

IndyCar Media Conference

Monday August 22, 2016

Will Power

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by the winner of today's race, Will Power.

Will, congratulations. Your fourth win here in 2016 and your 29th career win, tying your teammate Helio Castroneves and Rick Mears for 11th on the all-time wins list in IndyCar history.

How were you able to make it for the win tonight?

WILL POWER: Obviously, the start of the race, our car was not that good. We had to make a lot of adjustments throughout.

I have to say after around lap 100, you know, the car really started coming on, then it became really strong. I was able to pass anyone I wanted. The car was fast. I could lead. People couldn't tow up to me.

Fantastic job by the team. Great stops all day, great strategy. Just absolute team effort. I'm really, really happy to win here.

THE MODERATOR: Obviously you started the season on a difficult note, not being able to compete at St. Petersburg. Your fourth win of the season. Top two the past six races. How were you able to overcome the start of the season and surge in the championship?

WILL POWER: Obviously missing the first race, a big hit in points, considering that track, I'm very good at, I was on pole. Who knows what was going to happen. I forgot about that.

At the time I wasn't concerned about missing the race. I was more concerned about how I'd been feeling in the off-season and if I would ever get back to feeling normal again and having the energy to race properly.

I think this three-week break really helped me to get some fitness, because I didn't do any in the off-season. I could only work out maybe 30 minutes, if lucky, at one time.

Feeling good, yeah. Just got to keep going to each race, get the most out of it, and enjoy it.

THE MODERATOR: Clearly nobody can do anything



about the weather. How did the postponement of the race until this afternoon affect you personally?

WILL POWER: Me personally, not a big deal. It's what it is. It's more the track and the fans obviously. I think it was going to be a really good crowd yesterday. I bet you ticket sales were up more than it has been in the past two years I think we've been here.

It's unfortunate. It's a circumstance. But I feel as though every race we go to, the crowds are bigger and bigger. I expect when we come back here next year, they'll have a very strong crowd.

Yeah, I must say every time we race on Monday, I win, seems to be. If you go back and look at the last six years, I'll bet you I've won every Monday race. I can think of today, Brazil, St. Pete, all run on Mondays and I won them. So I don't mind Mondays.

THE MODERATOR: We'll see if we can talk IndyCar into some more Monday races.

We'll start with questions.

Q. 38-point jump today. How does it feel to be on the right side of that swing, especially at this critical time of the season?

WILL POWER: Obviously feels great. I remember when I used to battle Dario for the championship. I can see now, I've got older, you get more mature as a driver, you let the race unfold. That's what Dario was great at. Used to frustrate me because I'm quicker, I'm fast. He was just very methodical and good at it.

I think, yeah, I have a lot of respect for Dario. I have more respect for him now that I've got older, just seeing how he worked and all that. Obviously, when you're in the heat of battle, you kind of look over that sort of stuff.

Q. Can you give us more details about the adjustments you made? Do you think fuel consumption was an issue, driving faster?

WILL POWER: At the end?

Q. At the end.

WILL POWER: At the end everyone was equal. We all had enough fuel. I was 100% wide open for pretty

much the whole last stint except the last couple laps, yeah.

The adjustments? We added downforce. We were adding front aero, as well. I had a lot of understeer. It just got better and better for us. I had in-cockpit adjustments as well, kind of got the car right for the track. It eventually was very strong, strongest car in the field, I feel like.

Q. Today's victory was much like Rick Mears. He won Indy a few times almost being a lap behind. This is a different kind of win for you. Instead of taking the bull by the horn, leading every lap, you methodically worked your way to the front and kicked everybody's butt.

WILL POWER: After Iowa I said to Rick, Man, I worked out that line you're talking about in that last stint where you free the car up off the corner. That was another example of just hanging out all day, adjusting on the car, getting it right. Boom, at the end making it way up to second, similar to today.

The older you get, the more you let the race happen. You don't try to force it. Yeah, if you got it, you got it. If you don't, you settle for where you're at. That's what I was doing.

Q. You've taken part in Team Penske 50th anniversary functions all season, a big theme of the team all year. Roger got his first 500-mile victory here in 1971. You got the latest one here in 2016. Does that put a little bit of the 50-year history in perspective to you?

WILL POWER: Yeah, it was cool. Actually, the crew chief, Donohue, was here watching this race. I was speaking to him in Victory Lane.

Yeah, it's amazing that Roger won a race way back then. Obviously, everything that's happened in that time that Team Penske has done is phenomenal, the amount of wins and poles, laps led. Everything about it is fantastic.

It's just a real privilege to drive for Roger. Every week you have the opportunity to win.

Q. When that last caution came out for debris, you had a two-second lead at that point. What were you thinking when you saw the yellow flag come out? Your crew got you out first.

WILL POWER: I saw the debris before they went yellow. I'm like, Hmm, I reckon this thing is going to go yellow in a couple laps. It did.

The team done a great job all day, the crew. I was pretty certain we'd get out first because we had a clear

out. Simon wasn't there anymore. So, yeah, the restart was the worrying bit. How many positions are you going to lose? Usually you're a sitting duck. I actually got such a jump, I was able to keep the lead.

I was pretty confident that if I did not keep the lead I would repass, because I did it in the previous restart. Hunter-Reay got me. Obviously he had an engine problem, but then Mikhail got me, and I got him back.

The car was very fast, very fast. I would have been surprised if we couldn't have made our way back to the front if we went back a little.

Q. These last six weeks, incredible results. Is this just the sweet spot of the career? Have you had a period where things felt so in sync?

WILL POWER: It feels normal. It's not like I'm doing anything special. That's the funny thing. It's not like I'm putting way more into it. You just become very seasoned on how races play out, when to take risks, when not to. That's kind of how I've been doing it.

Honestly, like I said, the first half of the year was kind of just surviving health-wise, fitness-wise, being able to finish a race. That was more of a concern than anything else. Yeah, now I'm feeling good.

Either you got a car that can do it or you don't. You got to just play the game right. When you race so much, you start to understand that. That's what I've been doing.

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations. Thank you very much.

WILL POWER: Thank you. Cheers.