

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

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David Malukas

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Currently joined by David Malukas, third in the NTT INDYCAR SERIES points standings.

Your thoughts about the circuit for the first time.

DAVID MALUKAS: Yeah, I love it. I think it's fantastic. Super smooth. I think this probably is taking the lead on smoothest street course that we've had.

No, it's a blast. I think it's very well-designed. A lot of fun. A lot of difficult corners. From the hairpin to the last section, pit lane through turn 10, a lot of technicalities we need to fix up, but love it.

THE MODERATOR: Talk about the difficulty you've had in the group session.

DAVID MALUKAS: We've been dealing with it, especially just me and my car, just trying to build brake time. We get into an issue where tires are ready and brakes aren't. It's something that obviously we got to work on.

I just lost my temper, which I normally don't. Now we don't have a read on the reds and only a few hours to figure it out. Thankfully we got a good read from Scott and Josef.

THE MODERATOR: Open it up for questions.

Q. I assume you did simulator work. How close or different is it, especially the hairpin may be a little bit different?

DAVID MALUKAS: Well, hairpin is definitely different, for multiple reasons. Obviously a track change.

Also simulators, it's tough to picture elevation. On the sim it was flat. In real life you get a good elevation going up into the hairpin.

Other than that, the simulator was pretty spot on. Some corners feel wider and narrower than others. Supposed to be more of like a big turn. It's going to be fun, a lot of fun.

Q. With the hairpin, do you think you'll be able to go two-wide or just single-file?

DAVID MALUKAS: I mean, you go on restarts or starts. If everybody is close and you have a run, somebody gets a little bit of a snap out of turn five - still trying to figure out the course, before turn five - turn four into five, maybe there's an opportunity to get a move done.

If it is clean air running, I don't think it's big enough of a run. You can maybe do a dive bomb, but you're going to go wide when the other guy does the normal corner, so I don't know.

Q. Did you feel the bump in turn 10?

DAVID MALUKAS: Yes, on entry. There's definitely a big bump on entry. I love it. Bumps just add technicality. You're trying to figure out how to get around it from a braking perspective. It's difficult, but I think it's nice, it's good.

Q. First time here on the track. The transition to going from practice two into qualifying a bit later today, not too much time to debrief, a night to sleep on it, what is the expectation?

DAVID MALUKAS: Well, that's why I speed-walked over here. Normally Dave knows I take my time. I've been kind of hauling my butt everywhere just to make sure we can get time to debrief.

Plans for us still stay the same. On track stays the same. Off track, a little more rushed. By the time qualifying comes, we should have everything close to where we want it to be.

The difficulty is from practice one, you're being a bit more reserved, maybe 90, 80 percent pushing. You don't want to mess something up today because you will lose a lot of track time.

Q. This street course is different than every other one on the schedule. Has your approach differed in any way? How have you built up to finding the limits in the



first session?

DAVID MALUKAS: I think track progression was massive. When you look at the first few laps, there was still dust coming from my air intake into my eyes. I was blinking a lot to try to clean up my view. I would say by lap four or five, a lot of that got cleaned up, then the track grip started to build. With this new track resurfacing that they did, the grip level is so high, and you could feel it. Once you're kind of building some grip down, it is hooking heavily.

I think when you look at lap times, from practice one, by the time we get to qualifying, I think it's going to be a very big difference.

Q. With conditions much cooler to qualifying, how much more can you really grip through the corners? How much do you think we're going to see the speeds and lap times increase?

DAVID MALUKAS: It's going to be in seconds. Especially if it's cooler tonight, that's even better for us. It's going to be fast.

Q. You said this was going to be the smoothest street course. What was the street course before this that was smoothest?

DAVID MALUKAS: I feel like St. Petersburg is pretty smooth. I feel that is second place. Would have been first, but definitely second.

Q. Anything that surprised you on the track that you weren't expecting or thought would be different?

DAVID MALUKAS: Well, I mean, after the track walk, everything was a little bit more expected. I would just say almost entry of turn 10, how much speed you're actually carrying through that. I thought on the track walk it was going to be easy flat. It's on edge, for sure.

Q. A couple years ago when they went back to the streets of Detroit on Belle Isle, it was Bud's grand idea to have a dual pit lane. Now it seems to be standard operating procedure for any new street race. Do you think that's something we're going to see more of in the future?

DAVID MALUKAS: When it comes to street course designs, it works out perfectly. That's always the difference...

(Stream frozen.)

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