

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

Sunday, August 24, 2025

**Christian Rasmussen**

**Ed Carpenter**

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We are joined with the champion driver, Christian Rasmussen. First career win. For ECR, Ed Carpenter, first win since Rinus VeeKay on the IMS road course in 2021.

Christian, long time coming. Congratulations.

CHRISTIAN RASMUSSEN: Thank you. Yeah, amazing. Great job by the team this weekend. We started pretty rough, like we were really struggling in practice one. Got it turned around for qualifying. Qualified better than I thought we would, to be honest, which was really good.

The race went our way. We did what we do best on ovals: running whatever line the car in front is not (smiling). Again, we were amazing in traffic, which that's what made the main difference today again I think. Then with a good call there at the end going onto the new tires, having something to fight with.

Yeah, pretty cool getting my first win here. Good Sunday.

THE MODERATOR: You're part of the 302 drivers to win a race in INDYCAR. This is pretty cool, right? How big is this for you, your career, trajectory in INDYCAR?

CHRISTIAN RASMUSSEN: Yeah, it's going the right direction. I think massive step up from last year. Even through this year, we're just getting better and better.

It's also not only a testament to my improvement, I think it's also where this team is going. There's so much talk about our team with Heartland Food Group, Splenda and Java House coming in, giving us some opportunities we haven't really had before.

It's good to have that opportunity. It's really what you do with it. I think that's starting to show. It makes me very excited to see where this team's going in the future, next year, yeah, to see what we can do.

THE MODERATOR: Ed, congratulations. This team is on the rise right now. Definitely some momentum with this team.

ED CARPENTER: Yeah, definitely. I think we've been feeling it build all season. We haven't been as consistent as we want to be at times. A lot of weekends Christian will have a good day, Alex will have a bad day, or vice versa. So today especially, really this weekend, was the best group effort we've had all year.

Like Christian mentioned, a little bit of a rough start for him in practice one. The plan for the whole team kind of came together as the weekend went on. To me it was a really big group effort with kind of how we unloaded relative to where we were last year, what we want to do try coming here. It really worked out well.

You got to keep pushing. I think the championship was over with Alex the previous race. For us, there was a lot left to prove. Today is great, but we still have one left to go. We hope to do this again.

THE MODERATOR: Pretty special for Direct Supply, too?

ED CARPENTER: Yeah, obviously Direct Supply has been with the team all the way from the beginning. Having great support all year long, but especially here and Road America. First race win for them here. It was great to have Bob, Jenny, their whole crew here.

THE MODERATOR: Open it up for questions.

**Q. Christian, five seconds of rain created the opportunity for you to come down pit lane, put on fresh rubber. At that point did you really think that you got them right where you wanted them?**

CHRISTIAN RASMUSSEN: Yeah. We talked about this before the race, knowing if there's going to be a late yellow, we set kind of the margin if you can have a 20-lap advantage on the other cars, that's going to make a big difference. That's what we did. We went to the new tires.

I've been very comfortable on especially the new tires even passing other cars. We were doing that pretty well early in



the stints. Yeah, I was feeling good. Where did we restart?

ED CARPENTER: Fifth and seventh.

CHRISTIAN RASMUSSEN: It was cool.

**Q. Ed, Scott McLaughlin and Alex Palou both said what they really like about what you've done in racing is you always have a commitment to young drivers. You helped develop Josef Newgarden, Rinus VeeKay, now Christian.**

ED CARPENTER: Just need to keep Christian home will be the key moving forward.

**Q. Your commitment to young talent, to see them become great INDYCAR drivers, how satisfying is that?**

ED CARPENTER: I mean, winning is fun. Christian impressed us a ton before he ever got in one of our cars, the way he finished off the INDY NXT championship that he won. The back half of that season, it was a tight battle, but he really took control of it at the end. That level of intensity, dedication and improvement that he showed from his two years in that championship is really what stood out to me.

Then we put him in a car at Barber against Oliver Askew. A bit of a showdown. He rose to that challenge, as well. When you put a car in front of him, especially when he's got a tire advantage, it's a scary thing.

People talk about they don't like everything he does. We haven't asked him to change one thing. He's attacking and being aggressive, not settling for anything. That's the mentality we want to have as a team.

Really proud of the effort and the way he finished today.

**Q. When you get to second place, you see Alex in front of you, how difficult is it to remember you have time to get to him, not just try to rush through immediately?**

CHRISTIAN RASMUSSEN: I've been racing for (indiscernible). I know you don't put it all in one lap. Yeah, just seeing the gap get smaller and smaller, I kind of kept doing my thing.

I didn't really now he know how it was going to go whenever I got up to him. The tire deg was obviously huge here this weekend. I knew I had a tire advantage on him, but kind of once the peak of your tire goes off, it gets you

down into a level where it can be kind of tough to overtake. I didn't know how it was going to go.

I knew I was going to go for it (smiling), try to get my first win. (Indiscernible) but got it done into turn one. From there, it's still not won at that point. There was still more laps to go. We all know how well he saves his tires. You don't know how that tire advantage might go away or whatever.

I wanted a couple of cars in between us to feel like I was safe, so that's what I did. Once I had a two-car gap in between us, I thought that we can calm down here and just ride it to the finish.

**Q. Through your time on the Road to Indy, you had post-race festivities, USF-2000... What was it like experiencing that in INDYCAR?**

CHRISTIAN RASMUSSEN: I missed it. I kept thinking about the first year (indiscernible). Felt like we had a good opportunity to do that in St. Louis. The race was just too short for us. Getting my first win for the team in a long time, as well, being the driver to do that is a privilege.

**Q. Ed, with Christian winning today and Alex finishing fifth, how much does this validate the investment put into the team?**

ED CARPENTER: Yeah, I mean, obviously it validates that. You want to win for your partners, no doubt. But for me, it validates that and the dedication that people are putting in to improve in this season.

So finishing the season, we're also working on next year, what you need to do to take bigger steps in the off-season, while at the same time executing.

Really proud of the whole group and the energy that's going into getting us back to this point. Now we just got to keep fighting to not have such a gap between wins.

**Q. I think Homestead '99 was the last time I saw a driver on an oval turn right as much as you did today. It was Juan Montoya doing that.**

CHRISTIAN RASMUSSEN: That was a handful.

**Q. You're out there playing at a level that a lot of drivers couldn't hold on to what you held on to.**

CHRISTIAN RASMUSSEN: Yeah, it was interesting. We started (indiscernible), took a little bit of wing out. Tried to do stuff, use my tools. Then I feel like I would pick up a little bit too much understeer in the mid corner. The

steering input from the mid corner would make it snap on exit.

Just got to a point where it was always going to snap on exit. I don't know (indiscernible). I don't think I was the only one. I think there was a lot of cars struggling (indiscernible).

**Q. Your new teammate Alexander Rossi came rushing to you to congratulate. You credit Alex in the short time you've been together as being a positive influence on you and your development and growth. Tell us about his influence on you.**

CHRISTIAN RASMUSSEN: Yeah, 100%. I think not only for me, but for the whole team, Alex has been a massive, massive help.

I think for me, having like a real veteran driver that has been around, he's been with all the top teams, obviously has been around INDYCAR, top level of open-wheel for a very long time. Kind of seeing up close how he operates is quite different from what I've been used to coming through the ranks and whatnot.

Having him as kind of a mentor, also trusting whenever he says something to me that it's the right thing. You also don't always have that.

I think me and Alex both on the racetrack and off the racetrack, we get along super well. Kind of similar personalities in a way. We keep a little bit to ourselves. I don't know. I really enjoy the relationship. Yeah, we'll continue to grow together I think.

**Q. Ed, you've been here for a number of Milwaukee races. Speak about the crowd turnout today, the cheers for you and your donuts in the front straight.**

ED CARPENTER: I was on Alex's radio calling his race, obviously watching Christian as well. I could hear the cheer when he passed Alex like under green even before the donuts.

Yeah, we'd returned to this track a couple times since I've been doing this. But it seems like it's finally working. The combination and the growth and the strength of here and also Road America, we've got a strong fan base here. We need to keep building on it.

I'm super proud of the crowd today. I'd love to see when we come back next year that we don't have to have the sponsor covers on the stands coming down into turn one. Want to keep pushing that and getting it better and better. It's a great racetrack, a ton of history. The past two years

it's been a great show. So I'm happy is working.

**Q. (Question about popularity in Denmark. )**

CHRISTIAN RASMUSSEN: I doubt it (smiling). I doubt it. I don't know.

(Indiscernible) Copenhagen. Biggest following is in the U.S. I've been in the U.S. for a long time (indiscernible). Success has been stateside. It's understandable that I don't have a big (indiscernible). I don't know, it doesn't bother me.

**Q. Are you surprised if people will give you a welcome?**

CHRISTIAN RASMUSSEN: (Indiscernible).

**Q. Ed, you mentioned your last success at '21. How difficult is it you to keep the motivation up with a long waiting time?**

ED CARPENTER: That part's not hard. It gets frustrating at times when you're not performing the way you want to, me personally as a driver or as team owner.

The motivation to get back here has never wavered. I try to appreciate this as much as I can as a team. This sport, especially in this era right now, the dominance we're seeing out of one driver and one team, that's what makes this one the most special to me, watching Christian beat the best in the business right now. When you can go head-to-head and beat Alex, makes it's that much sweeter.

Like I said earlier, the expectation is to win races, to be fighting for a championship. A lot more work to do to be where we ultimately want to be at.

**Q. Ed, if we roll the clock back a year, you made the decision to step out of seat to allow Christian to race. How gratifying is it to see that pay off? Christian, how rewarding is it to give this to Ed one year on?**

ED CARPENTER: I mean, I think I was surprised as other people that I made the decision when I did. I just felt like it was the right thing to do, the best thing for the team, needed to give him an opportunity to continue to grow.

Even though it took him from that point to win a race, I think I felt even more convicted in the decision (indiscernible) the job that he did, getting the car in a tough situation. Had an accident in practice here. Didn't qualify great. I was confident with the decision back then. This obviously reaffirms that.

**Q. Christian, to reward Ed with a win?**

CHRISTIAN RASMUSSEN: Yeah, it's great. I've had a lot of success on the ovals, also INDY NXT, the smaller categories.

Yeah, first of all getting the opportunity to do it in the last year, like Ed said, it was a tough situation coming in. It was one of the few cars that hadn't tested here, one of the few drivers that hadn't tested here. It was a tough situation.

But we had three good races towards the end of the year. It was good for me just to have something to kind of go into the off-season with, see what did we do well, what did we not do so well, just so we have something to work on.

It's paid off (indiscernible). We've had a really good run. Hopefully we can continue that into Nashville.

**Q. Christian, certainly we saw the aggressiveness today. Ed joked about not every trying to (indiscernible) you back at all. How would you describe yourself as a race car driver, but also your personality?**

CHRISTIAN RASMUSSEN: I think my... I don't know. I'm aggressive on track. I feel like I learned a lot of lessons last year of how people drive in the series. I've kind of taken that and kind of replicated that.

I think I'm on the aggressive side, but I also don't think I'm (indiscernible). Feel like we had last year to kind of tone that or kind of get it into the right spot. I feel like we're doing really well with it this year.

We've finished every race this year. (Indiscernible) that I did. We had an engine failure, which was unfortunate, we had a fuel issue. Other than that, we finished every race.

(Indiscernible) I don't really care.

**Q. Do you have full confidence in every move that you made at the end or were there any moves that you made that you thought was going to work, but it might not?**

CHRISTIAN RASMUSSEN: I have full confidence. It was no different. I think the most interesting one, like I said earlier in this press conference, I think the one with Alex at the very end, most of your tire advantage has gone away. I didn't know how it was going to go, if I had enough to get past him.

I knew I would have enough to run the top. But if I would

have enough grip to actually get past him, I didn't know. Obviously we did. But I was confident in what I was doing, nothing (indiscernible).

**Q. Ed, Christian wasn't the only one on fresh tires. What was he able to do, what does he do, that allowed him to win this race that others couldn't do or didn't do?**

ED CARPENTER: I think he showed on ovals especially, but everywhere really all year, he's pretty relentless when he's feeling it and is confident in the car. So I think he wanted it more today than anyone else. That's what it looked like to me.

THE MODERATOR: We'll rap it up here. Congratulations.

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