

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

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Will Power

Pato O'Ward

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Will Power has joined us. Three-time winner in Detroit.

Good start to the weekend? What do you think, Will?

WILL POWER: Yeah, car was very good. Never got a lap on reds. That was my black tire, which is encouraging. Yeah, found some good stuff. Definitely can go back and work on it and improve, as everyone else will.

But Andretti is generally very good around these sort of tracks. Looking for a good weekend. I say that every time, but I really am. I really want a good weekend (smiling).

THE MODERATOR: Bounce back...

WILL POWER: It would be nice. Yeah, ultimately that's what it would be. If we just finish on pace and merit, I think we'd finish really well.

THE MODERATOR: We'll start with questions.

Q. If you could elaborate a little bit more. You've shown some speed. You had high hopes entering the season. How frustrated have you been that you just can't seem to catch much of a break?

WILL POWER: Yeah, frustrated but encouraged. I was in contention for win at Phoenix. I was in contention for a win at Arlington. Indy road course I was in contention for a win. I led laps at all those tracks.

It's there, for sure, if I just complete the task. Cars are good. Just various things going wrong at times. I think we were going to be very good at Barber. Had a brake failure in qualifying, which was unfortunate. We were quick in the race.

It can beat you down a little bit. That's the way this sport goes sometimes. I'm very happy with the team. Very good. Very good. We just got to execute a weekend

without any sort of issues.

Definitely a couple things, couple on me, couple things we could have done better. Yeah, encouraged, man. Like, it's there. I keep saying it, if we complete it, we'll be good.

Q. Have you two realized today is the year anniversary of your flower move?

WILL POWER: What we were saying is we should do it to the 12 car, because the 12 car did it to us last year. That's what I would say. 12 car did it to Andretti last year, so we pay him back. It would be very ironic and funny (smiling). Should I do it?

Q. Sure, why not.

WILL POWER: I think I'd have to sit out a session. I wouldn't get away with it this time.

You got changed, huh?

PATO O'WARD: I did.

WILL POWER: I'm waiting. What we call throwing the dummy in Australia. I tricked you. I saw you, I'll go in the truck and make him late. That's why I looked.

PATO O'WARD: He didn't see me (laughter).

WILL POWER: Just kidding.

THE MODERATOR: With that, Pato O'Ward, 2021 finisher in Detroit, joins us.

What did you make of that practice session? Were you happy with it?

PATO O'WARD: I thought the first part of it was good on the black. Quite tricky on the red. I don't think we're the only one that struggled with it.

I don't know what you thought about it.

WILL POWER: It wasn't like a big gain. I was definitely on



a good lap. But yeah, not a couple 10ths type thing.

PATO O'WARD: I think the cars that are strong on the black, you might see these guys transfer like from Q1 to Q2 on a black. Maybe as it rubbers up, the red is going to start to be a little bit better.

WILL POWER: Could be, yeah.

Q. Will, you never got on the reds, is that right?

WILL POWER: I got on the reds. I never completed a lap. I was on a lap, probably a couple 10ths on what I had done on blacks. I was a couple 10ths up on that. Not a big gain.

PATO O'WARD: At least you gained.

WILL POWER: Yeah, I could see how you couldn't. It was little bits everywhere. I probably just did a better job than I did on the blacks, yeah.

In the driver meeting today, Ed thought I was saying, if you're qualifying like crap. I didn't mean him. I just meant in general.

Everyone was like, Well, you suck, too (laughter).

Drivers meeting...

PATO O'WARD: Passionate.

WILL POWER: It was passionate. Came out with another rule. They like to make a knee-jerk reaction if something goes wrong one time.

Q. Will, is there anything you can do to get rid of kind of the 'bad luck'? Do you feel there needs to be more quality control? Is there something you can do?

WILL POWER: It's not bad luck. It's definitely things that could have been managed. For instance, racing Rasmussen for the win there at Phoenix, I could have given him a little bit more room, settled for second.

Indy road course, I could have not gone too deep coming out of the pits, got a penalty. That was definitely a top three there.

Brake failure in Barber. An unfortunate thing. We were told we have to move our brake line. It wasn't a place I had put it before. A zip tie broke and that was that.

All manageable things. I wouldn't call it bad luck. The car is really good, the team is really good. You just have to put it together.

I do think about Palou at these times and think about how often he puts it together. To be in this place must feel so good where it's all flowing for you. But his time will come (smiling).

PATO O'WARD: (Laughter).

WILL POWER: That was an evil laugh (smiling).

It's amazing how well they put it all together. I do think about that. It's possible, we can do it, we've got the cars and everything. Just got to let it happen.

Q. Will, is it at all stressful almost like not knowing if and when these random issues will come to you throughout a weekend?

WILL POWER: You definitely get to a point where you start to expect it, which is not good. I've been around too long to know this. You just go through these cycles. I've seen it over the years. You just get in these patterns, then suddenly, boom, it will all click, start rattling off some really good stuff.

It is easy to get frustrated. Nothing you can do. Getting frustrated will make it worse.

Q. Fast Six, if you're in it tomorrow, have you thought about the strategy on that?

WILL POWER: Very hard to tell.

PATO O'WARD: Probably you'd want to go first here. I would say probably on the same set.

Q. Long Beach?

PATO O'WARD: I went sixth. I was fifth or sixth. If you're fifth or sixth, I don't think it really makes much of a difference.

I do think going first to fifth is a big difference with just brake temperatures and being able to get everything going, especially if you just did yours. Yeah, going first in line is going to keep you.

WILL POWER: I think this will be the hardest track.

PATO O'WARD: Cars are going to be sliding around a lot.

WILL POWER: That little brake we had. Just that, you lose a second.

PATO O'WARD: Just imagine cold tires, cold brakes.



You're not getting it in.

WILL POWER: Incredible.

PATO O'WARD: You'll be sliding.

WILL POWER: Hustling around hoping for the best. It will be interesting.

Q. Pato, the first year INDYCAR raced here you said, it's going to be gnarly, bro. Do you think this track has gotten gnarlier or you've figured it out or...

PATO O'WARD: I feel like in certain areas, they've cleaned up like out in the chicane, I feel like the wall looks much nicer. There's different patches that I think turn nine, there was quite a big dip when we were first coming here, now it's not as aggressive. They've definitely made it much better for us.

I don't think the backstretch is as bumpy and aggressive as it used to be. The first year we came here I thought it was really aggressive. It's gotten better and better, yeah.

Q. We saw a number of cars spin at this complex during the session. Is that a case of the concrete or the track surface rubbering up with the GTP cars? Is that going to make any difference overall how that track handles long-term?

PATO O'WARD: I can't remember if the GTP rubber is good for us.

WILL POWER: I think any rubber going down on this cement stuff is good. It's so slippery.

Q. Does that change over the weekend, the concrete?

WILL POWER: Usually the track just progressively gets better.

PATO O'WARD: It opens the window a bit on driver lines and stuff like that. It should open it a little bit more.

WILL POWER: Yeah. It's a strange thing, cement tracks. When it goes yellow, the actual rubber on the track cools.

PATO O'WARD: You start sliding a lot.

WILL POWER: The restarts, it's like ice.

Q. Is that going to be different between the black and the red?

WILL POWER: The red is better in that situation, it's

slightly softer. It doesn't matter. You're on top of the road sliding a lot.

Q. How the excess rubber might make it worse, is the cement here different that much compared to Long Beach or St. Petersburg?

WILL POWER: It's definitely more slippery here, I think.

PATO O'WARD: It just feels like we struggle to get a carcass temp in the car much more. It doesn't help that 80% of the track layout, like we don't actually gain too much speed from turn three to turn seven. I mean, one, two, three, four, five corners that you're just in first and second gear.

How you get temperature in these cars, you have to go fast, then hit the brakes. That's what usually creates the most heat.

I just think over the course of the lap, there's not a lot of that, regardless if you're pushing a lot, whatever. You might heat the surface temp of the tire a lot, but you're not actually creating a lot of carcass temperatures, which is what makes the tire work.

Q. Is it all the same cement from last year's race?

PATO O'WARD: I think maybe nine is better. Maybe last year they fixed that.

WILL POWER: Yeah, it's pretty similar. The walls look nicer. The painting on the track looks better. They kind of learnt from Arlington. They did a really nice job there.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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