look from your standpoint?

COLTON HERTA: I would say it was -- nothing was really going on until maybe the last half of the race for me. Once we got the undercut by Christian and we were able to battle with him, that's kind of when my race came back alive. For a while there it was just me on the reds, Alex on the blacks, just trying to run him down.

Then when we got undercut, it opened up for us to -- opened up a new race for us. You know, I love the racing part of this. I love the racing aspect. Even when it doesn't go our way, the wheel-to-wheel battling in INDYCAR is a lot of fun. I definitely treasure it. I really enjoy it, but hopefully next weekend we can be on the better outcome of it.

THE MODERATOR: Next weekend, no racing.

COLTON HERTA: Two weekends. Two weekends from now.

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