

# Rolex 24 At DAYTONA

Sunday, January 30, 2022

Daytona, Florida, USA

**Devlin Defrancesco**

**Colton Herta**

**Pato O'Ward**

**Eric Lux**

Media Conference



[LAUGHTER]

COLTON HERTA: It's not like we had a huge heroic effort of passing three times and unlapping ourselves.

**Q. You weren't discouraged when you were three laps down?**

COLTON HERTA: I don't think anybody ever is because they know, if there's 16 hours left and with 61 cars, there's going to be a bunch of cautions. And you'll get the pass around, wave around. You'll get your lap back. I wasn't worried.

PATO O'WARD: I wasn't worried.

DEVLIN DEFRANCESCO: No, I agree.

PATO O'WARD: He definitely was calling me down in the last stint. I said, Devlin, relax. We got it.

ERIK LUX: How many more pit stops did we have compared to everyone else, because we had a lot of drive-throughs --

PATO O'WARD: I know for the first 25 minutes we were plus-6, or plus-7, more than anybody else. That was a good start.

DEVLIN DEFRANCESCO: I think we really hurt our crew. They'll need a good night's sleep because we put them through the ringer a little bit.

**Q. Colton, you said on TV five stints to end the race?**

COLTON HERTA: I think it was four. I think I did a quad.

PATO O'WARD: Quad.

**Q. Feeling good about your prototype debut that you were able to do that in your first time?**

COLTON HERTA: Yeah, to be honest the INDYCAR is a lot more difficult to drive than this thing. So we are

THE MODERATOR: On your far right, Eric Lux. Next, to Eric's right is Devlin Defrancesco. Pato O'Ward is next to Devlin, and then Colton Herta to your left.

**Q. Colton, five stints. How many consecutively at the end? And talk us around how you made the pass and what were you thinking when you guys had led all those laps there at the end and then it got around on the restart, what was the process like?**

COLTON HERTA: We got around in the pits. They didn't take tires. We took tires. That's how they jumped us in the pits. And so I knew that I would have a little bit of a grip advantage. But it is quite difficult to get a run and pass in these cars, especially with the Bus Stop. You get a lot of aero wash.

It took a few tries and it didn't happen until I got a little help from traffic. And he backed off going into the Bus Stop to get a run and I was able to go up inside of him.

**Q. Colton, it was five laps you were down, correct?**

PATO O'WARD: I think it was four.

DEVLIN DEFRANCESCO: Three. I'm sure because I did not get off my phone for four hours straight. I was looking and refreshing.

PATO O'WARD: Three then.

**Q. How did you guys come back from three laps down? And secondly when you were three laps down, at any point what was the mindset?**

PATO O'WARD: We sent it. They have a great system here where every caution you get a lap back. It was pretty easy, to be honest.



physically fit enough to drive the INDYCAR, so it makes it a lot easier when we come here.

It's more of a mental game when we drive this car. And you don't get a lot of sleep. So that kind of makes it difficult.

But, yeah, I think when you have the opportunity to win and you're in the last hour or two, it's going to happen in that timeframe. You wake up and it doesn't matter how tired you are. And that's kind of what happened to me.

**Q. Pato was in here last night, his usual bubbly self, talking about how much fun he was having. How much fun was this for you, just being with these guys and doing all this?**

COLTON HERTA: It was a lot of fun. It was really cool to be able to do it in Prototype and with this group. Like I said, I didn't know Eric before this race weekend, but I'm glad I was able to drive with him at least once. He's really good and fast and a really good guy.

I know these two guys for a long time, and we'll be competing against them very soon. But it was a lot of fun. And to win it on debut was amazing. And just what a team.

**Q. For all three INDYCAR guys, five INDYCAR guys get watches today. Pretty big deal for the series?**

PATO O'WARD: INDYCAR must be getting a good crack at it in social media, right?

**Q. I saw, Pato, you ran away with the box as soon as the celebration started?**

PATO O'WARD: Didn't want it to get sticky.

DEVLIN DEFRANCESCO: That's suede. It will be ruined.

[LAUGHTER]

PATO O'WARD: Cantara.

THE MODERATOR: This is Pato's second Rolex. I trust the other one's not sticky either. This is Colton's second Rolex also. Pato won in 2017 in PC class. Colton won in 2019 GT LM. First ones for Devlin and Eric. Third Rolex 24 win for DragonSpeed. Others were in 2019 and 2020, also in the LMP2 class.

**Q. They put this lineup together and you guys come out and win the whole thing. What do you guys do next?**

PATO O'WARD: DP car would be pretty cool. I have no idea how we're going to make that happen. But it's an idea.

DEVLIN DEFRANCESCO: He comes up with a lot of good ideas.

ERIK LUX: We have a year to figure it out.

**Q. But you're done for the year?**

COLTON HERTA: We have a full INDYCAR season. From SportsCar side of things, I might have some opportunities with BMW later on. But as far as this, I think it's kind of like a one-and-done sort of deal for this year.

DEVLIN DEFRANCESCO: From my side, nothing is confirmed yet. There can be options. But right now I've got an INDYCAR season to worry about. But definitely looking forward to whenever I'm in one of these things next, and I always enjoy driving them.

**Q. Colton, you're going to go to the Race of Champions and represent America; you're America's great hope, it seems these days. Are you feeling the pressure of that? And how did that deal come together?**

COLTON HERTA: My expectations are fairly low because I saw the lineup. We're racing on ice, and it's like nine World Rally champs. So I definitely have a lot of catching up to do, me and Jimmie. But it will be cool. It's something fun to do.

I think the expectations going in is low and so it can only get better from there. It's going to be something completely different driving on ice. I'm excited to do that.

**Q. (Off microphone).**

COLTON HERTA: Obviously he got hurt, and I was the next guy in line; they gave me a call.

**Q. Colton, you were not leading. You had to pass. How confident did you feel that you were going to be able to catch him after that exchange of the lead? And it looked pretty awesome for the rest of us.**

COLTON HERTA: It was difficult. It was always kind of give and get with the traffic. For the most part I was kind of getting screwed with my runs to the Bus Stop, and eventually I was in situation where he got screwed for one of his and I was able to -- he was trying to lift and set up and get a little bit of a gap from the GT car so he could go through the Bus Stop and get a run on the exit so I wouldn't

get a run, if that makes sense.

And when he was lifting, I was able to dive up the inside.

**Q. (Off microphone).**

COLTON HERTA: I wasn't sure how it was going to happen. I knew I was going to need a little bit of help with traffic. I didn't think I could pass him just straight up pace. But luckily we got some help there.

DEVLIN DEFRANCESCO: We were confident for him.

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