

IndyCar Media Conference

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Will Power

Carlos Munoz

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: From the Honda Indy 200 at Mid-Ohio, we welcome our second-place finisher today, Will Power, driver of the #12 Verizon Team Penske Chevrolet.

Take us through your day, please.

WILL POWER: Yeah, it really didn't start until that first restart. You know, the key was to get a couple saves for fuel, enough to go longer than Pagnaud jumping, which he did; pumped out some really quick laps.

Then the set of Reds we put on were ones we really liked in qualify, kind of struggled at the end of that stint. But then went yellow obviously and we had that restart and I just blew -- I should have done a much better job on that restart. I kick myself for not being on top of it more. It's a situation of trying to defend and getting in marbles and eventually getting passed.

THE MODERATOR: Still a Top-10 finish, lose a few points to Simon in the championship. You're still right there.

WILL POWER: Yeah, it's right there. Still quite a gap. But you know, it would have been nice to go ten points the other way.

So yeah, it's still -- yeah, it's obviously four races. He's consistent. It's going to be tough from here out but absolutely possible.

THE MODERATOR: Driver of the #26 Andretti Autosport Honda, Carlos Munoz. Carlos, your second podium finish of the season, following your second place at the Indy 500. Your best finish at Mid-Ohio previous was fourth. Talk us through your day.

CARLOS MUNOZ: You know, really happy. Finally I did a run, came out our way, the pit strategy with my crew -- pitted this lap, which -- inaudible. I don't remember but what happened. And we put on that lap and came out of the pit on the yellow. So that gave a lot of track position.



The good thing is after we get the track position, I was quite a good pace. Very happy for the team, all Andretti, it's been quite tough for us after the Indy 500, but happy to be back on the podium again. Look forward for Pocono, love that place.

Q. Will, on that restart lap of lap 66 when you guys had to battle, the smart money would have been for Pagnaud would have gone through the valley and let you have it -- maybe not let you have it, but he might have played it safe. Were you surprised at how aggressive he was, given he's got a 47-point lead coming into this race?

WILL POWER: Yeah, it was more how -- like I got pickup on the tires and kind of went wide and got more pickup. I was quite slow. So you know, I just made a dog's breath of the bloody restart, which allowed him to get into the position to have a shot. And if you have a shot, of course you can't pass it; you've got to go for it, and he did.

Yeah, so I really put myself in a bad position, and I should have done a better job of just getting a jump on the restart. I didn't realize Carlos was going to go straight out of the corner and not in the actual restart zone. I should have been onto that.

Q. A little bit of a follow-up on that. Were you surprised, though, because that was the first part of the race, a little bit more contact and it might not have ended up so well.

WILL POWER: Yeah, actually in the last turn, had I not backed off, we would have crashed. He was quite aggressive the way he threw it in there. At that moment, I thought of it being just -- I didn't want to say -- Roger would have been pretty mad if we had taken each other out of first and second potentially. At that point I decided to lift because he was not going to.

Q. If it hadn't been your teammate, would it have been different for you?

WILL POWER: I think so. Yes, I think so, it would have probably been different. I don't know if we both would have got to the corner. Maybe he would have given me more room, but yeah.

Q. That whole thing --

CARLOS MUNOZ: I was struggling all over the place with the marbles and everything. I almost got 10 out of

13, they were good, close to the gap I was -- I was afraid I might crash, because you never deserve that to anyone, but it was quite a fight (ph) for sure. I think he didn't have that much marbles than we did, and just struggle a lot after the restart. So you know, he did a great job and the tires on the restart, they are in yellow condition, he did a very good job.

Q. I know it's been a tough season for you guys on road courses in terms of pace. I know you've been qualifying laps -- do you feel you've found anything this weekend or was it more strategy that got you up front?

CARLOS MUNOZ: Strategy today, we have to be honest, the strategy of the whole track, Mid-Ohio, everything, track position, you get in front, you stay up front, and you can go quicker because you have more clean air. I think our pace was much better than we showed on the track in qualifying, that's for sure.

Ryan is pretty good. He's always been really good. The way he drives the car, it's hard for me to drive it on the other teammate. So we went another direction this weekend. I think we had a much better car than the qualifying car.

So you know, Ryan was really quick. I think he had that problem with fuel they told me, something like that. But you know, it's always a tough track for us.

Qualifying lap -- has been quite tough for everyone -- inaudible. We are getting there, we are making some changes and the team is working so hard. We don't like to see us always out -- for sure the team likes Pocono.

Q. A lot of times when a driver does pit strategy to get up to the front like Aleshin did, he may not stay there until the next pit stop, but this time, once he got there, he did a pretty good job of maintaining it. Were you wondering, what's gotten into Aleshin? He was so far ahead --

WILL POWER: I didn't see him, yeah. I didn't even know. Yeah, the last stint --

CARLOS MUNOZ: He crashed in the pits, he was in front of me -- like he went in front. Just like held up the whole group and he went a way away -- inaudible.

Q. (Off mic).

CARLOS MUNOZ: After the restart, overtook him -- had like five laps, just dragging the whole group. It was really slow. That is where he pushed really hard, after Josef came to the pits, I closed the gap a little bit, but he was pretty strong. He looked pretty good out there. We did a pit stop and I saw him crash. I think it was Newgarden that crashed. So you know sometimes -- I

think that wins the race.

Q. Do you see where he's got a lot better?

CARLOS MUNOZ: For sure, this year he has done a really good job in pits and everything (ph). They have really competitive cars, so for sure he's doing a really good job. He's aggressive and he's very quick for sure.

Q. I asked you before we got started but you look tired. How physical was it out there?

WILL POWER: It's tough, because the steering gets heavier and heavier as the rubber goes down, and you know, if we had power steering -- that's why Formula One has it. They have less downforce than we do and have power steering and smoother tracks. We have heavier cars with more downforce, and we don't have power steering, so it is like -- it is unbelievable at the moment. I couldn't imagine if they continued aero development into next year, I don't think we could possibly steer this thing.

CARLOS MUNOZ: It was last thing we did to save fueling, so when you don't save fuel, you don't push as hard. Before that, it was like -- it's hard for the drivers to drink the water when you are pushing the whole time. We always drink when we do the yellow -- it's really physical, the steering while, like Will said, was really, really heavy.

Q. I didn't see the incident, but Dixon and Helio getting together, I'm sure you heard about it -- (Laughter)?

WILL POWER: Carlos, tell us all about it.

CARLOS MUNOZ: I think Dixon was really quick the whole day, especially out of one. Out of the pits, I saw him, he went to the inside and then they touched a little. I don't know what he did. I saw him like get touched and he went straight out. After that, Helio had to steer (ph) -- the rear, that's why he came in. But more or less, I saw the crash.

Q. Could you tell how far enough --

CARLOS MUNOZ: I think he hit the back -- as the driver point, if you hit from the middle to the back, it's the front of the car overtake. If you hit from the middle to the front, it's the car that it didn't overtake's fault. I'm not sure, you have to ask them.