

NTT INDY NXT SERIES

News Conference

Sunday, July 19, 2026

Matteo Nannini

Nikita Johnson

Myles Rowe

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Wrapping up today's INDY NXT race. Matteo Nannini from pole position, first win on an oval, second win of the season, third career win in INDY NXT by Firestone.

Nikita Johnson, his best finish since a win at Barber this year. Retakes the championship lead.

Myles Rowe joins us, third podium of the season, best since a win at St. Louis.

Matteo, we'll start with you. Congratulations. Got the win on an oval, which I'm sure was something you were after. Tell us about your day up front. It was non-stop.

MATTEO NANNINI: Yeah, it was 65 never-ending laps. I feel like it was actually maybe actually our first real race because in Gateway we didn't start the race when everybody else did, we started kind of late. So yeah, I'm so happy for the team, for everybody involved to get the result we deserved.

Our season so far has been a lot of up and downs. Team gave us a fast car every single race. Sometimes weekends don't go as clean. Super happy to be here. It's another boost in my confidence for races coming up.

Yeah, overall just another one in the books.

THE MODERATOR: Nikita, again, another podium, back in front when it comes to the championship with a handful of races remaining. Your thoughts on the battle today.

NIKITA JOHNSON: It was pretty hard. It was a long 65 laps. It was a little bit tough having to battle, something I wasn't used to. It was tough, but we made it happen. Dropped back a little bit, but came back through.

The Cape boys gave us a really good car, Matteo and us.

The team has been working extremely hard. I know it means a lot to them getting first and second. Might be their first and second. Just proud of everyone and a great weekend.

THE MODERATOR: Myles, you were making the high line and low line work. 184 on-track passes. Tell us about your day, maybe the contact you had with the 26 there.

MYLES ROWE: Yeah, a lot of close racing. I was happy I could come away with that kind of racing. It was clean, very respectful. It was good fun.

Got tight with the 26 and I, clipped my wing a little bit. Had to look over to make sure I didn't ruin his race or mine. That's the fine line of these milliseconds to get the draft, make passes happen.

Just happy with all the racing up front. Glad to get one position up starting P4. Good points for this weekend.

THE MODERATOR: Was there damage to the car?

MYLES ROWE: No, no damage. Like I said, I looked at the right front wing. Everything looked good. It was pretty light contact.

Yeah, definitely was a little shaken up, wondering if the car had some damage. But it was all good. No problems after.

THE MODERATOR: Open it up for questions here.

Q. Matteo, how much did it mean to not only get to celebrate this in Victory Lane but I believe the first 1-2 for Cape Motorsports?

MATTEO NANNINI: Yeah, I think it's a great result for the team. Again, my car has been the fastest, one of the fastest, in every single racetracks we've been to.

We could maximize with every chance. Obviously means we're all doing a great job, the team back at home, and driving-wise, too. Just good momentum. Hopefully we can keep it up.



Q. Nikita, a couple more ovals on the schedule. Showing you can perform when it comes to this. Do you feel that's going to give you an advantage with Enzo and TymeK in this championship?

NIKITA JOHNSON: For sure I'm really comfortable on ovals. Always been. Even from testing. I think it showed it pretty well in practice. One of the only ones to pass on the high line in the first few minutes, right?

I think being able to be confident and comfortable on these ovals is going to make the difference. I'm not really sure where they ended up in the race and whatnot.

I think this is where we're going to get our points here, Milwaukee. All the tracks left on the calendar I think I'll be really fast at, been at and done well.

Q. Myles, how shaken up was your confidence with the contact?

MYLES ROWE: Yeah, I think it lasted for the length of the back straight. Once I went through three, four, everything was fine. I was able to lift my head up, see the right front was fine. Spotter told me it was good. I think it looked a little more hairy than it was. Probably a chip on the right front. But it was fine.

Was happy to keep pursuing the high line.

Q. Matteo, you have two wins this season. The first time you crossed the line first. How good does that feel? What does that do for confidence for the rest of the season?

MATTEO NANNINI: I mean, it feels good to actually be in Victory Lane, given the penalties and stuff.

Again, confidence always been there, it's just about maximizing weekends. Of course, I hope this puts me at least in the top 10 in the championship. Keep the momentum up. Only three or four races left. I'm sure we can do another step forward.

Q. With kind of the talk in the INDYCAR paddock being about silly season, how do you focus on the INDY NXT season while getting in the heads of these team owners saying I'm your guy, I can make the step up?

MYLES ROWE: I think honestly the best way to talk is through your performance in the silly season for where we are. Obviously some of us are allowed to talk to teams, others aren't. The best way we can create dialogue is through our performance.

MATTEO NANNINI: From a driver perspective, you know that you have a path after this, it gives you a little bit more extra motivation to keep driving forward. Unfortunately racing is so tough. Even if you win and stuff, there might be other factors that don't make you do the bigger step.

Again, only thing I can do right now is driving to the best of my abilities. I'm lucky enough to have a group of people that I'm sure they'll find me a good spot for next year.

NIKITA JOHNSON: I just focus on getting results. I think about that. My dad and Michael Moroney, my agent, are figuring that out.

Just going racing and trying to maximize each weekend, beat my competitors, which this weekend was a big swing, showed that I can run ovals. My competitors had a little bit of a tough time.

Just focus on maximizing results, let my team do their work, then whatever happens happens, right?

Q. Matteo, when was the last time, if you can remember, that you won an oval? How much does that matter to you winning on this kind of track?

MATTEO NANNINI: This is my second oval ever. I had Gateway this year, but we had a fuel leak starting the race. I was just cruising and didn't want to crash or damage the car.

It's actually nice to start the same as everybody else.

Q. It was predicted there would be a good amount of yellows during the race today. How did those cautions play a part in each of your races?

NIKITA JOHNSON: Yeah, I mean, the yellows I think were helpful for dialing up front. When we were at speed, the high line was a little bit dirty. With the track sweepers, there was the oil dry stuff. That was up top like two and a half or the third lane.

Yeah, just having a restart meant that everybody would be bunched up. We would take the high line a little bit slower. So for me it helped out.

Ultimately we didn't get it done. Matteo did a good job of pushing me up half a lane higher. I think the restarts were fun. It was definitely a little curve ball in there.

MYLES ROWE: Yeah, I think the yellows, just echoing Nikita, being a little bit slower, the high line was a little bit more manageable. Shook things up, made things more



fun.

My side of the race didn't change so much. Like he said, made the high line a little bit more manageable at that point in the race.

MATTEO NANNINI: I was hoping not to have yellow flags because it's such a resource zone. The way into turn one is pretty big. I know if I didn't do a good job, they can get my tow, and have a good chance in turn one. I think (indiscernible) the safety car was enough.

Q. Matteo, obviously you had two years out of INDY NXT. Ahead of this year, what was it that really kind of made you want to come back to racing? Ultimately, have you fulfilled your ambitions there?

MATTEO NANNINI: Yeah, I think we made the deal up pretty late in the season. I wasn't even thinking about racing. I was focused on our USF2000 team.

When the opportunity shows up, you can take it because then you might regret at the end. I'm still not too old to do it. I was out of the game for a couple years.

At the end this is the reason why I moved to the U.S. and the reason why I did so many sacrifices. When the opportunity came, I definitely took it.

Q. When you are out of the game for a couple of years, what's the process of finding yourself getting back up to speed?

MATTEO NANNINI: I think definitely the hardest part is to race craft, right? You don't really lose the raw speed. More like riding a bike, you can find details, the speed.

We had a few test days before St. Pete. Obviously the more races I do, the better I get. With the team we find whatever setup works best for me to have more confidence and push as much as I can every single lap.

Yeah, this kind of shows it. We started kind of rough, but we're getting better and better.

Q. Nikita, a big day for the Cape team. Talk about the environment, maybe what within the team has made them capable of weekends like this.

NIKITA JOHNSON: Yeah, I mean, Cape is a small but mightily team. We're going against all the big teams. So far we're kind of I think surprising people with how well we've done as underdogs.

I'm so thankful to be back on a smaller team again. Some

of the big teams are not amazing, where you didn't have the connection. With this whole team, Matteo and the team, I think this is Cape's first year of having two really good drivers to fine-tune in car and the setup.

Dominic and Reggie listen to the both of us really well. Shoot ideas back and forth. Everybody has a really good bond and understanding of what our roles are, how to get better. The attention to detail is like no other race team I've been in. I'm thankful to be here.

THE MODERATOR: Guys, congratulations.

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