

IndyCar Media Days

Wednesday January 18, 2017

Jay Frye

Media Day Presser



Q. I think with the car revealed that will take place this spring, I guess just the one thing you can speak to before you go is you almost have to -- you have so much excitement and momentum building, you have to step back and remember to take people on the journey. You feel like you have good energy?

JAY FRYE: Yeah. Well, we talked about last week in Detroit, this whole process started last April, so part of it you think we were behind because we really tried hard to see what we could do or what was possible for '17, but in reality we're quite a bit ahead because we're working on this car for '18 now. We've made a couple of announcements here recently with Dallara and Firestone. We've got some more coming up in the next couple weeks I think will be really good.

It appears we have some really good momentum, and the plan that we've come up with has been -- we've been very transparent. We've caught the power of the paddock, all the teams, stakeholders, OEMs have been involved, and I think we're all pointing in the same direction, which is really good, obviously.

That's my statement.

Q. Real quickly, what kind of reaction did you get out of the news that came out of Detroit?

JAY FRYE: From everything I've seen it's been very positive. And again, what's been really great, I think, over the last year, so when we announce things, we don't really get a lot of calls from the teams because the teams are aware of what we're doing. They were part of the process. Where before -- not before, but at times historically, we would make announcements and the teams would maybe not be aware of what we were doing. Well, now they're very much a part of the process, and our manufacturer partners, Firestone, our tire partner, we try to include them in everything we're doing. Obviously at the end of the day, we have to make the decision, but you want, again, the power of the paddock. You want everybody's opinion. We've got a lot of really smart people, and we've tried to make sure to use them.

So far, so good. We had a promoter meeting yesterday, and we went through our part of the process, and they were very excited about it. Again, there's this plan. We're freezing in '17. '18, '19, '20 will be a common kit or a universal kit that is really -- it

really, really looks good. We did the sketch drawings the other day that I think are exciting and cool, but it's really just come a long way in the last little bit.

So far every goal that we've wanted it to obtain, it's obtained, so that's been exciting.

Q. When do you think we'll see the prototype?

JAY FRYE: Kit? Hopefully -- so we keep saying after the Phoenix Open test, so before St. Pete, before the opening race. And that won't be a physical car, it'll be the actual rendering of where it is to date. Again, we did a -- there was a wind tunnel test done like 10 days ago or two weeks now, and that was one of the things we wanted to do before we showed anything was to have the test completed to make sure we were on the right track performance-wise, because again, this car was designed kind of -- we kind of reverse engineered it, being that it was designed more for esthetics first and then performance second. When we did the esthetic part, we thought the performance pieces were built into it, too.

Q. How much different is this thing going to look?

JAY FRYE: A lot. Yeah, it's very -- there's some safety pieces built into it, a lower engine cover -- well, you saw in the sketch drawings some of the things. There's some rear wheel guard differences. They might not be on there at all. It's a work in progress, but I think we talked about -- if you look at the '17 Camaro, which is kind of getting old now, but a '17 Camaro to a '68, they're designed to look kind of alike, but obviously the '17 Camaro has got all the latest and greatest performance pieces to it. So this car was designed based on maybe looking at 20 years of cars. We took different things that we liked off of each one and tried to come up with a piece that we could put all together, and it kind of has a wow factor to it.

We had one recently where we put a -- I'm an old NASCAR guy, so I say paint scheme on it, a livery on it, and it was definitely wow. I mean, it was like, that's what we're looking for. Part of what we did, too, on this thing which is kind of cool is because the engine cover is smaller and lower, you'd think as a team coming from a team perspective that you just lost a lot of sponsor space, right, so we were conscious of that when we designed the new car that if we took a heat map and did it on the current car and then put the same kind of

map on the universal car to make sure that the teams still have the same ability to still different things, and it's there. It's just different spaces. And it's surprising when we did this heat map the areas of the car that were more valuable than others that you didn't anticipate, and this is basically -- we had some outside research companies do this for us. I think the teams will be excited. They haven't seen that yet. They'll be excited to see that because it'll give them probably a new perspective on what's valuable on a car more than they thought.

We try to have a process to everything we've done. It's not just, hey, here we go. A big part of what we're trying to do is come up with a plan, come up with a process, keep it on a path, and keep everybody pointed in the right direction.

Q. And when would you want the contract for the universal aero kit builder and supplier to be awarded?

JAY FRYE: That would be probably the same time we unveil the car, so by March 1st, or before the first race. That would be part of that plan I would think.

Q. I don't know how much stake you put in this, but Ganassi switching to Honda and Penske being with Chevy, from a fan engagement standpoint, do you like how that looks for competitiveness seeing both of those big people on both sides of the street?

JAY FRYE: You know, obviously we don't get involved in that. I think as a whole for the series, it's probably a really good thing that they're in different camps right now. It'll create an exciting competition amongst the teams. But there's also -- this sport, if you look at the carpenters and the Rahals and the smaller teams like that that can compete on a high level, and a lot of times we look at those two teams, there's the Honda, the Chevy, we look at those two entities when we make a change, how it affects them, because they would be the most impacted, that size teams. But I think the lineups are really good on both Honda and Chevy's side, so that's part of the excitement.

I just wanted to come to say hello and thanks for coming.