

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

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Pato O'Ward

Press Conference



PATO O'WARD: It's me again (laughter).

THE MODERATOR: Welcome back Pato O'Ward. It's a one-day sweep. First time that's happened since Rick Mears did it in Atlanta in 1981. Three-time winner at the Milwaukee Mile. Third win of 2026, as well.

That was a heck of a show.

PATO O'WARD: That was, man. We were determined today. We were determined to keep ourselves in the fight, keep ourselves in the opportunity of anything that came our way that we could take advantage of.

I'm super proud of everybody. Super proud of Team Chevy. It's been a huge weekend for them. Obviously very proud that I was able to bring two dubs for them. For Arrow McLaren, like I said, it's been such a challenging year at the ovals for me. This closes it out exactly how I had it in my mind coming into the weekend.

Yeah, I mean, I told you. I told you in the video. I showed Alex. Wait until I do my dump later. It's going to be a good one. On Instagram, not in the toilet (laughter).

Yeah, no, congratulations to Alex. It's unbelievable, four in a row. Already a 500 winner. Yeah, he's already got five.

THE MODERATOR: That's crazy, right?

PATO O'WARD: Pretty incredible. I was talking about giving the goat to Dixon. Maybe I deliver a baby goat to his door. He seems to be pretty fitting to that name already.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. I'm going to read these names to you: Al Unser, Mario Andretti, Bobby Unser, Dan Gurney, Johnny Rutherford, Rick Mears, now Pato O'Ward are the only drivers that have won two races in one day. To have your name attached to that list, how big a 'wow' moment is that?

PATO O'WARD: Those are heavy names. Then you hear mine, you're like, What (laughter)?

Honestly, man, I'm just writing my own story. I really don't know what's in store for my INDYCAR career. So far I've dedicated my whole life to this. I always really dedicate myself to everything that I do to the best of my ability.

I'm one hungry competitor. I love to go out there and compete and to challenge. It really is a bad day whenever we're not able to do that. I feel like this year there's been more of those than not. I feel like the best way for us this year has been to...

It's been pretty crazy. I have three podiums, but all three of them have been a win. Before the last yellow when I was behind Malukas, I was like, the two podiums I've had have both been wins. It would suck for the third one to be a second. Racing gods heard me.

David did a phenomenal job. No one was going to catch him. He was doing such a great job through traffic. He was on fire. I told him, man, this story is just about beginning for him. He's in a fantastic team. He's an amazing driver. He's great on and off the track.

Whenever they start raining on him, he's going to be like, they are very sweet, much sweeter now.

Q. To capitalize on that moment, had it gone green, were you concerned you might not have an opportunity to get up to Malukas?

PATO O'WARD: Oh, no. I was just kind like, I can't really get too creative here. Like, really I just had to let something come to me. That's what ultimately gave me the opportunity.

I've had that issue, what David had. I also lost a race. It sucks.

Q. Should you just save your money and wait a couple years and see if you should just give the big goat to Alex?



PATO O'WARD: The big goat?

Q. If he wins two more, he's probably a bigger goat than Scott, right?

PATO O'WARD: I will first get two goats (smiling).

Q. Can you repeat what you did today enough to catch Alex and beat him for a title?

PATO O'WARD: No, he already won the championship (smiling).

Q. In future years.

PATO O'WARD: Oh, yeah. If I keep doing that every race, for sure he's got no chance. I'll tell him, Enjoy looking at my rear wing. But right now I've been looking at his.

The guy lives rent free in everyone's head in the paddock. He's raised that bar, him and Ganassi. That 10 car has been unbelievable. Must be nice. One day we'll get there. One deal we'll be there. It will be soon.

Q. When you say 'one day,' do you think it's attainable in 2027 or is it something, refresh, new car is going to be the best opportunity for someone else to win?

PATO O'WARD: I think the biggest opportunity is going to be the new car. But that doesn't mean we're going to stop pushing this current package. They're going to keep pushing as well. Every step they take, every step we take, we keep pushing the boundaries. I feel like we're always a little bit of a step behind because it has taken a little bit to get up there.

They deliver and they execute. He doesn't have the best car everywhere. Like, the guy also does some pretty magical things in it. He's obviously human. He will make mistakes just like we all do.

But the amount of times that he does make mistakes, he could always back it up with a win. Those are truly the times that give you the faults of having an issue or having a crash or whatever. Going into a weekend, we can back it up with a win, we'll kind of rebalance ourselves into this championship.

For us, it's just the bad days are really bad. My great days have been fantastic. My good days have been, like, good solid top fives. But my bad days have really sucked.

Q. You mentioned three podiums, three wins. How surreal is that? What do you make of this season as a whole?

PATO O'WARD: I mean, expect the unexpected. The whole year just been waiting, waiting, waiting. It just never kind of came to us and just kept slipping here and there.

Coming into this weekend knowing there were a hundred points on the table, having a good car here was crucial to having a shot at second in the championship. I don't even know where I'm at right now, but pretty sure I go into Laguna with a proper shot at being second in the championship again, which I did last year.

I love that opportunity. I'd love to end it like that and kind of just pick it back up because, like I said, the rest of the year I felt a little bit of a lost puppy really.

Q. Since you brought up that Twitter video with you in the bullpen.

PATO O'WARD: I just got to crop the pictures. I got that one, that one, another one over here (laughter).

Q. Part of the reason he was reacting that way is you said sarcastically, I'm going to win both races.

PATO O'WARD: No. I meant it. What? I mean it. Oh, my God.

No, yeah, I came into this weekend like I have a good car, I can win, I can win both of them. It's just phenomenal that we got that on tape. Boy backing up with the facts, you know. Backing it up (smiling).

Q. What you guys did this weekend, knowing two teammates who are going to be coming into your doors next year, how excited are you to rebuild that oval program?

PATO O'WARD: There's been plenty of switches and changes in my Arrow McLaren career, INDYCAR career. I think these guys are going to embed perfectly. They're professional. Their knowledge is going to be an up-leveling to our program.

They're also good guys, good guys in and out of the track. That's important for the chemistry. That's important to build an atmosphere and a quality team that ultimately is going to raise everyone's game.

I cannot wait to have dinner.

THE MODERATOR: Sausage? Cheeses? You're in Milwaukee.

PATO O'WARD: A nice burger. That would be nice.



