

# NTT INDYCAR SERIES

## News Conference

Friday, May 15, 2026

**Chip Ganassi**

**Mike Hull**

**Kyffin Simpson**

**Scott Dixon**

**Alex Palou**

Press Conference



Really looking forward to it. Obviously the weather outside there right now is not that great, but hopefully it will dry off, we'll get some running in today and tomorrow.

Yeah, looking forward to it. Again, you hear all these clichés over the years, these lines, we've all heard from every team, We're focusing on the race, we're not worried about qualifying. But they're all true. They're all true.

I look back at last year, years past when we've won the race, you forget about all these things that happened earlier in the month. You kind of move on. In some respects, it's the largest single-day sporting event in the world. At the same time it's another race and you have to approach it that way. Looking forward to it.

THE MODERATOR: Kyffin, how would you describe first couple days of practice and what do you expect heading qualifying?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: It's been a solid start to the Indy 500. The car has been feeling strong, feeling good in race running. Haven't really gotten any qual sims in yet. Hoping to get some in today.

I do think it's been a solid start for us. Just myself feeling a lot better this year coming into it. Two years under the belt already. Yeah, looking forward to another year.

THE MODERATOR: Scott, Indy 500 number 24 a week from Sunday.

SCOTT DIXON: Wow, a couple.

CHIP GANASSI: He started when he was 10.

THE MODERATOR: Has it been different at all for you this week?

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, they're always different. I think the surprising thing for me is lack of running. A lot of cars haven't been running. There's pockets when there's been some good race running. Yesterday we were trying to gear up for that at the start. There was only one pack that went. We missed on that a little bit.

THE MODERATOR: We wrap-up with Chip Ganassi Racing, winners of six Indianapolis 500s, seven if you want to include the Pat Patrick years, that was excellent. Chip will join us, leading the team to 17 NTT INDYCAR SERIES championships, including the last three.

Mike Hull also joins us. Long time managing director for Chip Ganassi Racing.

In the car this weekend, Kyffin Simpson on the right.

Six-time NTT INDYCAR SERIES championship and winner of the 2008 Indianapolis 500, Scott Dixon.

Last week's pole winner of the Grand Prix, four-time and reigning INDYCAR SERIES champion in Alex Palou.

Chip, another strong season for the team. What are you looking forward to in qualifying this weekend?

CHIP GANASSI: It's interesting coming back to Indianapolis this year. We've had more races this year prior to coming to Indianapolis than we have maybe ever, at least in my era, in our era.

You kind of come in here, you're in mid-season form already. You've had some races behind you. The season's developing. You come to Indianapolis, certainly it's its own special place, takes its own special attention.

I think as you'll probably hear from the guys, we feel good about our race cars. We feel okay about qualifying I think. I don't know that we're 1-2-3 pole material, but we feel pretty good. I think we'll be in the mix.



I think for us, we've done kind of a lot more digging, trying to find some different stuff. Even being my 24th, even with this car, I don't know how many years we've had this car, maybe 14 or 15 years, we did a lot of stuff I've never done before.

I feel like the 9 car group is in a really good spot. We kind of just had half a qual sim yesterday. Alex did a lot of the grunt work yesterday converting early and doing those runs yesterday.

We feel comfortable. I think we're in a good spot. The team as always is prepared very well. A lot of hard work on the off-season and throughout last year to come back better and stronger. It's looking good.

THE MODERATOR: Alex, the 10 car has looked good this week. What are your thoughts heading into qualifying?

ALEX PALOU: Yeah, I'm excited, very excited. As Scott said, I think we've seen a little bit less running from everybody in general than what we expected. Probably also because we just had the open test so close to it, it kind of feels like we've been here for an extra week let's say.

Yeah, excited. Very excited. I think we've seen some good progress in our team with last year. We feel a bit more comfortable in some areas. We need to see what qualifying is going to bring.

I think yesterday I did a lot of work and a lot of focus on single-car running in just qualifying. Everything's going to change today and tomorrow, like this weekend when we're going 12 or 10 miles an hour faster heading into turn one and three. It's not going to feel as easy.

Yeah, just excited to feel that when it clears up. Very excited to be back here.

THE MODERATOR: 100 horsepower makes a difference.

ALEX PALOU: It's very different. People don't realize how different it feels as a driver when you go to that boost level, the amount of speed that you gain. It's exciting.

THE MODERATOR: Mike, exciting for you to come back. What has impressed you about this group here in 2026?

MIKE HULL: The teamwork frankly. They work so well together. They help each other. We're able to map the racetrack pretty quickly as well as collectively. That's been a big deal for us. That's always what our culture has emphasized. It works all the way through the system when

it works with the drivers.

We have three drivers here. It would be great to occupy the front row. I don't know if that's possible or not, but we'll find out. That's why they have qualifying.

How you qualify sets the tone for how you race.

THE MODERATOR: Guys, you hear that? A front row sweep.

ALEX PALOU: No pressure (laughter).

THE MODERATOR: Mike is playing the heavy on this.

MIKE HULL: Good cop, bad cop (laughter).

THE MODERATOR: We'll open it up for questions.

**Q. Scott, when Chip is over here talking about don't know if we have enough to do for a 1-2-3 streak, you crack a smile. Are y'all holding back a little bit?**

SCOTT DIXON: I don't know. I haven't really done too much qual sims.

I think we're in a good spot. We definitely saw some pretty stout runs yesterday. There's definitely a lot of competition. Looks like there's little pockets of groups.

Yeah, I really don't know. I think some of it will change once you go to the bigger boost. We'll have to see how today plays out. Tomorrow looks pretty rough. Might be an all-Sunday show.

I feel more comfortable this year about where we are just knowing what we've got, how we prepared, the window we need to be in. I think as a group we feel more comfortable doing what we're doing. I think last year we made a couple mistakes, especially in qualifying, where we should have had more performance.

You never really know. That's the hard part here. Even a gust of wind can change your run dramatically. It's harder this year with the hybrid. You're going to see a lot of different strategies, which will be interesting. Everybody is going to be crunching those out.

No, I feel quietly comfortable and excited. We'll see.

**Q. The last handful of years, some of the runs you've had, how close you've been, how this season has started, what would the second Indy 500 feel like for you?**

SCOTT DIXON: You can't really dwell on the past. That's for sure. It's just eyes forward, focusing on what we've got this year.

Some things are in your control, some out of it. There's definitely moments where you felt like you were hard done by and maybe some that you did yourself.

Yeah, it's really just taking in the moment right now and focusing on what we've got in front of us. Trust me, if I can get a second, I'd be thrilled. But unfortunately there's 32 others that are going to have a pretty good shot.

I think you're going to be racing five to 10 as a group of really strong cars. Even last year you could see there were a lot of people taken out early, had issues early. It's a tricky race to get everything right in that three hours. Honestly then it just gives you a shot at possibly winning. Even if you have a perfect day, it just gives you a shot.

**Q. Scott, when we get to qualifying, you get this extra boost, fundamentally how different does the car feel? Forget the speed aspect, but does it change the characteristics of the car?**

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, it does. You're 10 or 12 miles an hour faster into the corners. Your average speed is up a ton. Surprised to see this week how many people were doing qual sims, even on Tuesday and Wednesday, considering how I feel how much it changes once you turn the boost up.

It's tricky. Once you get into that sweet spot of trying to trim out as much as possible, ride that fine line of being on the edge, not going over too much. Even if you slide the car a little bit too much, it just kills the speed.

I don't know. I enjoy it. It's fun. I don't know what driver doesn't like more power. When they turn it up, it's a ton of fun.

**Q. Alex, do you feel it physically when you're driving the car?**

ALEX PALOU: Oh, yeah, big-time. Qualifying sims on yesterday's boost, I don't want to say it's easy, but you feel like there's a ton of grip, like the car is not on the limit. Today or this weekend it's going to feel like the car doesn't like it, it's not as happy, you start sliding, need to work more with your tools. You cannot go aggressive with the amount of trim you are doing.

Yeah, obviously when you're going that much faster, it just makes the car feel that much different.

**Q. With the way the qualifying format is now, the fact if you're going to be in the Fast Six you have to run multiple times. That's putting the car at risk multiple times. How does that make you feel?**

ALEX PALOU: It's good. More fun. It's good when you have a good car. It's super fun when you have a good car. I believe if you're qualifying fast, if you're directly into the Fast 12, you're doing the same amount of attempts as last year.

Yeah, as long as the car is good and you're enjoying driving it, it's super fun. Obviously when you're struggling with the balance of the car, you don't really want to go out and do another qualifying run to try and advance.

Yeah, hopefully we'll be on the good side.

**Q. Alex, as the reigning winner of the Indianapolis 500, how much does that help your confidence level knowing that last year you were able to make all the right moves?**

ALEX PALOU: Zero, yeah. I don't think it carries much. Like, do I feel super happy and I think we did a great job last year? Absolutely. But unfortunately it doesn't really give us any advantage this year.

I think there's been so many drivers that have been in the fight already, like towards the last stint, that it's not that you can say, yeah, you have so much experience on that fight. I think probably 20 drivers or 25 drivers in the grid have been in the fight.

I feel really comfortable, really happy about what happened last year. Unfortunately I think this year it's going to be a whole lot different.

**Q. The great thing about this race, from what we saw last year, there was a point where we really didn't know who was going to win the race. Looked like Takuma was going to run, Ryan Hunter-Reay, Josef Newgarden charging from the back. Is that what makes this race so much fun as a driver, because it's so fierce?**

ALEX PALOU: Yeah, anyone has a chance. Even if you're not having a great day at the beginning or you have a slow car or you're not feeling super confident with it, you have so much time to recover, you have time to react and do different strategies. Kind of fortunately or unfortunately brings everybody into play for the win.

As a driver, it's what makes it fun. I would say what makes it so special as a driver is just the amount of people and the fans and the energy that we have at this place.

**Q. The drivers, you spend this whole week collecting data, doing what you can for qualifying. On the weather note it feels like next week will be considerably warmer. How much are you able to take away from what you get from a data standpoint this week?**

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, you can learn a bit. It is going to be different. As it gets hotter, everything gets more difficult. You kind of have to take that into account. The team's got some great people that all have a lot of experience here, kind of know what to expect a little bit.

Yeah, we're all prepared for it. We'll stay on our toes.

ALEX PALOU: Yeah, I agree with Kyffin. At the end of the day it's the same conditions for everyone, this week and next week. Yeah, everybody will need to adapt or change that up. Yeah, we feel strong about the car and the team that we have around.

I think as drivers we don't really have to think too much about that. We just need to focus on driving and making sure we do our stuff right. We have an amazing group of mechanics and engineers that will get it right on conditions.

**Q. Chip, a lot of drivers have become team owners. What is it about you and the way you've run this team that has separated it over the years?**

CHIP GANASSI: That's a good question. Our team is nothing special, okay? What makes it special are the people, people like this guy to my right, having the ability to attract drivers like these guys on my left, the people that are back there in the garage.

I always wanted to have a team. Early on, I remember saying I wanted to have a team that I would have wanted to drive for. Being a driver in a team, you want this, you want this to be right, you want these kind of people, all that sort of thing.

I was pretty picky as a driver. I just thought put a team together that I would want to drive for. That was how I started out. Here it is 35 years later, it's where we ended up, yeah.

**Q. Alex, you were pretty much the last one out there last night still trying to find that extra something. You're the benchmark that everyone is chasing. Can you talk about you and the 10 crew's obsessive desire to keep improving, how that translates to success?**

ALEX PALOU: I think it's everybody at CGR that just is

obsessed with winning. Not obsessed, but that's the work that we want to do, everybody at the shop.

Yesterday was just my Internet wanted me to keep running and collecting data. It was actually the first ever time that I got the checkered flag here at IMS.

I don't know. The good thing is that we collected a lot. We understood a lot. We got faster throughout the day, which that's the best thing to see as a driver, knowing that all the work that you're doing, you're getting speed out of it.

But yeah, it was just Julian and my team that said, Okay, one more Alex.

I'm like, Okay, let's do one more till the end.

I think if they would have kept the track open throughout the night, we would have been running (laughter).

THE MODERATOR: Thanks for coming up. Appreciate it.

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