

Indianapolis Motor Speedway Media Conference

Tuesday, January 19, 2021

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Jimmie McMillian

J. Douglas Boles

Beth Paretta

Simona de Silvestro

Press Conference



Race For Equality & Change announced last July. If you've been following this, it's the latest step in a series of really groundbreaking events over the last several months covering any number of sports around the world.

Ladies and gentlemen, first things first, turn your attention towards the monitors for a brief first look at Paretta Autosport.

(Video played.)

THE MODERATOR: Good morning, everyone. Welcome to the world famous Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Great to see some familiar faces back here at the world's greatest race course. It's a good day here at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Before we introduce everyone up on stage we do want to recognize Roger Penske. Good morning to you, sir. Chairman of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway is here. Up on stage, on the far right, we say good morning to Jimmie McMillian who is the chief diversity officer of Penske Entertainment. In the middle, Beth Paretta, long time automotive and motor sports executive and certainly no stranger to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Another no stranger to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, J. Douglas Boles is here, the president of IMS. And joining us via Zoom all the way from Switzerland, we say good morning and/or good afternoon to Simona de Silvestro, a veteran of the NTT IndyCar Series, who appeared in five Indianapolis 500s after being named the rookie of the year back in 2010.

We are here this morning to witness the launch of a brand new race team in the NTT IndyCar Series, which will begin its journey at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway 500, the 105th running this coming May. And this team will only grow from that exciting race, perhaps with an eye on a full-time ride. We'll see what, we'll get Beth's thoughts on that, the 2022 season of the NTT IndyCar Series. It will be known as Paretta Autosport, with Beth Paretta as the team owner, part of the female-owned and managed race team integrating female members to ensure opportunities on the competition side of the team, along with operations and administrative roles.

Team Penske will provide technical support, with Simona returning to the NTT IndyCar Series to drive the No. 16 Chevrolet-powered entry. All told, it becomes yet another initiative of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway and IndyCar's

THE MODERATOR: We'll start with Beth. Congratulations. What an awesome day. A long time coming for you. There was a similar announcement some five years ago for a team that was entitled Grace Autosport, but it's all coming to fruition now. What a journey for you, Beth.

BETH PARETTA: Thank you, Dave. Thanks to everyone here and thanks to everyone on Zoom. Yeah, first, I am grateful for the opportunity to officially announce the start of this program. It has been a long time coming, a lot of hours, a lot of flights, a lot of meetings, but we are here. There's been a lot of talk lately about representation and that is a very real thing. We hear about the importance of role models, examples, mentors, for people to have the opportunity to see themselves in the women on the grid and in pit lane.

Just a bit of background about why I'm doing this, why we feel it's necessary, why I have been driven to put this together. I've worked with women engineers who only decided to follow the engineering path after they saw another woman in that role. I'm guilty of that myself. I only pursued the job as an automotive executive after I saw another woman in a role that I thought that maybe I could do one day. And -- even though I've seen examples of men in those roles for years.

But change is happening and there is some momentum by we're sort of able to create opportunities for women by shining the spotlight on their stories, because the way that people identify and feel a connection to what they see is innate and we can't change that, but we can change the focus and we can shine that spotlight on the members of this team and their stories, and what will that mean, what will that do.

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Maybe some of those girls watching from home can become fans that might not have ever thought that something like this was possible for them. Maybe some of them will be inspired to join us. Others might be captivated by the idea of racing and perhaps pursue education in STEM and ultimately choose a career in a related field. All of those outcomes would be success. Let's be clear. There are women in racing. We all know each other. And in the past several years there have been, there's been some progress with programs to get more female racing drivers on the grid, from all female driving lineups in sports cars, the W Series, these are all great strides.

But we believe that there's a lot more to do and even more opportunity. A race team is just that, a team. Many people with varied roles, all critical to getting the car on the grid and running at its best. When the Race For Equality & Change was announced, I was so pleased. I hoped that it meant that there was a real commitment and investment in our collective future, as race fans, as racers, and as a series.

IndyCar is competitive, exciting racing, with a talented field and great venues and a very loyal fan base. But it should also be said that the IndyCar paddock has the most women working in all levels, on teams, in the series itself, and at the track, and that should be celebrated. This has always been a welcoming paddock, to me and to other women.

But now, under the stewardship of Roger Penske and the management here, it is just getting stronger. So, after the announcement for Race For Equality & Change, I called Roger, as you do, and asked if we could talk. But the reality is we started talking about this years ago. I've had the good fortune, having worked with Mr. Penske since 2007, first on the automotive side of things with Aston Martin, and then when I was at FCA as the director of SRT and motor sports. We were partners with Team Penske and won the NASCAR Cup Championship in 2012, which was actually the first Cup Championship for team Penske in NASCAR.

So last year, we sat down and he described the great work that they have been doing here at IMS and with the IndyCar series. I talked about the foundational work that I've been doing these past several years and how I would like to now, the work I've been do you think is off the track, with schools, educational partners, museums, working on curriculum to tie what we do at the track to what kids are learning and to inspire them to pursue educational pathways in STEM that could lead to robust career tracks.

When we sat down, I said that I would like to now bring it full circle and get back to the track to promote gender

equality. So with that, I'm proud to say that Paretta Autosport will have a technical alliance with Team Penske, will start with the 2021 Indy 500 with plans to grow from there.

I also reached out, soon after, to Simona de Silvestro, and learned quickly that she was aligned with my goals, our goals. And with her remarkable talent and experience here at Indy, it was an easy choice to invite her on board. What's different here is this is a full program. We will strive to incorporate more women into the team. I've always believed that with aptitude, interest, and the right attitude, the rest can be learned. We all started somewhere. We want Paretta Autosport to be the place to welcome, train, and support professional growth in all facets of the team. Eventually we hope it will be a team of women running the car, and that can and will inspire others to become mechanics, to become engineers, to become drivers, to become team owners. Racing is for all of us, and working together we all win.

Before I hand it back to Dave, I need to thank a few people. First and foremost, I want to thank Roger Penske, Mark Miles, and Jimmie McMillian for their vision and commitment to IndyCar and the Race For Equality & Change. To Bud Danker and Jonathan Gibson for their support in the business side to help put this all together. Thank you to Doug Boles. You've always offered support to me and this program and I thank you for that. And your tie matches the color palette.

A special thank you to Chevrolet, Mark Reuss and Jim Campbell. They have valued this mission from the start and I can't wait to hear our Chevy-powered IndyCar power up for the first time at testing.

I want to also thank Porsche for allowing Simona to join us for the month of May and more.

And one last thing, I'm sitting here, and that's my name right there, but I'm forever grateful to Stacy, Christian, Paul, John, Ron, Linda, Heather, and Barbara. You've helped me so much and I can't thank you enough. So it is my name, but there's a lot of people standing behind me and with me today.

THE MODERATOR: Great. Awesome. We do have a shot of the car, if I'm not mistaken. If we can go ahead and put that up again up on the monitors. Tell us a little bit about that, Beth.

BETH PARETTA: Well, you see the logo. I have to say that the person that has helped me with the graphics is my very best friend from my whole life, and she did a lot of the work that you see, kind of with the branding, and that, we



always do a livery. In fairness, as we grow and add sponsors, that livery will change. But that shows you a little bit of sort of the look and feel and where, how we're starting out.

THE MODERATOR: Awesome. Once again, joining us via Zoom, again, we say hello to Simona de Silvestro.

Simona, another shot now at the Indy 500 in a much different way. How exciting is this for you?

SIMONA DE SILVESTRO: Oh, well, yeah, thank you. And, yeah, Hi from cold Switzerland. For me, it's quite special to be back at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, especially virtually, and I can't wait to come during the month of May.

I'm very happy, actually, that today is the day that I'm finally able to announce that I'm joining Paretta Autosport. It's quite a special day. I think it's something that I've worked for my entire life, to get a proper shot at this race, and I think it's super exciting that it's finally happening. And when Beth actually called me a few months ago and told me about this opportunity, and I think literally an hour later, I was on a Zoom call with Roger Penske and Bud Danker. It was quite surreal, that it all happened so quickly, and for me to really come back to the Speedway with a constellation like this, with the association with Team Penske, it's really, to be honest, as a driver, a dream come true and I think it's something that is really special.

I think it's going to be the best opportunity yet with everyone involved believing in the same goals. So I think we can be really successful when we come in May. And I really hope that along this journey we will inspire more women to follow their dreams and also create some pretty cool opportunities for them to join and for them to follow this pretty amazing journey.

I would really want to thank, actually, Beth, Roger Penske, Bud Danker, for choosing me to steer this entry, and I know it will be successful. And also from my part, I really have to thank Porsche for giving me the green light to participate in this iconic race. So, yeah, I'm super excited, and, yeah, I can't wait to actually be for real back on the starting grid soon enough.

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations. Great stuff. Let's also bring in Jimmie McMILLIAN now. And it's certainly an important day, none more so than IndyCar and IMS Race For Equality & Change that was announced last July.

Jimmie, what does this day mean?

JIMMIE MCMILLIAN: Thank you, Dave. First of all, I want

to congratulate Beth, and I want to congratulate Simona on this very important day. Just sitting here, I can't help but stop smiling and feeling the buzz and the excitement. We have always had women in our sport. We have had a long history of successful drivers, nine women, who have raced at the Indianapolis 500. We have had women who owned cars.

But I've also seen the disappointment from years that we have not had women that competed and I can tell that you this is super exciting as I look out amongst what I know and see every day at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway and the NTT IndyCar Series, which is not just women in the sport, but leaders. We are led by superstar phenomenal women every single day. It's one of the things that I probably hear the most. When people come in the building they think is a male-dominated support. I take orders from women all the time around here, as many of us do, right, Doug? And so, I think that needs to be reflected on the track and this is a powerful moment that matches our goals for the Race For Equality & Change when we're talking about not just walking it, but actually walking what we talk, living what we preach, and creating the opportunity for people to actually be able to see something and know that they can be it.

And that's what I think Beth and Paretta Autosport represents. We know that what we did with Force Indy was create a pipeline for folks to come in as engineers, as drivers, as an owner, but also in other areas, from HR to marketing, to sales, to learn how to run and operate a team under the very best in Roger Penske and under his tutelage and the tutelage of Tim Cindric and the folks at Penske Motorsports.

We're going to create that same opportunity now for women in the sport with Paretta Autosport. That's very important because once we get that pipeline flowing, I think we won't be able to stop it. I'm looking forward to not only seeing a team on the grid, but seeing the team compete. I think this sends a message. When we see Simona go out and try to qualify, there will be a buzz, there will be an excitement, there will be a part of all of us, whether you're a man or a woman, that will want her to win, that will want her to be successful because of what it represents. I have a mother, I have cousins, I have a number of women in my life that I look up to and I know the strong person they are, I know some of them can drive better than me, and I know some -- I believe that Simona's going to prove that she can win the Indianapolis 500, and I'm going to be there cheering for her.

So this is a super special moment and I want to thank Roger Penske again. I want to thank Bud Danker and Johnathan and the entire team, Mark Miles, Doug Boles. This



Race For Equality & Change, this journey that we have all been on has been made all the better by the fact that our leadership is 1000 percent supportive and energized and moving towards that every single day. This is a real diversity initiative. This is not pretend or fake. This is something we can all believe in and cheer for.

THE MODERATOR: Quick reminder for our reporters. We're going to take questions here. Please head to the standing microphone to do that.

First things first though, bring in Doug Boles. And of course, women have been racing here since the great Janet Guthrie in 1977. To own a team certainly is a different level. You can't underscore the importance of something like that.

J. DOUGLAS BOLES: No, you can't. And congratulations, Beth, again, and Simona. You know, I sit here and I'm, like Jimmie, I have a huge smile on my face. I love days like this when you get to be surrounded by really passionate people who love our sport and in particular, passionate people who love our sport who are trailblazing, and this is a trailblazing day and I'm really excited to be part of it. Women have been involved at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, as Beth alluded to, for a long time. In fact, we have had an owner, female owner, dating back to the '20s. And then the last 25 years, it's really been the rule, not the exception, that a female's competed in the Indianapolis 500.

But this takes it to another level. Here we're talking about not just a driver, but we're talking about a driver and owner, but we're not just talking about a driver and owner. Beth's vision, and I think our vision, is this gives folks an opportunity, women an opportunity to get involved in the sport beyond the driver and beyond the owner piece and I can't wait to watch that come to fruition.

As I sat here today, and even yesterday, thinking about this announcement this morning, it's the beginning of a new year, it's an opportunity to reflect on what happened last year, and anticipate what's coming up in the new year. A lot of things have happened over the last year. Roger Penske took stewardship of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway on January 6th. Shortly thereafter, we had an Xfinity car testing on our road course and we made an announcement that the Pennzoil 150 was going to be held on the road course. That's turned into now the Cup cars and the IndyCar weekend in August.

We talked about Force Indy announcement, which has been an awful lot of fun to watch since last July. The Force Indy team now is testing, testing before Christmas, they have tested after Christmas, getting ready to compete here

at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, and Beth and Jimmie both talked about this. It's important for our fan base to grow it, that if we're going to be more diverse as a fan base, we need to be more diverse as a series and as a race. We want people to know that when they come to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, that they see people like them competing and owning cars here at the race, and that's one of the really, really exciting things about this opportunity.

What I'm looking forward to this year is just that passion that you see from Beth and you see from Jimmie, but that really starts with Roger Penske and the entire Penske Entertainment organization. This is going to be an awful lot of fun. I can't wait to watch you guys compete on the racetrack. I can't wait to see Simona back here, our Rookie of the Year from 2010. Those of you that followed the NTT IndyCar Series over the last several years, you're very familiar with Simona de Silvestro. There is nobody better in a race car than Simona. She's a fierce competitor, and with the right equipment, she can win the Indianapolis 500.

THE MODERATOR: With that, we'll turn things over to the reporters that are in person here at the Speedway. If have you a question, go ahead and make your way over to the standing microphone located to the right.

While we wait for that to happen. Simona, just back to you quickly. 2015 was your last 500, how much have you been ready to get going again here at IMS?

SIMONA DE SILVESTRO: Yeah, I'm really excited. You know, I've, the Indy 500 has always been the race that, if it was possible, that I wanted to do. And to be honest, to come back, yeah, how we are now, with this team, with Beth making this happen, I think it's really cool and I really think we have all the ingredients to be super successful. And to be honest, I can't wait for the next few months to go by so we can get started.

THE MODERATOR: The count down is on. There's no question about that. Let's go ahead for questions.

Q. Congratulations, Beth. This is quite the script already and we await a huge finale, if not this year, in the coming years, so great work.

In the beginning when you had this vision, how high of a mountain did it seem? Bring us back to the early days of this goal.

BETH PARETTA: Yeah, it was quite a mountain. You have an idea you set forward, and in fairness, it's definitely a story of just not giving up, not taking no for an answer.



Sometimes you have, back in 2016, so in '15, I announced the intention to run in 2016 and after announcement set off on putting everything together, and we actually were very, very close. I had an engine deal from Chevrolet. I had a partner, a team partner, that we were going to run with. In fairness, Roger and his team were offering some support on, some logistic support, and ultimately the team that I was going to work with, the terms of the deal changed, and so then I had to set out to then find somebody else to work with and then look for different other equipment.

And it came down to the wire and it was four weeks before the Indy 500 and I had to take the tough decision to pull the entry because it wasn't right. The vehicle, the car that we had was not raceworthy, really. I mean, could we have maybe put it together down to the wire? Maybe. But I wasn't willing to do that because there's extra scrutiny on a program like this. Everybody's watching, and you bear that responsibility.

Although I had to take that tough decision, that's what happens in racing. And if you're doing it the right way, you make those tough decisions and make those calls.

So once that was done, I took a little bit of time off and then really was right back in it within six months on the educational side of things because that really was the driver of: How do we tie what we do every day to create this sort of pipeline of fans and make the most of it? It's such a wonderful platform. Racing is applied STEM. It's STEM in action, so there's so many things that we can do with it. And that's a thing that I'm sure many other racing teams are finding, that's very appealing to partners. Sponsor partners really like that connection and so that's what I was working on, sort of -- and the funny thing is, it's very, to put a car on a grid as a one-off, sure, you can do that. It's not easy, but people can do that. But to build a program takes a lot more time and I was more interested in a program that was sustainable than an entry.

Q. A follow-up to that: Was there something, then, that made this click? Was there something that just said, yes, now it's time, now is the time to do this?

BETH PARETTA: Yeah, I mean, seeing the commitment from the Series and from Roger and his team, it was, maybe we were early six years ago, because I had conversations with many people, people, some people instantly got it. It clicked. Some people, it didn't. It clicked with Roger from the beginning. It clicked with Mark Miles. It clicked with everybody that's, honestly, in this room.

But I think seeing the momentum last year, last year was such a difficult year with everything, with COVID, so that kind of put a monkey wrench into a lot of things for

everybody. But when I saw these sort of announcements happening, it was thinking, like, okay, maybe this is definitely the place where we would fit best, and also, in fairness, be able to elevate the programs the other programs that they have, like the announcement with Force Indy. These are all real. It's, they're not a slogan. They're real change, so I think it was really seeing that and seeing the momentum.

And in fairness too, these are the things that are visible, but when I sat down and talked with Roger and the rest of the team, they're doing so much here at IMS and throughout the Series that you don't see, that has to do with diversity and equality, and they're very real things. And that should be applauded too. So when you see that somebody's approaching something so holistically and making, and having real action items, there's nothing better than that.

Q. How would you describe the importance of inclusion to little boys and little girls who are watching what you're doing right now?

BETH PARETTA: Well, I think, it's funny, I mean, I didn't grow up in a racing family. I grew up as a racing fan and I could not have dreamed this for myself. I'm at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway right now. I didn't grow up with parents that took me here every May. But it's that idea that if you find something that you are, that you love and that you work hard at, there are -- and maybe the result isn't a race team, but there's somewhere that you can fit. There's somewhere for you. And from the very beginning, and yes, is, my focus is on that sort of 10-year-old girl because you can affect a kid's trajectory of what they want to be when they grow up from 10 to 12. And even though I work, we'll have female engineers, the reality is young boys are still going to get the same lesson. The girls will see that it's a female engineer; the boys will get the lesson. So it's really for all kids.

But the idea of working hard and sort of following your passion can lead really in amazing -- if you're open to the opportunity, your life can take turns that you wouldn't have ever scripted for yourself and I think that's sort of the end story here.

But I do, I have always had this idea of the opening ceremonies of the Indy 500 are some of the most, it's, the rich pageantry of the 500 is amazing. The energy here, if you ever have the opportunity to be here in person, it's like nothing else. There are 300,000 people here. There's just this energy. And when you think about, so I grew up watching it on TV, right, and so there's those iconic things that we all are familiar with and there's that lineup of the starting grid and that when the teams are out there early on

and there's that sort of swooping crane shot and the idea of seeing a line of women with matching uniforms, okay, you might say that's cool, but to a 10-year-old girl watching that from home, it hits differently.

Q. I know it's early, but I'm sure you've talked to potential partners, sponsors. What has been the response so far?

BETH PARETTA: We have had some amazing conversations already. Obviously, it's a little tough before you announce because your conversations are a little bit more brief, so we're grateful for today because now the cat is out of the bag. But we have had some great conversations and we will announce sort of where that's going. But yeah, it's already, already happening, which is great.

Q. This is absolutely fantastic news for you guys and for the sport in general. How beneficial do you think it's going to be for you to have the likes of Team Penske kind of behind you in terms of this entry with their kind of success at Indy and that kind of thing?

BETH PARETTA: Well, they have won 18 times. It goes beyond just the technical support. I mean, even just in the past few months just sort of, in fairness, Mr. Penske has always been a bit of a mentor and I think a lot of people will say that, those who know him. And he's been very generous with just ideas and thoughts, and that is sort of that intangible stuff that I am extremely grateful for.

But the technical partnership, to just be able to not come in completely cold and have that, sort of that shared understanding of, and of course, it's great for Indy, but as you expand, to understand how to approach races at other tracks too. It's invaluable.

Q. First question, Beth, since you're going to be involved with Team Penske will your shop initially be down here in North Carolina?

BETH PARETTA: That's a great question. Yes, we are starting out close to Team Penske in North Carolina for the sake of logistics, yes.

Q. And also, the benefit of having, I mean, Simona's kind of been part of this package for so long that you know that you could always depend on her when you finally got this deal together, granted there were probably some obstacles you had to overcome, but how valuable is that to know that she was on board from the very beginning?

BETH PARETTA: Well, that makes it a lot, certainly a lot

easier. It also helps it when we're talking to partners because we can point to her experience here. And in fairness, too, beyond IndyCar, she's been racing full-time in other series and, again, as a factory Porsche driver. So she's certainly a very accomplished driver behind the wheel, and so whenever have you that story to tell it makes things a lot easier.

In fairness, too, like I say, the alignment to what we're doing here, that's key. When you have the privilege to build a team, I always say that you're lucky if you can find -- really the first goal is to find people who have sort of the same approach to things, the same attitude, and that makes for winning combinations. I think that as Simona and I have gotten to know each other, it works really well, and I think that that's, that always, that will contribute to our success on the track.

Q. A question for Simona. Welcome back. You've been out of site, but never out of mind. You talk to a lot of the race fans every year around Indy 500 time. And on social media and everywhere else when they talk about drivers that could run Indy, your name is always one of the big names that's always talked about. Just how important has that been to you, because you really made quite an impression during your time that you did run over here full time.

SIMONA DE SILVESTRO: Yeah, it's quite special, and like you mentioned, I've seen those Tweets about my name getting put in there and I think it feels really special in the sense because that means people really saw what I was able to do on the racetrack and I think that's pretty cool, for sure.

Maybe now it took a bit of time to come back, but I think 10 years ago when I was there and kind of making my stride, I think I've grown quite a lot as a driver, and especially IMS I think has really built me especially from my character side as well. I've had lots of highs and pretty big lows at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

So I think to come back like this, I think it's something I think that is all coming together. To get the right opportunity, I think this is the one, to be honest. And yeah, I'm super excited and I think that I'm pretty grateful that the fans are welcoming me back with open arms and hopefully we can put on a really good show when we're on track out there.

Q. Question for Beth. Congratulations. Had a question, if you were to go all the way back to like your Dodge SRT the marketing days of the racing program and all of that, would you ever have thought that you would be here at IMS announcing your own IndyCar



team that will be racing in the Indy 500?

BETH PARETTA: Yes and no. I think that I'm a racing fan and I have been -- I was that kid like in the grandstands -- and finding a place for myself in racing is sort of always seemed to be where I would go, maybe what my destiny would be. You talk to anybody that's known me for a long time and none of this is surprising to them. They might have seen it even before I did.

But, yeah, I mean when I had my responsibility at FCA what's important there is, although the racing was very high profile I also was working on the brand side and running sort of the business and marketing for the performance brand SRT.

And working for a car company I saw in realtime that there were, there was a phenomenon that was happening where engineers were retiring at a faster rate than they were being backfilled -- and regardless of gender. So there was a critical need to get more engineers and such and people in technical careers in the pipeline.

And so seeing that in realtime and then on the racing side being on the business side of racing, I saw the business model as it has been and it's evolved in a few different ways over the years, but realistically I saw that in a lot of ways the business model needed some more, needed to evolve even more and that partners, to have, in order to have long-term partners, you need to have something very compelling and it's more than a sticker on the side of a car.

We have gone through phases, we can all look at if you're race historians, we all know how the business side has evolved and it looked very much like it needed to evolve again. And partners were leaving, racing sponsors were leaving the sport and how do you solve that.

And maybe I think, although I'm a racer, I'm also a business person at my core and it was sort of like that business problem to solve, it was like a business case. And I thought, okay, we need to do more with it, there is more here, there is more content here, there are more stories to tell and they're very interesting stories. I'm biased because I find them interesting, but I thought, well if I find them interesting then maybe other people can too.

And by telling those stories and by then also connecting it to education, you can then talk to a whole different category of sponsors that might not have ever considered being part of the IndyCar grid or any race grid for that matter.

So I think that the impetus behind it was, let's get more women involved and let's do more with racing.

Q. And just a follow-up, so you have this season running the Indy 500, are there plans to do more in 2022?

BETH PARETTA: Yeah, I mean I would like to, selfishly, I would like to see if we could do even do another race or two this year, but it has to do with scheduling and what sponsors may or may not want. But I know that there's already interest from some to do a few more races even this year, so we'll look at that.

But my hope is that we could maybe even run a full season next year. But always pushing forward, but we'll see how it pans out.

Q. I had a question for Simona. Simona, congratulations this, is great news. Would you say that this would be one of the biggest opportunities of your life?

SIMONA DE SILVESTRO: Well, you know I think I've been really lucky in my career so far, especially now the last few years with getting good opportunities. Also at the end of last year for me to join Porsche as a works driver I think it's quite special, but I think for sure in my IndyCar career, especially as a driver being associated with Team Penske, with having Beth putting really this program together, I think it's, yeah, my best shot at it, I would say.

I'm really excited about it and I think that throughout my career I worked really hard to get to this point. I think that it's finally time that it's here and, to be honest, I'm super excited that it's happening while I'm still racing and I'm still as competitive as I can be.

So I can't wait and, yeah, you know, it's definitely all the stars are aligned at the moment, so I'm really excited about it.

Q. Welcome to a first-time owner in the paddock, that's quite rarified air. But from a culture standpoint, you bake a cake and all the ingredients are important and you, one looks at this from a third person where I am out here in Los Angeles and it looks like an absolutely wonderful looking cake. You've got so many decades of dedicated and focused motor culture participation. You mentioned, Beth, that you were hoping to get a race or two and of course I'm out here near Long Beach and we didn't get to see any IndyCar out here on the West Coast. When are we going to see cake by the ocean?

BETH PARETTA: Oh, I like what you did there. I love Long Beach, I have been fortunate to be with teams that



have raced at Long Beach many times. It's one of my favorite races on the calendar. And I love that they, it's later in the year this year, right? So kudos to the city of Long Beach because obviously moving any city race is a, that's a mountain to climb in and of itself.

Q. Season finale as well.

BETH PARETTA: Yes. Yes. And in fairness, later in the season, timing might work, but we'll push for that, believe me. I'll push for any race. I mean, I'll race in a parking lot outside of a Kroger, I'll show up to.

Q. For Simona, of course cake by the ocean is one of your main characteristics, having won at Long Beach Grand Prix. Now it's the Accura Long Beach Grand Prix, but you won it when it was the Toyota Long Beach Grand Prix and also you were Rookie of the Year in Indy 500. So how would you like to see at least a minimum of two races this year?

SIMONA DE SILVESTRO: Well, if you know me, you know as many times I can get into a race car I will take the opportunity. I think this is just the beginning of this program and I think right now I think we will really focus on the 500 and, yeah, we never know what the future brings. Three years ago would I have said that I was going to be back at the 500 so quickly? Maybe not. So we never know what happens, but the thought is always here and me as a driver I will always be ready for any opportunity that comes up.

Q. Well you were in an odd way a stand out with the Lotus effort and it was, again, something that was ushered in as a first of and now you're on a second wave of a first of and we look forward to seeing you out on the track with such a great assortment of ingredients that will bring you to the track.

SIMONA DE SILVESTRO: Thank you.

Q. One question for both Beth, so people may be wondering, what kind of ultimately led to Simona getting the ride and what do you see from her that maybe others don't, for those who might be into the sport over the past few years since she last ran in 2015?

BETH PARETTA: Sure, that's a great question, because you haven't seen her in a couple of years. But if you look at her total combined experience at IMS, but also, like I said, she, the broad experience she has in other series, she's been racing full-time even though we haven't seen her here in some very competitive series. Including NV 8 Super Cars against Team Penske and that, they were also

comfortable with her capabilities. And I think she's just a great fit, she's done really well here and I think it's a really great opportunity and we could have a shot to have some good results.

Like I said, honestly, the fact that it's a really good fit for the mission. So beyond just behind the wheel, I think we're very aligned and that means a lot to me.

Q. Simona, you brought it up earlier, that you feel more prepared, more focused. What has the time period between 2015 to now made you better as far as a competitor? Is this more or less being versatile or just more or less getting the experience all across the world?

SIMONA DE SILVESTRO: Yeah, I think it is a lot of factors. I think I'm a bit older as well. I think I see the picture a little bit differently and know as well really what I need in the car to be quick and, yeah, for sure I think the experience as well. I've been so lucky to be racing in so many different cars at the end of the day and I think that that can help a lot. But I'm super excited to get back into an IndyCar. I think from a driving style point of view I think it's definitely so far the one that has fitted the best to me. So, yeah, just getting to, getting the chance to get back into an IndyCar I think I'm really happy about it.

And, yeah, I think I've grown. I think the time I've grown quite a lot, the things that I've experienced are I think going to be really good for my future and, yeah, I can't wait to get going.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Thank you very much Kate. By the way, September 26th is the date of the Accura Grand Prix of Long Beach and I'm also interested in cake right now, I don't know about you guys. But for now we're going to break here, join us for a socially-distanced photo op at victory podium here at the speed way. Thank you.

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