

# IndyCar Media Conference

Friday July 29, 2016

## Will Power

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We're joined by our fastest driver of the day, Will Power. You've been fast here. You've had a few poles. Not quite captured a win yet. What's your prognosis heading into the weekend?

WILL POWER: Yeah, it's interesting, this place. It's funny, tracks that click with you, it's me and Sonoma and Dix and this track. Usually he's clicks well around here.

But yeah, I think we've had a couple poles here. We finished second a couple times. It's just about nailing it. Obviously yellows play a big part. If it goes yellow and you're stuck out, you go to the back, which is one of the worst things about this series, and it has to change. I say it every week. But it won me a race in Toronto, and it probably won me a race in Detroit, and I still say it's wrong.

But hopefully it's dry for qualifying. I think that'll make it -- I wouldn't say more interesting. There's a way to make it really interesting, but for us we've got a good car on the dry, so we're open to that. So this way we'll be ready.

THE MODERATOR: With the rain lashing through the track, it really kind of presents a green track, a fresh track to work on tomorrow. How do you think that'll affect qualifying?

WILL POWER: Yeah, this is probably the one track that evolves more than any other track. There's no other track that has a lap time evolution of like five to six seconds. I mean, that's what this track does. So that will make it very interesting. It will be very green when we go out to qualify. I guess we get to practice, so that might rubber it up a little. But it seems to somewhat reset every session anyway, but I'm sure rain is going to make that worse.

THE MODERATOR: I believe with the practice time, even though it's not official, you were a good bit under the track record that stands here at Mid-Ohio. Does that tell you anything what you can expect from tomorrow, especially from your other competitors and from yourself?

WILL POWER: Um, yeah. Obviously the cars are just

getting faster and faster. It's not like the track is getting faster. It's just amazing how much speed we have in like Turn 11 and Turn 1 now. It's close to flat -- it's not flat, but it's at that horrible limit where it's not flat. You know, you hold your breath kind of lifting. It probably looks spectacular from the outside. But yeah, it's definitely going to be a lap record broken. I don't even know what it is. What is it? It's Dixon's? Yeah, from last year. Yeah, yeah, that'll be broken for sure if it's dry.

THE MODERATOR: Switching gears a little bit, also on Sunday following the race, your episode of Celebrity Family Feud will be on ABC at 8:00 eastern. Tell us about your experience.

WILL POWER: Yeah, I just wonder how much they edited out. I think it was a great experience. It was a lot of fun, and the competition was really good to look at.

**Q. I think you were alluding to the fact that IndyCar's policy is that when there's a caution they close the pits and get everybody to gather up, line up behind the pace car, and there have been times, I don't remember how many years ago, but it seems to me in the last five or six years there might have been a period where they left the pits open.**

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah.

**Q. Can you talk about the reasons maybe you know why they want to do it or don't want to do it? I know it really affects someone's race results.**

WILL POWER: The reason to close the pits is for safety, which I 100 percent agree. You can't have people speeding past an accident. But now with the technology we have, and we're sponsored by a company that's big on promoting technology, Verizon, that is, and it's a wireless system, you can have not a virtual safety car like they do overseas where everyone maintains a gap, but you would go to a limit, whatever that may be, 60 miles an hour, the pits would open, you would have your chance to pit, and after that they would turn the safety car out, everyone packs up, and you still get a restart.

As it is right now, if half the fields pit -- if half the field has pitted and it goes yellow, it pretty much squinches the whole field. It happened last year twice in this race,

which must be so confusing for the viewers. There's a bunch of guys battling for the win. Suddenly they're back from 15th to 12th. There's a new bunch, and then it goes yellow again, and then it switches back to another bunch.

To me there's an easy fix, and there's no reason why they shouldn't do it. Obviously this year you can't change it, but for sure in the future it's got to be something they look at. It's absolutely a lottery when it comes down to that, whether you catch a lucky yellow or not.

**Q. Going back to the good ol' days of CART, some drivers or most of the drivers complained about the traffic situation. What about traffic now with these new IndyCars or IndyCars in general? Is this an unknown factor in the race?**

WILL POWER: Turbulent air or -- yeah, when you're trying to do a lap, yeah, I mean, it's tough. It's really, really tough. There's a lot of good guys. Everyone backs up, and you don't want to be -- you don't want to really be too -- it's hard to know the gap, but I don't hardly want to see another car in front of me. You want to be way down the road, because otherwise you're getting affected or you're losing grip because you're so relying on all this downforce. So traffic is a problem because people have to back up so much because they lose so much grip, and it is frustrating. It can be so frustrating at tracks like this and Barber and pretty much everywhere, honestly. Road America is about the only place big enough to spread everyone out.

**Q. You talked about that little horrible zone when you're in Turn 1 when you're almost flat but not flat. Explain that to folks; in other words, do I take a shot here and keep flat. Talk about what you're talking about there from a mental gymnastics situation.**

WILL POWER: Yeah, you see guys that try it. You see on the data, your teammates trying to go flat. On reds maybe -- I don't know, I've said it every year, I've said, we're going to be flat in qualifying. It's never happened. So I don't think it will be. It will be close, but I don't think you'll be flat through there. It would be amazing if you are.

**Q. It's literally in the middle of the corner --**

WILL POWER: Yeah, it is really. It can be entry or -- flat is a big chunk of speed. You think you're lifting a little bit, but when you try to go flat, you understand, yeah, that's going to be a big gain if I pulled that off.

It is, you've got to understand when there's so much downforce, it's very difficult to feel that limit. The actual tire shudders there's so much grip. Like in Turn 1 when it starts to let go, it shudders. The whole car shudders.

It doesn't just slide, it actually shudders the tire, which is kind of an interesting feeling.

**Q. Will, there's a number of your countrymen that race in the USF2000 Series. On a weekend like this where you know you've got your main focus, or just in general, how much time do you get to see them or do you interact with them much considering how much countrymen have been invaluable to your career?**

WILL POWER: Yeah, I've watched it with interest, actually, because Jordan Lloyd is from Toowoomba, which is my hometown. I've actually seen him when I'm in Toowoomba. It's very cool to see him doing well, and you've got Luke Gabin, he's from Perth, and Anthony Martin, he's doing a great job leading the championship. He's really, really come on strong. Yeah, I saw him win another race today, which is awesome. But yeah, they're doing really well. Really well, really happy to see that, and I hope one of them wins the championship this year and gets to go on to the next series. Yeah, it's good to see some Aussies coming through.

**Q. As far as experimenting with ride heights and wing settings, have you been able to get much of that done, or will you still be going through that kind of thing in practice tomorrow?**

WILL POWER: Yeah, getting pretty close. It's amazing, you come back, you've been around this place so many times, and basically it's the same car, and it still ends up being a completely different setup every year. You know, yeah, I think we've found a pretty good spot for us. Like we're right in the window of mechanical and aero and just right where I need to be for qualifying tomorrow.

**Q. It seems at this track Ganassi has won six out of the last seven races here. I don't know if Dixon has won like five times. How are you going to beat him? Is he the real guy that you worry about the most here?**

WILL POWER: Yeah, Dixon is definitely quick around this track. There's a bunch of guys. All my teammates are really quick this weekend. Hopefully -- I would love to win this place. We've been so close. Dixon is definitely the yardstick, and Ganassi in general. They're very strong around here.

Who won last year? Oh, Graham won last year, yeah. It was yellow. But he was a deserving winner. He fought towards the end. It was good to see, actually, hometown boy.

**Q. Speaking of Dixon, he mentioned you were the guy at this point of the season to worry about in the points standings. Is that something you're**

**thinking about right now with only five races left?**

WILL POWER: Well, you're definitely looking at the situation and the points because it's very obvious to us what we have to do, and that's finish ahead of Pagnaud in particular because he's got such a chunk of points ahead of us. You know, it's a no-brainer for us. Maybe for him it's a little different. He's got that cushion, so do you take a risk, do you not. But for us we just have to. We have to keep going. Not that you take any stupid risks, but we understand that week in, week out, you've got your aim, you've got your goal.

**Q. Will, you talk about you've got to catch Pagnaud, and the way you speak of it is very different than what we hear from a European style Formula 1 team where they don't talk so much about trying to run down their teammate in the point standings. It's more of a constructor-type deal. Is it really that different, and how does it work within Team Penske as far as you guys want to beat him? How does that really work and work in a big team at the same time?**

WILL POWER: It actually works well, because we work well together. We all debrief together. I've been in this situation before with Helio and Briscoe.

You know, in one way you know exactly what he has. You can see his data. You can see his setups, and same for him, which is a good thing. It's your teammate, so obviously you can't be so aggressive with him in certain situations, like at Toronto I was very standoffish through the first corner. I didn't want to -- you've got to be very clean. Roger likes us to race hard and push each other, and that's why -- Roger is a racer at heart, and he loves beating the other guys, too. He enjoys being on the stand for Helio. He loves when he gets one over Cindric. It's great, friendly competition like that, and that's what I think breeds such an competitive atmosphere and competitive results at Penske. He wants us to push each other. He doesn't want us taking each other out. He definitely wants to see the most out of each driver.

**Q. With Pagnaud at the top, you second and Helio third, has Montoya said which one of you three he is going to help for the championship yet?**

WILL POWER: Which one he's going to help? Yeah, I think he's just focused on getting results. He's real quick this weekend, and obviously he's had a bit of bad luck in the last few races. I think he can get back up there by the end of the season. I don't think he's focused on which one to help. He's just wanting to get a fair result. He's run into some bad luck with cautions and getting pushed into the wall and so on.

**Q. Can you say something about the engine situation? Do you think there may be an update for**

**the rest of the season from Chevrolet?**

WILL POWER: Not that I'm aware of. I don't think so. I'm still on the engine from the Indy 500. Obviously they've got to go 2,500 miles, so there's not many times you can update during the year. I think it's four engines for the year, so we'll be getting to our fourth hopefully for the Pocono race if we get enough miles. But yeah, I don't think so. In the off-season they'll probably focus on that stuff. I think they made good gains in the off-season, and they just kind of rub on it during the year and then try to make another jump in the off-season.

THE MODERATOR: Will, thank you very much. Appreciate it.