

# IndyCar Media Conference

Tuesday November 15, 2016

## Conor Daly Carlos Munoz

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Welcome, everyone, to today's IndyCar media teleconference. Earlier today A.J. Foyt Racing announced its two drivers for the 2017 season. Carlos Munoz will drive the No. 14 ABC Supply IndyCar, and Conor Daly will return to the job to drive the No. 4 ABC Supply IndyCar.

Conor and Carlos, welcome to the call.

Carlos, we'll start with you. Congratulations on today's announcement. I know you've been in the IndyCar Series for a few years now, but you spent most of your career with one team. How important to your career is making this move over to A.J. Foyt for 2017?

CARLOS MUNOZ: Next year is going to be my fourth year full-time, you know. It's going to be actually my first change. I have been with Andretti for the last five years, so it's a big step of my career I think forward. Going to be totally different approach from my part, you know, driving with this team.

I'm glad to join this team. It's been for a long time in IndyCar, and also A.J. is Indy 500 champion. I really honored to be a part of his team. I think it's a new challenge to my career.

It's also nice to be teammates with Conor Daly. It's good to have two young, really fast drivers in the team. We want to drive really good, we want to win races. We're going to work really well together.

THE MODERATOR: Carlos, what about driving that same No. 14 car, which was made famous by A.J.? Do you feel any extra pressure to get that car up to the front and keep it there?

CARLOS MUNOZ: I think the whole team is friendly to me even though we're going to be a little bit different. One car is going to be in Indy, one car is going to be in Houston.

I think A.J., when I went to Houston to join the team and everything, say, There's not one driver or second driver mentality driver here, all drivers are the same.

I feel honored to be driving the 14 number because I know for him is really important, that number, for him. He love that number.

I think as a team, they want both drivers to be in the front. I've never been a driver that's attached to a number. I want to be the best no matter what number. I think it give me even more motivation.

THE MODERATOR: Conor, speaking of numbers, your car, No. 4, has a pretty big significance for you, too. Talk about getting the No. 4 car and being based just a few short blocks from the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

CONOR DALY: Yeah, I mean, it's really cool when Larry told me that we were going to be based in Indianapolis. Obviously that helps me quite a lot because that's my hometown. Pretty excited about that.

Then I actually didn't know we'd be the No. 4 until probably like just a few days ago. That was even cooler just because of the history that we have there with my stepdad Doug, when he was running with Panther Racing, involved there. I grew up watching those guys, Scott Goodyear, Sam Hornish, Tomas Scheckter, as well, then Dan Wheldon.

It was just a cool number that meant a lot to my family. It was cool to carry on. I have plenty of Pennzoil hats with No. 4 on them from when I was a kid.

It's just going to be cool. It's just a great relationship, a great opportunity, and then I just can't wait to get started.

THE MODERATOR: Obviously you have a history with A.J. Foyt Racing, a team that gave you your first IndyCar test, and you ran your first race for A.J. Foyt Racing in the 2013 Indy 500. How excited are you to be back with A.J. and Larry?

CONOR DALY: It's awesome. It's just a great team, so much history. I've been friends with those guys ever since 2013 when we had the first chance at the Indy 500. That meant a lot to me obviously. So to come back now and be actually competing for them full-time

is super cool.

So, you know, we're going to have a shop in Indianapolis. Going to take some time to set up and get things going. I'm excited just to get back to work. It's my sophomore season. I know there's so much that I learned last year that I just want to apply in this upcoming season.

I think with Carlos, as well, the guy is incredible at Indy. I want to learn from him at Indy and all the other tracks. He's coming from another team, so there's always going to be more information to learn. Hopefully we can put it all together and make it work really well.

THE MODERATOR: We'll open it up for questions for Conor Daly and Carlos Munoz.

**Q. Conor, who is going to be in charge of the Indianapolis side of the shop? Is it going to be George?**

CONOR DALY: I don't know that yet actually. We're still sorting out who's going where, personnel, all that stuff, so...

**Q. Does that cause some logistical challenges? On the one hand it's going to be very convenient to be in the center of the industry, Indianapolis, to be able to do a lot of things there, but to have one team separated by a thousand miles or whatever, does that create any logistical issues?**

CONOR DALY: I don't think so at all. I mean, I think it just gives us two good hubs. There's obviously, you know, good space in the shop that we have at Speedway. And technology these days is pretty awesome. So I think there's going to be live video conferencing you can set up with all the engineers from both bases.

It's not something that worries me at all because I think these days, to actually have two bases like that, I think Larry's approaching it in the right way and doing it properly.

It's still one team, without a doubt. They're just separated by a few miles.

**Q. Larry pretty much runs the team full-time. When A.J. is around, when you listen to A.J. talk about racing, is that almost like hearing Babe Ruth telling you how to hit a fastball?**

CONOR DALY: I love listening to A.J. That guy's got a story for everything. It's always such great information. It's just cool to hear. I mean, he's just a legend. He knows everything about racing. It's just in his blood. It's in everything about him.

So when A.J. is talking, for sure I'm doing a lot of listening.

**Q. Carlos, your thoughts on working with A.J. Foyt?**

CARLOS MUNOZ: I think I'm really happy. I've been saying in a lot of interviews already. Now I can say it's confirmed. For me it's another part of my career, new times. I'm really happy to making a step up as a driver.

What is most challenging, the team, they want to progress, they want to do the things right. They've been trying to change a lot of stuff in the team. Totally two new drivers, you know, new people.

We have George. I worked with him in Andretti. I think he does a really good job, can operate the team really well. When I went to Houston to visit the team, they were organizing everything for the season.

I'm proud to be a part of A.J. Foyt. Like I say, he will be my boss. It will be tough to understand him in the first place because he has the Texan accent. But like Conor say, he has a story to tell you each time you go and talk to him, like unbelievable stories when he used to race Indy 500 with the bricks, how he make his car faster. He's unbelievable, no? I think he knows a lot about Indy.

Hopefully we going to have great work together, all of us. The main goal is to go race by race and try to be a better team.

**Q. Conor, with a pretty successful rookie campaign under your belt, what are you overall looking to get out of your second season in IndyCar?**

CONOR DALY: Just to improve. We're in a constant state of improvement. There's things that I already want to do differently, going to tracks, whether it's from a driving standpoint or a car setup standpoint. I'm just excited just to get back at it.

Last year, the tracks that I had been to before, like Detroit and Toronto, you know, we had two of our best -- well, Toronto qualifying, and Detroit would have been good qualifying had we not got a penalty. We obviously had a great race weekend in Detroit.

I want to use that experience at every track that we go to. So just trying to build on it, build on it, and continue to get better. More podiums is obviously the goal.

**Q. On the oval side, do you think having one of the best oval drivers that the sport has ever seen with A.J. Foyt, do you think that's going to be beneficial to you this year?**

CONOR DALY: Yeah, well, having A.J., and really

having Carlos, as well. I think Carlos has shown just incredible skills at every oval, really all the tracks. He was the highest-finishing Andretti driver in the championship. There's a lot of experience I can learn from him, too.

But, of course, A.J. has knowledge. He watches, he keeps an eye on it. I'm excited to use both of those things.

**Q. Carlos, are you going to be relocating to Texas full-time or are you going to be commuting from Florida when you're not at race weekends?**

CARLOS MUNOZ: No, no, no. I think I'm going to stay in Miami. I think I'm always a driver that thinks when you're not on the track, home is better mentally.

I think nowadays with technology, you can do everything. You can do everything with the phone, with the Skype, with FaceTime. Miami, you have flights the whole time to Houston all the days. I will be staying here.

Houston is (indiscernible) my favorite, but I will stay here. Looking forward to start traveling, especially to be back in IndyCar. It's been so long, the off-season. But first thing after racing, I will stay home for sure.

**Q. You're both young drivers. You wonder, there's veteran guys out there. Do you like the fact it's two young guns pushing each other? What have you learned from your opportunities in junior formula where you knew you had to beat your teammate when he was someone of a similar age range?**

CARLOS MUNOZ: You know, A.J. hire young drivers. They want a project for a long time of period. That's why they hire two young drivers.

I also think IndyCar needs a new generation. I think the new generation is coming. Like Tony, Helio that are getting, you know, close to retirement, even though they're still really competitive. I think IndyCar needs a new generation.

I signed with Larry. I know, because I was in Houston the whole time, a lot of, lot of drivers calling him the whole days. He asked me which one of those I have on my list I would like to be on the team. I say, Conor, he's a really young driver, he's American, really talented, really good his first season, and I think we going to push each other a lot. I have a good experience. He's really fast, as well. He can be really fast in all kind of tracks. I think we can work really well together. We also raced in Europe, so that helps us a lot.

I think we can push each other a lot. Conor showed

last year, as well, that he can be really competitive, you know. I think the good thing is to push each other, but work together, but always push each other. That's it, work together.

CONOR DALY: Yeah, I mean, I agree. I think, you know, Larry and A.J., they're embracing the future. That's one thing that I really want to see even more teams do. I believe there are a lot of other young drivers out there, as well, who deserve to be in full-time. I'm happy that we've got this opportunity, Carlos and I, at the Foyt Racing team. I think we are absolutely going to push each other.

We want to win so badly. I haven't experienced it. Carlos has. Carlos has won. It's one of those things, I just think we are genuinely more hungry. We have to be more hungry to win because we haven't experienced it yet, or as much as the veterans. They know what it's like.

We're pushing at the absolute limit and even over the limit just to be perfect and try to get better, try and get better to take advantage of this situation.

It's not easy to get a seat in IndyCar. It's not guaranteed for a long time. So we know we have to do our best every time out there. We're both going to learn from each other. We can only get better together. I think that's really encouraging for us as we move forward.

**Q. Carlos, a few months ago you said, I've proven myself. I'm not going to bring money anymore. I'm going to take chances. I think I deserve to be hired. It came to fruition. Was there a period of time when you thought that you might not be able to drive next year if you didn't good out and find money, or were you confident you were going to hear from more than just A.J.'s people?**

CARLOS MUNOZ: I was really confident. Also have some option with other teams, even though it was not full-time, for a few races, especially at the Indy 500, to continue in some teams.

But, you know, Larry motivate me because the changes he wanted to do. Like I said, I wasn't worried about my future. I know it was my choice. It was my choice to say, I have to stop bringing the money. When it's enough, it's enough. I will have the backing of my family next year if I was with Andretti, or the sponsor in Colombia would have been in a good position for next year to go to Andretti or another team. I say, Enough is enough. That was my personal choice.

We can do really good stuff. We put all the package together really good. I think we can show results,

right? We have a really good example with Ed Carpenter. Five years ago no one was saying anything about this team. Now everyone wants to go to that team, right, because they did a really good job with Josef, with the engineers and everything. I think we have a good example.

So, you know, finally I see the light in the tunnel. Like I said, I have improved. It's not like I'm done, completely done. I still have to push a lot to stay in the light of the tunnel. I have to push. I still pushing really hard, to show the teams that I really deserve the position I am right now.

**Q. Conor, as far as you're concerned, you look at the guys like Sage, Gaby, guys that look like they're not going to be driving, and you've shown you can win races in Europe, you've won races here. Do you still sometimes think in the back of your mind, There's only so many guys that get hired to drive cars anymore? As good as you've been, it's a fortunate situation.**

CONOR DALY: Yeah, man, it's tough. We need more teams in the series. We need more cars, for sure. We need more drivers out there. But it's just the current situation, the current state of affairs. I feel very lucky to be in this position where I do have a chance to continue racing.

I think it can only get better, obviously. We've got some young guys. We got Josef going to Penske, got Alexander Rossi, got me and Carlos, which is sort of part of that next generation.

I mean, I'm excited to try and push and make sure that we as a group of young folks can prove to the other team owners that, Hey, we can do it. There's a reason Formula One teams are hiring 17-year-olds and 18-year-olds. It's because they can do it. It's the will to really push absolutely at the limit.

It's something that I'm happy to be a part of.

**Q. Carlos, you made the switch from Andretti to A.J. Foyt. Do you think you can take anything what you learned from Andretti working-wise to the team? And concerning changes, you have a new driver lineup for 2017. Just to double-check, except for drivers, is there any changes in the engineering side? Engine-wise, are you still with Honda or are you switching to Chevy?**

CARLOS MUNOZ: I think the team is going to announce really soon, next week, about the engine. For right now we cannot talk about it. I think they going to announce it next week.

Larry, George, everyone in the team is working really

hard to get the best people as possible. They've been talking to a lot of people. We just taking who is going to be the better fit for us next year.

For sure, I can tell you there's going to be some changes there, some good changes, I think, even though they had real good engineers that have been with A.J. I don't find to work in Spain (indiscernible) mechanic. They just need experience, an engineer with experience.

I think I can bring a lot of information. With Andretti the last two years, they have trouble a little bit to get the setup right. The setup at the Indy 500 is one of the best cars up there. I know what the car feels like, I know what direction to take. When I go to the track, I know how I want the car to be, how setup I want it to be.

I think I can bring a lot from Andretti. Like I said, been five years with the team. I know also how they work. It's different how they work. Try to introduce that.

I think Larry and George will be really capable of bringing talented people with us, to help us, because we are young drivers. But I think having the experience, now it's my turn, Conor and I, to be leading the team, try to have a good car, try to have the best car possible in the Indy 500. I think it's the most important race of all of them.

**Q. Conor, let's talk about relationships. ABC Supply has been with A.J. for 13 years now. That's a big deal. It's such a big part of the industry, how they support you as a new driver to the team. How is that relationship going to work?**

CONOR DALY: I think it's going to be awesome, first of all, just because I'm an American driver. I got to meet a lot of the guys, a lot of people from ABC, when I did the 500 in 2013. I still say hey to them at the track every time I see them.

They just love racing. That's the best part. When you have a company like that involved in racing, who just have a passion for it, who just make it work for them, in a business sense as well, there needs to be more companies like that in the world.

I'm excited about it. The car is red, white and blue. I bleed red, white and blue. I try to be the most American dude around. I'm excited to kind of use that and just strengthen the relationship. It's going to be awesome.

They're a great company to be involved on both of our cars. We definitely want to get them up in the front and keep them there, thank them for all they do for us.



**Q. Carlos, back home in Colombia, what is the vibe? Are they proclaiming you to be the next Juan Pablo Montoya?**

CARLOS MUNOZ: I don't like this, You're going to be the next Juan Pablo. I want to make my own path in motorsport. I think he's been the best driver Colombia ever have in the history. I think I want to have my own path.

They won't be disappointed if he wasn't a full season IndyCar driver, but it's what he choose to do because of his son. But they were really happy to have right now one Colombian representative in the league. I think it's great. I think Colombia has been really passionate IndyCar fans. The last three or four years has been so many Colombians in IndyCar. Because of the lack of support from Colombia, everywhere, we seen that number going even lower and lower. Right now it's only one Colombian right now full-time.

It's nice for me, it's good for me, it's good for the Colombians that they have a Latino there because I think it's great for IndyCar, as well. I'm from Colombia, right? I think we have to still fighting and to make that fans more engaged with IndyCar, and the big companies to be more engaged with IndyCar.

But, you know, really proud to represent my country. It's a shame we don't have the five Colombian drivers we used to have three or four years ago. Now it's come down to one. I'm ready to show what I can do.

THE MODERATOR: As we have no further questions for our guests, we will wrap up today's IndyCar media teleconference. Thank you.