

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

Sunday, August 24, 2025

David Salters

Kelvin Fu

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Continuing our race day at the Mile, celebrating Honda and HRC as the 2025 manufacturer champions. All told it's their 11th INDYCAR SERIES manufacturers championship, fifth championship in the last eight years. They lead the NTT INDYCAR SERIES with two races remaining with 12 wins, including the first 10 races this season. 10 NTT P1 awards as well.

Here to talk about that and more, great to be joined by David Salters, president of Honda Racing Corporation USA, and Kelvin Fu, HRC US vice president.

David, we'll start with you. The numbers certainly tell the story in 2025. How would you describe what you've seen here this season?

DAVID SALTERS: Firstly, thank you. Thank you very much all for coming. Good morning.

Thank you is the theme because thank you for all the men and women at HRC, all our teams, the marvelous drivers, because it's a team sport. We have the privilege of sitting here looking pretty. Kelvin looks pretty.

KELVIN FU: It's the gel (smiling).

DAVID SALTERS: We have the privilege of sitting here, but we're just representing the hard work of an amazing group of men and women. So thank you is the theme.

To watch people achieve what they achieved through being smart and working hard is the greatest privilege we can have. So we get to talk about it a little bit, but it's just a big thank you.

Answering your question, what do we think, how do we respond? It's thank you to all our men and women, teams men and women, everybody.

THE MODERATOR: Kelvin, as ultra-competitive as this series is, you think back, the overwhelming numbers, Indy

500, manufacturers championship. To David's point it's a team effort. You have to be ultra-proud of the team you help lead, as well?

KELVIN FU: Good morning, everybody.

It really is, you have to understand how special this year has been. We're watching a massive effort from everybody at HRC U.S., also with Alex in the 10 car, it's a generational talent. Just such a special season.

At the same time you have to appreciate all the teams pulling together. Every one of our teams has scored manufacturers points for us. It's all of us working together, trying to lift everybody up, come together.

Just being able to sit here and represent 250 people, everybody cares so much about how we do, what we do. Even when we go back to headquarters in Torrance, everybody is just ecstatic. The fact that people are trying to sell cars, which is really what Honda is for, they're incredibly impressed with what we've done and keep congratulating us as we walk around. So thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations. We'll take some questions.

**Q. What led to the domination, the sudden I don't want to call it turnaround, because usually manufacturers championship has been a fairly even battle, Chevy has had an edge for a couple of years, but this is total domination. What was the root cause of being able to have such a dominant year?**

DAVID SALTERS: Hmm... A racing car is a sum of the parts. It's never one thing. It's a collection of everything, in my experience. I've only been doing it for 30 years, so I'm still learning a lot. It's the sum of the parts.

I think between the efforts we've put into it, we weren't happy where we were last year, so we worked really, really hard over the winter.

It's like a duck. It looks really calm on top. There's lots of flapping underneath (smiling). That's what happens here.

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Most of the work happens in the off-season and during the season, but there's this ferocious amount of work that happens from people who are hugely motivated to succeed. We're racers.

To answer your question, I think there's not one thing, but there's a collection of things. CGR is performing at huge heights. All the boys and girls, HRC we've stepped up to huge heights. Alex Palou, we are witnessing a generational talent. But then Kyle, another huge talent. Scott Dixon is still Scott Dixon. So it's all these things that go together.

I think it's a sum of parts. Fundamentally, just a huge amount of hard work.

**Q. Also, how is the HRC model compared to the HPD model you once had? How does that help the overall success?**

DAVID SALTERS: To represent HRC we all know the history of Honda's racing. More than 60 years old. Honda is a racing company. That gives us immense pride to represent Honda.

But the HRC... I grew up watching motor bikes, Isle of Man, all that sort of stuff. To help contribute to the HR history, be more integrated with our HRC colleagues, we're so proud to do that. It's HRC Honda racing. It's legendary.

To very humbly sit here and be a very, very tiny part of that, for us and for our men and women, is such a privilege really when you look at that history.

So being part of HRC is wonderful. We've done okay. So yeah, there you go.

KELVIN FU: Yeah, David said it's a sum of the parts. It's true, right? It's (indiscernible) everywhere. There's no magic bullet.

You're asking what's the turnaround. Well, in 2023, we won 12 races, we just didn't win the 500 and we didn't win the manufacturers because we had our own issues inside.

Reliability has to be better. How do we attack that? This year it's again working with teams more and more closely, trying to get better every little place.

There's no single thing to point to. Everything is a little bit better than we were in '24.

In terms of HRC yeah, the integration has been great. Just being part of a global, worldwide organization, it's just better than being a regional part of racing, even if it's just

understanding the heritage. This symbol opens a lot of doors to Honda, too. It just helps.

**Q. Is there anything in your INDYCAR technology which now or in the future can be applied to road car technology? Also it's a totally different technology, different championship. Are you exchanging experience from time to time with your colleagues in Formula 1?**

DAVID SALTERS: I think we can answer bits of that.

So if you look at INDYCAR right now, we have 100% renewable fuel and a hybrid system on the car. Stuff we learnt there, the combustion model, renewable fuels. We have some very interesting combustion systems in these cars. We don't speak about it much and we don't speak about it much, because it's some of the secret sauce. That's inside Honda. We learn that.

If anyone wants to get really bored, we do chemistry kinetic combustion reaction models.

KELVIN FU: It's very boring.

DAVID SALTERS: Sorry. I like that sort of stuff (smiling). I have a whole Ph.D. in that.

Stuff like that, we don't show it very much. Again, normally people know about 100% renewable fuels. Underneath we learn about that. That probably will be quite relevant in the future. Not so much right now, but in the future let's all see.

Then hybrid systems. We have the super capacity system that we made in a panic. We just learned how to deal with quite unusual energy source, which is interesting inside our company.

Then what is the most interesting, Honda does this to develop its people and its tech. We talked about the tech. The most interesting thing is the people. So how we go about organizing ourselves, reacting, working quickly, we share that back into our company.

In fact, we went down to our head office and gave a small talk on how we are agile, which the mother ship is very interested in effectively. So how we do our work and the people, how they do their work, is actually something, again, that's not talked about, but that is the core to racing.

It's very interesting in this day and age of how you are agile. Sort of racing companies were start-ups before the word 'start-up' existed. A flat structure. People get too much responsibility, a huge amount of responsibility, and



respond to that. We empower.

To take that back into the company is super interesting actually, so... There's three areas there: sort of how we work, some tech, that goes back into the company, which is why we do it really. But the people element I would say is key.

**Q. Are you sharing with Formula 1?**

DAVID SALTERS: We do. We have to be very careful how we manage cost cap and all that sort of stuff. We've been lucky enough to take some of our associates, and they're embedded in the F1 program. We do that. We have to make sure that we cost cap and it's all done separately.

But we've always worked very, very well with our F1 colleagues. We always have a residence engineer that comes from the F1 program. We're all like-minded people who want to go race and get stuff done. We collaborate where we can. Again, within the cost cap. Strictly policed.

Honda has a technical forum once a year where you can submit subjects to get discussed amongst the whole of Honda. We always have a couple of subjects that we submit. Generally are very well received.

We also go and present to a key group inside Honda globally what we're up to. Not obviously F1, but we also recently are speaking to our Moto GP colleagues, which is lovely. Again, we're all trying to do the same stuff. That's been a nice thing to where we are now with HRC.

KELVIN FU: This is where the HRC logo opens doors within Honda itself, too.

But I think the great thing about Honda is, like, everybody loves racing and is focused on racing. The nice thing with the new technology coming into automotive, whether it's hybrid, electric, hydrogen, there's opportunities within racing to try out new technologies and try out different aspects of it.

It pushes our people, right? My boss on my left-hand side here is looking at what's next, what are we going to do in the next four or five years.

DAVID SALTERS: We want Kelvin to get bored (smiling).

KELVIN FU: It's always like what is the next thing coming down that we have to get ready for. That gets our people ready, too.

DAVID SALTERS: Full fun. We just made a hydrogen

race car that we sent up Pikes Peak. Unfortunately it was fairly windy so we couldn't do what we wanted to. 80 mile-an-hour wind at the top. We thought we would have a bit of fun.

How do you get hydrogen to Colorado? How do you send a car to the limits of its operation because it works on air effectively, and there's not much air up there.

KELVIN FU: That was January of this year we had to do it by June.

We got Honda Marysville to get involved, too. There's a lot of opportunities for Honda to push the limits and try up new technology. Everybody is up for it.

**Q. The hybrid system being so new, how did you work with the teams to incorporate and optimize their ability to get the most out of it?**

DAVID SALTERS: The fundamentals of this is within racing, you need to understand what you're doing. The more you understand, the luckier you get.

We do a huge amount of simulation to try to understand how to use the hybrid system in terms of lap time, deployment. Also understanding driver workload, what can the driver actually do. They're pretty busy when they're doing 240 miles an hour on an oval.

We did a huge amount of simulation with the teams and tried to understand the best way to use the hybrid system, then validate it in reality. Simulation is a simulation. It has a lot of assumptions. Sometimes it can be right, sometimes it can be wrong.

Basically the bedrock of that is vehicle simulation, whether it's lap time simulation or in the DIL. We have a very, very good DIL that we developed, again with the teams. We use our tools to help understand that. Just together with the teams, so...

**Q. I imagine the drivers learning to adapt their style to this new system was a big learning curve for them, correct?**

DAVID SALTERS: Yes. I think so. But they're some of the best people in the world at doing this stuff. Again, I think they love the challenge. It's something new. Again, we've got drivers in the loop simulators. We have other simulators we can use where we can sort of try and prepare as best we can for when we get to the track.

KELVIN FU: I think if you looked at the 500 qualifying, where we had our simulation, This is the way to do it.



Then a lot of drivers are like, No, I'm going to try my own thing. And they did, right? You could see them definitely trying different ways around and doing comparisons. Some would not listen. They're convinced they're the right way. Maybe it addresses their style, too.

But we propose. Again, it's in the hands of the drivers. They're all pretty good. So you have to trust that they also know what's going on.

I think they work with their engineers, strategists to really figure out what the fastest way around is.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

KELVIN FU: Maybe not for qualifying, but yeah.

**Q. When I look at your peers, manufacturers, you look to see in they're any outliers. Palou has done a lot of winning this year. I look at the manufacturers results and realize it is the sum of all parts. I look to see where is the bottom team. Even the bottom team is doing very well, which tells me the manufacturers champion has done a good job, but also you have a lot of contributions throughout your roster. You speak to having two Meyer Shank cars in the top 10. You have Rinus in Dale Coyne sitting there. Graham is surging right now. This isn't just an Alex Palou championship. From the outside it appears like you have a lot of contributions points-wise to help build this manufacturers title throughout your roster.**

KELVIN FU: Yeah, I think our focus has always been on performance. I think that's our philosophy when we're working with our teams. Our job is to win for Honda. To win the manufacturers championship for Honda means everybody's got to be contributing to the overall points.

As we know, every track is different. It's such a varied schedule. You have to make sure that everybody's game is at a certain level so everybody has a chance. Alex may not have a great day every single day or Andretti may not have a great, not be that great at a track. It has to be spread across where everybody is trying to contribute. That's how we work with the teams.

Everybody is great. Everybody understands. Everybody's goal is to win. Nobody wants to be here just to participate. None of our teams want to be here just to participate. We really work with them on that.

DAVID SALTERS: To add to that, we all know in INDYCAR the competition is tough. The gaps are so small. Again, we all understand how hard racing is. We also have the utmost respect for our competitors. We

enjoy that competition.

The other thing we need to make sure is that we're helping all our teams because you need that combined effort. Any slipup you're going to pay for.

Within it being so competitive, within having so much respect for your competitors, we need to make sure to help all our teams to deliver. They've all scored points for us, which is amazing. Thank you to all our teams.

**Q. There's some big decisions to be made on HRC U.S.'s future in INDYCAR. What can you tell us about where that process is right now, how this dominant championship might factor into what that looks like?**

DAVID SALTERS: Okay, over to Dave Furst (laughter).

THE MODERATOR: Refer back to you (laughter).

DAVID SALTERS: So seriously, we love INDYCAR. We've been here for 30 years, I believe, doing pretty well. Very well this year, thanks to all our men and women. We love INDYCAR. We love the racing.

We don't talk about our private businesses. We look at where we're going for the future. That's a Honda thing. That's who we deal with thing. We don't really discuss our private business in public, to be honest with you.

**Q. The growth potential this year with FOX Sports coming in, third owner in Penske Entertainment and INDYCAR. Do you see that growth potential as something now that definitely needs to be considered with that decision?**

DAVID SALTERS: Firstly, a big thank you to FOX. I think we'd all say they're doing a stunning job. Hats off to them. Thank you.

That looks like a great development from where we sit. I would say generally people perceive that as a really strong development. There's real growth and momentum in the sport. Well done everybody. Well done INDYCAR. Well done Penske Corporation. Well done FOX. Well done all the partners that are contributing.

It's lovely to see that and the growth. It's brilliant. We're in here racing. To see that I think is superb, isn't it? We can all see really, really strong growth.

We're big fans of what FOX is doing.

**Q. (No microphone.)**



DAVID SALTERS: Referring back to Dave Furst (smiling).

Again, we love INDYCAR racing. We're invested in INDYCAR racing. To see it growing is brilliant.

**Q. I know the hybrid system has obviously something that the manufacturers were really pushing for. After this first full season of it, do you see it as having been a success?**

DAVID SALTERS: Actually the series was the one that was pushing for it. That was supported by the manufacturers. That's on pieces of paper.

I think so. If you were to look at the amount of miles that the hybrid system has accumulated, it's quite frankly astonishing. For something that really is in the cutting edge of where it can just about fit and what we're trying to do with it, the safety of the system. So I would deem it as a big success personally. Also as an engineering accomplishment, what was achieved.

We're running 10s of 10s of cars. It's a racing car. It's at the limit of stresses and strains and temperatures and vibrations and all these sort of things. To watch how it's behaved, thanks to the efforts of INDYCAR and GM, ourselves, I think it should be applauded really.

The fact that it's not talked about very much in terms of issues and things I think is testament to that, considering the amount of miles it's running.

THE MODERATOR: Two more chances to pad the stats beginning today. Appreciate your time. Congratulations. Well done here in 2025.

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