

NTT INDYCAR SERIES

News Conference

Saturday, September 5, 2026

David Salters

Kelvin Fu

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Good morning. Beginning the day by celebrating Honda as the HRC 2026 champions here of the manufacturers between Honda and, of course, Chevrolet.

All told it is their 12th INDYCAR SERIES manufacturers championship, sixth in the last nine years. Since Honda's start in the series, they've now powered 22 drivers championships.

With tomorrow's season finale, Honda leads the 2026 season with 10 wins, 13 NTT P1 awards. We'd be remiss if we didn't mention that it was Honda that powered Felix Rosenqvist to his Indianapolis 500 win.

David Salters, the president of Honda Racing Corporation USA. And Kelvin Fu is also here, he is the HRC U.S. Vice President.

David, congratulations to you. It's a season that began with a multi-year commitment to INDYCAR and the NTT INDYCAR SERIES. Ends now with another championship, with really powerful results all season long. How would you describe this season for yourself personally and for HRC?

DAVID SALTERS: The personal thing doesn't come into it. Thank you for the kind introduction and the rapturous applause for Kelvin and a little bit for me (smiling).

As always, it's a thank you. It's a thank you for the marvelous men and women at HRC. We have the privilege of sitting here, but as always there's real people doing real work. We have amazing real people doing our work, a whole team of them. We work as a team. We're privileged to lead that, Kelvin and I.

Yeah, just thank you to our men and women and thank you to the teams that we work with. Thank you to the brilliant drivers. Thank you to INDYCAR. Thank you to the fans. Very kindly thank you for everybody here that writes about it and promotes it. Lots of thank yous really.

You learn to be very humble in this game. You lose more than you win typically. When you have some success, thank the people who deliver that success.

THE MODERATOR: To that point, Kelvin, such a competitive series. It gets more competitive as the years go on. What does it mean to you and the team to have something like this at the end of the season?

KELVIN FU: It's been a fantastic year. As you said, we signed for a multi-year with INDYCAR. I think congratulations to INDYCAR, right? Everything this year has been fabulous. 110th running, most exciting finish I think any of us have ever seen. DC was amazing. It's something we're going to remember for the rest of our lives and also with DC, too.

That's kind of the backdrop to everything that's happened for us. The team has come back. We work really well with all of our teams. All have scored manufacturing points action all podium'd. It's not just us working in HRC in Valencia, and we work hard on advancing, but it's also working closely with all our teams, Ganassi, Andretti, Rahal, Dale Coyne and Meyer Shank to try to get better at every single track.

THE MODERATOR: Five teams, everyone led laps, podium'd. That speaks to that. It's something you guys are pretty proud of.

KELVIN FU: Yeah, I think it's something where obviously some teams are stronger in street courses than ovals. Every team has had a chance to step up and show what they can do. It's really a tribute to how they're working internally. Also working with us. But we have to give credit where credit is due.

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

Q. I'm from New Zealand. Been around the series for 25 years. Colleagues that have worked with HRC over the years like Steve Gauff (phonetic). The thing that amazes me when I see you in the paddock is the smile on your face continuously and the passion you give



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your team members. My question is, when you wake up in the morning, what motivates you?

DAVID SALTERS: Fear (smiling). It's true. I think in this you don't want to let your colleagues down. Steve Gauff (phonetic), people like that you mentioned. These are people that you respect enormously. We're fortunate enough to have a whole company like that. I don't want to let them down.

Actually when I wake up in the morning, it's like, What am I going to do to make sure that I'm at the same level of all the people that we work with?

I'm afraid when I wake up in the morning 'cause it's a lot to live up to, seriously. I think you'll find a lot of people in our position. Some people say the excitement of winning or the fear of failure. It's the fear of failure that motivates you.

That then you have to turn into a positive, otherwise it would eat you alive. You have two choices, don't you: you can be miserable or happy. Might as well be happy.

We also have a responsibility to motivate our people. You sort of want the boss to look cheerful and positive. All those things go together.

We're very privileged to do what we do. Amazingly privileged to do what we do. We get to work with amazing people. That's probably what puts the smile on my face really, we get to work with amazing people and do amazing things.

Q. Every time I've seen you, there's always been the smile. Just to see that motivation that comes from the pair of you down the food chain.

KELVIN FU: I'm still waiting for the smile (laughter).

Q. I've seen it in your corporate videos. It's the motivation that a lot of companies need to strive for.

DAVID SALTERS: Thank you for saying that.

The other thing, as well, we're in the entertainment business, aren't we? We are here. That's the lovely thing about INDYCAR and racing in the U.S., is we're here to entertain fans. The most important thing we have is the fans.

When we do these things, it's fun. So let's transmit a bit of fun. We don't want to be super corporate. We want to be normal, and human and fun.

That's the thing with Honda. Honda is weird in a good way.

You see that with all the amazing cars, the things we do, crazy stuff we do. It's nice to transmit that, as well.

There's a real respect for individual inside Honda. We all look after each other. If we can transmit that to fans in a fun way in setting like this, why not?

Q. Curious, when you reflect on Scott Dixon and what he's done for your program over the last 20 years, with a few years that weren't Honda, what are your thoughts about him closing out this chapter with you?

KELVIN FU: I think Scott's one of the greatest, right? I think we're just thankful having the privilege of being able to race with him, work with him. He is the ultimate professional. Our engineers love working with him on the DIL and also in the race car.

I think just having him in a Honda for I think the majority of his career is something we're just grateful we've had the opportunity to work with him on.

As he goes forward, he'll be a competitor. We'll always have an immense amount of respect for everything he's done, everything he's going to do in the future.

DAVID SALTERS: Kelvin said that very well.

As a young engineer in my short trousers, I came here in I think it was 2001 with a different manufacturer actually and PacWest I believe. There was some young guy. My first time coming with the laptop, plugging into a car. There was some young guy from New Zealand testing. That was Mr. Dixon.

I have a particular affinity. Every time I come here and I come through those gates, I smile because it's the first time I ever came to a racetrack. I believe Scott was testing.

Turned out to be one of the greatest ever in INDYCAR. Now he's the G.O.A.T. Scott is Scott. He is unbelievably good as a racing driver. But if you look at his motivation and his drive, you can see why.

We've had the privilege of having some of that rub off on us. But actually I have a personal thing with my little laptop plugging in, there was this kid from New Zealand. Every time I come through the gates here once or twice a year, it makes me smile. And I don't have short trousers anymore, unfortunately (smiling).

THE MODERATOR: Did Scott have the blond tips on his hair?

DAVID SALTERS: No. I think all our hair looked a bit



different then.

Q. Do you anticipate having the same number of full-time teams in the series next year?

KELVIN FU: I think we're keeping all of our contract negotiations quiet right now. It will come out when the time's right.

Q. Kelvin, maybe you remember a short chat in Milwaukee last week when I asked you if there is a possibility to build an engine in the future as a flat engine. In the meantime I look deeper in the technology, there are a lot of advantages. When you look in the history of motor racing, Porsche won four Le Mans with a flat engine. Subaru, the champion of rally. Do you think one day we'll see a Honda in INDYCAR as a flat engine design?

KELVIN FU: One of the fun things about INDYCAR is everybody wants to talk about possibilities. I think there's a lot of discussion about what could be. But I think we all, especially here representing Honda, we also have to represent things that are relevant to, like, our company.

Honda in some ways, we're a V6 company, right? We want to have electrified, we want to have V6 technology that's kind of relevant to what we have on the road, too.

I think anything's possible, but I think we also have to be realistic about how do we represent our company the best. I think that's kind of our position on engine technology and what's possible out there.

Q. (No microphone.)

KELVIN FU: We don't have boxer engines in production.

Q. With the Acura GTP program exiting after this year, the branding transitioning to INDYCAR, how important will that branding be next year and going forward?

KELVIN FU: I think that's still in discussions right now. I think it was exciting to see Acura represented at Long Beach, at the 500, Mid-Ohio, and DC. That's something that Chuck and the team in American Honda will look at. It's great to see Acura.

INDYCAR has a lot of horsepower when it comes to publicity and eyes. I think Acura wants to take advantage of that.

At this point we don't have anything to announce.

Q. David, obviously you guys extended your contracts

in INDYCAR at the start of the season. We've seen the new car on track. What makes you really believe in the long-term potential of INDYCAR, what the future maybe looks like for the series?

DAVID SALTERS: That's a good question.

I think the proof, you can see it, can't you? Believing is one thing, but actually you can see where INDYCAR is going if you look at this season. We were averagely a million, now it's almost averagely two million. Significantly more than Formula 1. It's starting to catch up to NASCAR. Well done FOX, well done INDYCAR.

That drives everything. That's more people watching, more fans. Like I said before, the fans is why we do this. So that's awesome.

If you look at the new car, in person it looks awesome. Then what's under the hood, there's going to be new power train, new hybrid system. Then also the way we go about using that car. We have a charter. We can get more involved with how we run it.

Honda does it to develop as people in these technologies, so it has those ingredients. But it comes down to the product. The racing is superb. The Indy 500 this year I think from start to finish was one of the best ever Indy 500s. There was stuff happening everywhere. You're on the edge of your seat everywhere. That's a proof point.

Washington was unbelievable. I've been doing this for 30 years. I've never really seen anything like that. Like the fly pass was the best-ever fly pass that's happened in sport. I think that's a fact.

So look where we are going. You don't have to extrapolate, you can see it. So super, super optimistic. There's just all these proof points. Everything is growing.

Can there be things that can be a little bit better? Well, of course. But actually if you look at where it is, what's happening, where it's going...

Just the product, it's entertaining. You watch a race, you don't really know who is going to win. People talk about the overtaking. It's every lap. The whole thing is growing. It's brilliant. The proof points from this year are there.

I think the reason to be optimistic you can see now, and it will only get better in the future, as far as I can see.

CHUCK SCHIFSKY: My question is quiet simple. Yesterday we had a beautiful celebration of the renaming or naming of the corkscrew after Alex Zanardi. He played

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a pretty pivotal role in the beginning success of the Honda program in INDYCAR. Can you comment on what that means and what heritage means overall to the Honda INDYCAR program.

DAVID SALTERS: Again, I'm old, older. Actually I'm 58%, apparently (smiling).

The heritage, that is Honda. Honda is a racing company from pretty much day one and has used racing throughout its company life to develop its people and its technology.

The thing with Honda, you see that heritage here in the U.S. It goes back to 30 years. So we've been in INDYCAR, CART racing for 30 years, making history.

Alex was a legend, wasn't he? What happened here is legendary. You build this history. There's not many companies that have that actually. We're incredibly proud.

One of the things I'm proudest of is to represent Honda in racing. Then the season we've had this year is pretty good. Had worse. I mean, it's astonishing. But the lovely thing is you're adding to Honda's history. We're seeing the new Alex add to Honda's history.

I think Mr. Zanardi was a legend, and everything he stood for and everything he achieved. But Honda has been associated with that, legitimately racing at the sharp end, good days and bad days.

I think the point is we're very fortunate to celebrate that history and represent that history and keep that history going.

We resigned with INDYCAR for a reason. We love INDYCAR racing. We've kept saying it. We've been doing it for 30 years. I sincerely hope we can do it for another 30. I don't see why we wouldn't. That is Honda's DNA inside. It is a racing company. It's won in F1. It has won in Moto GP. It has won the Indy 500. It has won all this stuff. Motorcross, et cetera.

We celebrate Alex Zanardi. But there's a lot of Honda history tied up in that. What we achieved this year is down to the men and women of Honda. You see that core. There's 300 people that are distributed in California, in Indy, in Ohio that have Honda badges and 401(k)s, all that stuff, all work that Honda does. We're enormously privileged to celebrate things like that.

What we're seeing now is more history being made with Alex Palou. We're watching greatness. All of us should be amazingly proud and privileged to see the history being made now.

Very proud for that.

THE MODERATOR: The beauty of yesterday was not only did it celebrate Alex Zanardi, but there were current champions, former champions. They all drove for Honda at one point in their career and were very successful for you guys leading those cars to victories and championships. It was a fitting tribute I think for Alex yesterday. It's great to know that corkscrew is always going to have his name associated with it.

Congratulations again.

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