

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

Wednesday, January 28, 2026

### Kyffin Simpson

#### Press Conference



**THE MODERATOR:** New gear, new firesuit, new year. Great to have Kyffin Simpson with us. Are you getting used to the new colors for 2026.

**KYFFIN SIMPSON:** Yeah, yeah, enjoying the new colors. They're kind of similar to the Barbados flag actually. I like that part of it for sure.

**Q. What do you think in 2026? Obviously a lot of momentum that you've built in 2025. Hopefully continue that here in this new year?**

**KYFFIN SIMPSON:** Yeah, for sure. I think we kept building and building throughout last year. Hopefully we can just continue that momentum into this year.

**Q. Do you have goals at all for 2026? Do you want to do X, Y and Z?**

**KYFFIN SIMPSON:** Yeah, definitely got to get that first win. That's next on the list for sure.

Other than that, kind of shooting for -- aim high, top 5 in the championship. That would be big. Got a couple big goals that whether we hit or not, I'm going to aim for them and do my best to try to get there.

**Q. The confidence level coming out of Nashville, that battle with McLaughlin, surviving that day, last race of the season, you were probably wanting to get back into an INDYCAR the next week on an oval. What did that day do for your confidence moving forward into 2026?**

**KYFFIN SIMPSON:** Yeah, it was big for sure, especially being on an oval. That was a big thing for me because that's where I really wanted to improve. So that was a big confidence boost for me.

But at the same time, Nashville is a little bit of a different oval relative to the other ovals we go to. So I definitely was kind of feeling like, okay, now I want to go verify that I have actually made a step by going to a different oval.

Obviously didn't get to do that. It was off-season. Now when we go to Phoenix in a couple weeks to go test there, that'll be my next chance to try to get back into it and try to pick up where we left off.

It'll be a new oval for me, as well, so that's going to be a big learning experience. But yeah, I think we've done a lot of looking into it over the off-season and looking into what exactly worked well and why was it good.

I think we should be looking good when we get to Phoenix.

**Q. What's something you want to work on in 2026? Is it late race scenarios, trying to get the most out of the car? I point to Mid-Ohio as one of the races that maybe you could have -- stuff could have improved, despite the penalties, whatever. Is it pit stops? Is it just executing strategy? What's something you want to work on in 2026?**

**KYFFIN SIMPSON:** Yeah, I'd say consistency is the biggest thing, more like weekend-to-weekend kind of consistency. There were some races where we were very good and there were some races where we weren't. I just want to make it so that we kind of bring those races that weren't very good up to a higher level.

If a bad weekend for us last year was 20th, I want to try to make a bad weekend 12th, you know? Yeah, I think that's something that I want to work on a lot for this year. I think that's where a lot of the championship points will be by the end of the year.

By making a bad weekend not so bad I think is where you really make big gains in the championship, and I think that's a big focus for me this year.

**Q. You guys at Ganassi have a lot of continuity now. You're in your third year with the drivers but just as a whole as well. How do you think that has helped you guys and will continue to help you going forward?**

**KYFFIN SIMPSON:** Yeah, it's been very good. I've not done three years in anything in my career. This will be my first time being in a car, in the same car for three years.

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think that's a big help for me.

Another thing is I've got the same group of guys around me as I did last year for the most part. That'll be a big help for me. It's a great group of guys at Ganassi on the 8 car.

I'm looking forward to getting back to work with all of them.

**Q. You mentioned you want to break through and get that first win. I know we don't have Toronto on the schedule anymore. What are some of the races you have circled on the schedule thinking, this might be where it happens?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, I felt really good at Indy GP last year early on in the season. Felt really good at Mid-Ohio. Detroit was obviously another track where we felt pretty quick.

We've got lots of opportunities to do it. Arlington is going to be Sunoco's home race this year, so would be pretty cool to get it done there. Who knows, maybe that's going to be the pattern wherever the sponsor's home race is. So that's pretty cool.

**Q. It's been about a month and a half since we publicly announced the Sunoco deal. Talk about the reaction that you've noticed and how fun it has been to represent this brand so far.**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: It's been awesome. Such a historic brand in racing. They've got such a great history. So many people I've talked to have been like just talking about how big of a Sunoco fan they are from all the racing they've done. It's a huge honor for me to be able to represent them.

**Q. Last year you obviously had a really big improvement in comparison to year one. What do you feel like made the massive difference where you were able to unlock this next step in your performance?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: I don't know that there was any one thing that really clicked, per se. It was all just building through last year into this year. I think having that off-season to reflect and refocus was a big help. But then also just going back to all the tracks for the second time in the same car is a big help.

I just felt like whenever we rolled out the trucks, I just knew what I was doing. I knew -- I had an idea what the car was going to feel like from the first laps, and that just gives you that much more time to work on the car and to make the car better instead of having to focus on yourself and trying to get yourself up to speed before figuring out the car.

**Q. There was a bit of a discussion yesterday amongst a few of the drivers about doing the Rolex before the season starts and getting into a racing mentality. When you do Daytona, is that something you consider getting into race shape even if the car side of things doesn't translate?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, for sure. For me, the Rolex is just about, like you said, getting your mind back into it and getting back into that rhythm of racing. Especially racing in one of the higher classes like P2 or GTP you end up passing a lot, which you're passing slower cars, but whether you're passing slower cars or not, you're still passing cars.

It does kind of get you in a good mindset for when you get to racing. For me, that's really what it's about. You get back working with engineers and working on your feedback and how to make a car better, as well. All of those things are just good to get the wheels turning again and get back in shape, per se, for the season.

**Q. Have you had a mentor that's helped you take that next step, which like we saw last year with the podium at Toronto and the strong performances we saw from you all year-round?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Dario has been a big help to me my entire career. He's been the guy that I've kind of gone to whenever I've needed help with anything driver-related, and he's been a huge help for me on that. He's got so much experience.

He's always got little advice, little piece of knowledge for me. So that's always helpful.

But working with Scott and Alex, as well, you just pick up on little things all the time, little things they do different and little things, little habits that they've picked up on.

**Q. The one thing that I think everyone is looking forward to is the Indy 500, and I know last year was a little bit of -- the flip there during practice and just the struggles until, of course, the race was fine. What's the biggest thing you want to improve on for the month of May?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: I don't know. I felt going into last year, I felt really strong up until Fast Friday, obviously. All through that first bit of practice, I felt like I was getting a lot more comfortable and really understanding how to race better. Then obviously we had the crash on Fast Friday, and after that we kind of took a step back.

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I think a bit of that was me kind of mentally. After a big crash like that, it's hard to get back into it. Took me some time for sure.

Then the other bit was just the car was a bit different. We had to go to the backup car. It's not quite the same.

I think we were strong going into last year. I think I've just got to keep working at that kind of race running. I think the team does a great job getting our qualifying cars ready every year. I don't have any worries about that. I know that when I get in that qualifying car, it's going to be good.

For me, I've just got to focus on race craft.

**Q. Speaking of race craft, which track type are you looking to make the most progress on for 2026?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: I mean, it's still ovals. Ovals are still the focus, short ovals specifically, I think. I think Milwaukee was a pretty weak race for me last year. Having a double-header there this year, I think I've got to put a lot of focus into that and really make sure we maximize that weekend.

**Q. This is your third season here in INDYCAR, even your third with Chip Ganassi. After building that momentum, everything that you took from '24 and '25, do you believe that in '26 you can build up chances to try to be on the podium more often and fight for wins for often?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, I definitely think we'll be able to fight for wins and podiums. Obviously the team is going to be there. The team has got the performance. It's just on me to make sure that I'm doing my job.

We've just got to go into this season knowing that we're good enough and that we've been very close before. I think we can get it done for sure.

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