

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

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David Malukas

Will Power

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: David Malukas started second this afternoon, his third runner-up finish in 2026. Back to second in points in the NTT INDYCAR SERIES standings.

David, your thoughts on a second-place finish here at Road America.

DAVID MALUKAS: It was a crazy race. No, it feels good. P2 champions. That's been the story of this season (smiling).

Honestly, big, big kudos to this team because that race, I mean, obviously everybody saw that, that was insane. I didn't even know what was going on. Next thing you know we're P2.

Really happy from the team side. Travis on the wall, great strategy. I have to look into it. Our race pace, missing a little bit there from my side. I have to study and figure out why I'm losing some time on these races.

This team carried me here. Big thank you to them.

THE MODERATOR: Will started 10th today, comes home with a podium finish. Best finish of the season. Third podium here at Road America. 110th career podium, still fourth on the all-time list.

Will, crazy finish at the end. The contact with Graham.

WILL POWER: Yeah, unfortunate there. I was braking, he was braking. I don't understand why that was. It took me by surprise obviously. That's what caused that. It's a pity.

But still a very good day for us overall. I'm really glad to finish third.

THE MODERATOR: Best finish of the season.

WILL POWER: (Indiscernible). Had a rough season, for sure. Had a lot of potential. Yeah, it was nice sitting there

in third, then waiting to see what would happen with that contact.

Yeah, from my perspective, I could not do anything. I mean, I was at the capacity of braking. He moved it. There's nothing I can do.

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

Q. Will, how fortunate did you feel tonight in that moment?

WILL POWER: Yeah, that was good, too. He just kind of moved over, got his rear wheel. That was that.

But yeah, probably shouldn't have got myself in that position to start with. Was third, locked up in eight. He passed. Hadn't locked up all day. Took me by surprise in turn eight. Good strategy. We actually had a fast car. Car was very fast on blacks. Reds went off pretty badly.

We're conscious of the new sort of INDYCAR throwing yellows very quickly. It is a risk to go long, no question, as a lot of people found out today.

Yeah, we were on the good side of that. Made sure we were, pitting early. But some eventful restarts. Honestly, pushing qualifying laps for those last couple stints, for sure.

Q. You're used to winning and expect to win. The way this season has gone, is this something you'll take, getting to the podium?

WILL POWER: Would have taken top five. Not that it has been lack of pace. We've led five races, been in positions that are great. Just finishing it off, yeah. I think you just got to accept top five sometimes. I think if you've got a shot for a win, you should always go for it.

Yeah, we're in a position, not going to win the championship, so we probably can take some risks on strategy and so on to go for a win.

Q. David, on a restart like that, if you don't get the leader in lap one, is there anywhere else around the



course that you can close up dramatically?

DAVID MALUKAS: Which restart?

Q. The one at the very end.

DAVID MALUKAS: The very end one, that was the one that's not really any chance there. You're going against alternates versus primary tires. It's not really going to be a competition. You come out of turn 14, he's going forward, I'm going sideways. That's kind of the result of that.

I mean, if it was same tires, you can maybe make an opportunity, yeah. You could try to set him up the next lap through 14. That's just a tire difference there.

Q. Will, you've raced here a long time A lot of times these races can play out predictably. Today was pretty wild. What do you see the reason why that was today?

WILL POWER: How the yellows are thrown. That's why. A lot of restarts. The whole field gets mixed up. I was not a big fan of not letting the pit stop sequence happen. As you saw a whole bunch of people ended up getting put back. I think there's a happy balance there.

Q. As a fellow competitor, we all know that Christian Lundgaard has had some talent, this year he seems to have really picked up his game. What do you think of that as a fellow competitor?

WILL POWER: Yeah, he's been incredibly quick in a couple of these road courses. His race pace has been amazing. I think people are happy to see someone else win to be honest (laughter).

Q. David, you've talked about how you're really happy with your year so far, but still chasing the first win. How much pressure or frustration do you feel to get that?

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, I mean, it's definitely slowly starting to build there. It's always just a battle of trying to keep that kind of contained. At the end of the day we're still in a championship fight, still good amount of races to go. We really never know what happens.

You're still on that edge of I want to make some risks to go for the win, at the same time I need to keep it contained because I don't want to make something stupid and get out of some good points.

That's the challenge of this year, balancing between those two forms of racing.

Q. David, can you talk about the championship a little bit. You're inching a little closer now. Does that rise more to the front as an achievable goal?

DAVID MALUKAS: I mean, it's something that's there. Palou obviously has been on his A game. Same thing with Kyle. I think Kyle had a little bit of an off race this one. I mean, we all have one off race. You know the next race we go to, he's going to be right back up there. It's going to be a close battle. You never know.

With these yellows now being thrown out randomly, you got to be on the forefront of strategy. If we can still be getting some good strategy calls, we can slowly pick at it. Who knows what will happen in the end.

Q. Because of the yellow calls, does this change your strategy during the race? Is it making it harder to do a strategic plan before the race?

WILL POWER: It makes it a risk to go long. It kind of pushing everyone to the same strategy a bit, yeah. It's too hard to understand when they will throw. If someone spins or someone has to be on the gravel...

In the past, if someone goes in the gravel, there's no contact, they would let the sequence happen, throw the yellow, give everyone a chance to pit. Which to me in all motorsports around the world is the fairest, best way you can do it. Virtual safety cars, people get a free pit stop. I thought INDYCAR was doing it the best way. Now we're sort of back to completely inverting the field at times, which I'm not a massive fan of.

Q. Do you feel we need to make a change to that rule now?

WILL POWER: I think there's just leeway there. Car makes contact, everyone knows it's going to go yellow immediately. I think if a car is safely in the gravel, no contact, it's getting stuck, maybe you should let the pit stop sequence happen.

I mean, yeah, depends where you qualify. If you qualify in the back, you're fishing for those lucky yellows, someone going in the gravel.

What it opens up to is when it comes down to the last race, you can have a teammate drive in the gravel for you 100%. I'm not joking. It's happened.

Q. Did it?

WILL POWER: Absolutely happened. You could have a teammate drive in the gravel, pit early, boom. Newgarden?

Josef or McLaughlin? I'm sure both those guys would be happy to do it (laughter).

DAVID MALUKAS: Oh, my gosh. You gave the script away. Oh, no, there you go (smiling).

THE MODERATOR: I believe there are rules against that, but you guys talk amongst yourselves.

WILL POWER: Locked up, went long. See me locking the wheel (laughter).

Q. This back and forth you just had raises the juxtaposition, the No. 12. Talk about what it's been like competing against each other.

WILL POWER: It's cool to see him kicking ass, man. Honestly, eventually I was going to retire anyway. I think he was absolutely the right guy. Done a bloody good job. He's beating his teammates every week. He's good on ovals. He's a package. Doing good, man.

DAVID MALUKAS: Means a lot. For me the No. 12 car was it specifically. The name Will Power, Verizon being on the car for so long. That was the one car I watched growing up. That's what really got me into racing, you and obviously the Cars movie. That's what got me into racing.

To be in that car, it was a dream come true. I am not going to lie. The amount of pressure I was under heading into St. Pete, needing to fill the legend here, fill his shoes, what's he's accomplished, it was pretty stressful.

But it's a good crew. We've always been good friends ever since. Was it here where you showed me the Vegemite?

WILL POWER: I think it was.

DAVID MALUKAS: It was here. He knocked on my bus. He said, Hello. Just walked in. I was very confused. He let me try Vegemite. Then I was like, Wow, that's actually pretty good. I thought I was keeping it.

He said, No, no, I need that back.

WILL POWER: I was like, I like my Vegemite. You can taste it, but you have to buy your own.

DAVID MALUKAS: Then he left, that was that (smiling).

WILL POWER: He's done a great job. The win's going to come. No doubt. It's just a matter of time.

Q. David, you talk about the championship. Like today, are they telling you to be safe because you're

ahead of Palou and Kirkwood?

DAVID MALUKAS: No. During the race they're saying full push, do whatever you need to get around him. They're going full from their side.

When it comes to INDYCAR, everybody here is veteran drivers. Even when you see rookies, it's incredible, this field. Everybody is at the top of their game.

It's more of a mental note to myself to keep calm, keep that controlled. At the end of the day I'm 24 years old. That younger side of me wants to come out and do some stupid stuff. I'm trying to keep it calm.

WILL POWER: I still do stupid stuff. It never changes (smiling).

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations.

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