

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

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Kyffin Simpson

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Thanks for joining us. Busy stretch for the 2026 NTT INDYCAR SERIES championships. Our guest today continues to build his résumé in the NTT INDYCAR SERIES. He has six top 10s this season, already matching his career high. Last year in this event picked up his first podium. We welcome in Kyffin Simpson.

You ready to go to Markham this weekend?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: I'm ready. I can't wait. I can't wait to be back. Another new track, number two of three. For me two of four because I'd never been to Phoenix either. Lots of new tracks this year.

THE MODERATOR: Certainly for you a lot of good memories in the Toronto area. How do you build on that here, really an entire season that has been solid in 2026 for you?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, it's been great. I think this kind of second half of the season we've really caught a stride and had some solid consistency that I've been very happy with.

Yeah, I think we're doing a great job, doing a lot of things right. We're learning from all our mistakes, which is the big thing.

Yeah, we just keep getting better. Hopefully we can grow to try to get back on that podium.

THE MODERATOR: I'm guessing you've had a little bit of time on the Honda sim in Brownsburg, is that accurate?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, got a little bit of sim time in. Got to check it out for the first time. Seems quite interesting so far.

THE MODERATOR: What do you think?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Seems exciting. Seems like it's going to be difficult and very technical. We'll only really know for sure once we get there. The sim just really helps you to

turn left so you don't get lost on the streets. It's helpful.

I'm really just excited to get there and see it in person for the first time.

THE MODERATOR: Let's open it up for questions.

Q. Two top 10s in the first seven rounds, then four in the last six. Is there a certain moment, conversation, any type of thing internally that you looked at that's helped reset your year?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Not really. I mean, this whole year, after each race, we've tried to -- not each race, sometimes it gets busy. We've had times throughout the year where we've sat down at different points, just discussed where we are and what we think we're doing wrong, what we think we need to be doing better. Discuss little points and things here and there that have just built over time. We just are making less mistakes. We're doing the obvious things right, as Chip likes to say. We're just kind of catching a stride.

The same kind of thing happened last year where second half of the season really picked up. We really caught some momentum, had a strong second half of the season. Maybe we're more of a second-half-of-the-season kind of team.

We just got to make sure that we keep learning from this and that we can continue to build.

Q. The elephant in the room question. This being your third season, you've had a chance to learn from Alex Palou and Scott Dixon. We know what's happening with Scott next year. We don't know what's happening with the 9. There's so much data and information that's helped you. What are you looking for in a teammate as you move forward? What kind of teammate are you hoping to have in the 9?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Man, that's a tough one.

You always just want someone that's going to push you, someone to learn from. That's always helpful. Someone



who's going to not just push you, but elevate the whole team is very important. I think anyone that can come in and point out weaknesses in the team is great. I think that's always helpful for growth. That's how we'll get better.

Q. You're on the younger half of the grid in terms of your age and experience. We're coming up on two tracks that will be new for the whole field. Do you think that evens out the playing field? What difference does it make for you as one of the younger drivers?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, I think it evens it out a little bit. I think the people that just have experience in the series, that still helps. But when you go to a track that no one knows, it's more about who can learn it the fastest. That is a skill that you develop over the years. That's something you can kind of learn. Sometimes experienced guys have that skill very well-developed.

It does kind of even the playing field. That's one thing that I feel like I'm fairly good at, is learning tracks. Hopefully that's good for me. Hopefully when we get there, I can try to push the envelope and be up front.

Q. You've talked about the progress you've made. It seems like you've been making good improvements every year. How happy are you with the progress you've made in the past two years?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: I've been happy about it. I think we've done a good job with consistency this year, especially more recently. I felt like that was one of the big things that was lacking last year, was just consistency through the season of results and being able to consistently be in the top 10, consistently qualifying well, and those kind of things.

I think we've done a much better job of that this year. I would have liked to have done better up until this point at least for sure. But I think we've still got some races to go to be able to hit those targets.

But I'm happy with it from my side. I think we just keep getting better. Hopefully continuing on into next year I can keep on growing, chasing after new goals.

Q. You mentioned that you got some time in on the sim earlier. What is your assessment of the track's layout and how it compares to the old layout down at the lakeshore?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: It seems tricky, that's for sure. It looks like a very technical track, which isn't usually my kind of track so much. I love all sorts of different challenges and tracks. I feel like once we get there in person it's probably

going to be a lot cooler than looking at a track map.

Yeah, I'm excited for it. I'm excited to see kind of the elevation change that it seems like it has. That seems like a cool aspect for a street course that we don't really have anywhere else.

It's going to be interesting to see what the passing opportunities are like. I feel like it looks like it's going to be difficult to pass, but you might just have some big (indiscernible) in the race.

Q. Is there anything different that goes into your preparation when you are dealing with a track that you haven't seen, nobody's seen?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, I mean, we look into it as much as we can. Run a lot of sims on everything, what they think the best setup is going to be, what they think the best way to drive the track is going to be, all those fun calculations that they do. They do a great job at it.

I think in Arlington we did a great job with all that stuff, showing up to the track with a car that rolled out of the trucks being pretty good. If that's a sign of how things are going to be here in Markham, I feel like we're looking pretty good.

Q. Talk specifically about the goals you had coming into this year and are you on track to meet those?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, well, kind of the original goals I set for the season, I always come into the season with very high goals, very high expectations, see if I can meet them. Most of the time I don't, to be completely honest.

This season the goal was Fast 12 in every qualifying or top 12 in every qualifying, top 10 in every race, which I don't know if anyone's accomplished either of those goals this year. Those are the kind of goals that I like to set for myself. I understand that they may not be achievable, but that's the way I like to go about it.

Yeah, I think as of more recently we've been doing a better job at those kind of goals. To start the season off, I feel like we weren't achieving them as often as I'd like to.

Another goal was top 10 in the championship. We're pretty close to that. I think we've made good progress and we're I think only 20 points out of top 10 or something like that in 13th. We're pretty close to that one. I'd like to try to wrap that one up by the end of the season.

Q. Obviously working with drivers like Alex and Scott, you can learn a lot. What are one or two things that



you've picked up from Scott this year that you're going to take forward with you?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: I think obviously Scott's kind of known for his fuel save, how amazing he is at that. It's been great to be able to learn from him on that, how he's able to do that so well, kind of apply it to my driving and learn how he does it. It's been fun. It's been a challenge to try to be as good at fuel saving as he is. I feel like I'm getting there.

Yeah, it's been a huge thanks to him. He's helped me a lot. Dario's also helped me, coached me along. They know each other pretty well. Dario's a huge help for that. The two of them have both helped me out a lot. It's going to be sad seeing Scott missing next year. Times change and people move on.

Q. Last week at Portland, a solid job, Fast Six. What's the confidence like with yourself and with the team?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, very high. I think we did a great job last weekend in Portland. Kind of from the get-go we were very quick. We were very happy with the car. We had been testing there two weeks before, so we knew we had put ourselves in a good position, and we learned a lot.

Yeah, it was great to roll out of the trucks fast. We just kind of kept that momentum through the weekend. I was super proud of the team for that.

Q. Not to mention the emotions, we flash back one year ago, you got your first podium. Coming back to Toronto that the has to feed you with some confidence coming into it. What are you feeling like coming back knowing that that podium is already in your pocket here in Canada?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, it's been great. It was very cool getting that first podium last year from the perspective of first INDYCAR podium, but also it was a home race for our sponsor last year. That was just a cool experience, having so many people there for you, supporting you. That was great. Yeah, it was a pretty surreal experience.

Q. Chip Ganassi has said he's pleased with how you're coming along. When you hear that from someone with his experience, does it change the way you see your own progress or do you need to prove a bit more?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: That's a tough one. I feel like I'm always pushing myself to be better. I think you always have to be your toughest critic. I think being able to properly analyze where you are, the progress that you're making, is an important thing.

I'm happy with the progress I've been making, but at the same time I know that I can be doing better. I know there's still more progress to be made. I know there's still more work to be done.

Q. Has your definition of success changed since joining INDYCAR?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: I don't think so. You're talking about success in INDYCAR?

Q. Yes.

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, I don't think so. To me, success in INDYCAR is winning championships, winning Indy 500s, winning races.

Yeah, I wouldn't say it's changed. I feel like that's always been my view of things.

Q. What keeps you motivated during a long season?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Man, you're kind of always just looking at the next race, right? The season comes and goes so quickly that you're kind of just always living one race to the next, just taking it one race at a time. Enjoying each one I think is important.

Once we get to kind of this stretch of the season, yes, we've got a lot of races to go, but it's not a lot of time. Very, very soon we'll be in the off-season. We'll have no more racing for, what is it, five, six months. It's just about enjoying each race, enjoying the whole experience.

Q. How instrumental and valuable has your time been with Chip Ganassi Racing, sandwiched in between two of the possible G.O.A.T.s of this sport in Alex Palou and Scott Dixon, what you have learned and can take forward throughout the rest of your career?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, I mean, if I were to list everything off, it would be a long list. We'd be here a long time. You learn so much from those guys even just sitting in the room with them.

Their experience is very valuable. They both have a lot of experience at this point, winning championships, winning races, winning Indy 500s. You're always able to take so much from all of their experience.

Q. When you're approaching a brand-new circuit, what are you personally looking for the first few laps out on track? How quickly do you need to build confidence before you can really start pushing?

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

KYFFIN SIMPSON: It kind of depends on the track. Depends on kind of the surface of the track I would say is the biggest thing. You're always looking for that on your first couple laps, how smooth it is, finding where the bumps are on street courses. There's always bumps. It's about finding where the difficult ones are and finding a good way around them.

Other than that, you're getting an eye for brake markers, visual references of where everything is. Once you get an eye for that, you're pushing. You're kind of pushing from right away, but it's kind of more like a strategic kind of pushing where you're not all out, you're just looking, pushing in safe places, let's say.

Q. With a packed schedule like this, how much communication happens between your crew about managing fatigue during these stretches? Is that something you actively talk about or is everyone in race mode until it's over?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, I'd say these kinds of stretches are definitely more tough on the crews than they are the driver. The crews are pretty flat out the entire time. The cars are going straight from one race to the next. They've got to turn them around sometimes in less than 24 hours. Yeah, it's very difficult for them. They do a great job of that at Chip Ganassi Racing, getting the crews some time to rest when there's time in between races.

Yeah, it's one of those tough things that they just have to balance. The crews, they love racing just as much as all of us. They're in for it.

Q. How would you rate your team's street course program to this point?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, I'd say we've done quite well this season on street circuits. They aren't our strongest suit probably, but we do a good job. I think we always have good race cars, maybe not necessarily the ultimate pace sometimes, but we do a great job making sure our race cars are good, we're able to perform when we get in the longer stints.

Q. With the success you've already had this season, leading into the second half, later half, what are your goals as we close out 2026?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, I mean, final goals are just continuing trying to get top 12 every qualifying, top 10 every race, ultimately trying to finish off in the top 10 in the championship.

Q. As we head into a new track this weekend, how has the prep been for the new layout? Looking at the big picture, how would you rate your work with the team and your teammates for the next year?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, it's been good. I think we've done a good job preparing for these next couple weeks, next couple new tracks that we've got coming up. I think the team's ready for them. I think we've done a good job preparing.

At this point we kind of just got to get to the track and learn what we've assumed wrong essentially, take it all in and adapt where we can.

Q. You got your first INDYCAR podium in Canada last year. Coming into the final five races of the season, do you feel a podium or your first win is a realistic goal for this final stretch?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Yeah, for sure. That's kind of been the goal all year, to get back on the podium, to get my first win. That's been the goal all year.

At different points I felt like we maybe could have gotten back on the podium, but wasn't meant to be. Yeah, I think we've got some good races coming up, some tracks that we're strong at. I don't see why not. That's going to be the goal.

Q. If you could give your younger self one piece of advice before your first INDYCAR race, what would it be?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Just take it all in. It's one of those things where you're so nervous before that first race, it's hard to keep the nerves down. But I think the best way is just take it all in, just enjoy every moment of it.

THE MODERATOR: Kyffin, what is your favorite Canadian snack when you go up?

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Man, I did actually try ketchup chips last year and they were really good. I was kind of questionable about them at first, but yeah, they were very good.

THE MODERATOR: Safe travels. Thanks for joining us this weekend. Good luck on Sunday on the streets of Markham.

KYFFIN SIMPSON: Thank you.

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