

IndyCar Media Conference

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Jay Frye

Press Conference



JAY FRYE: As far as drivers, we're very fortunate to have those two available. Again, very current, but not current full-time drivers, so that's how they were picked.

Q. How much adjustability is built into this car, to be able to make a lot of adjustments for the teams?

JAY FRYE: I guess that's part of the testing process. We're going to see all we have, what we need, if there's more flexibility, adjustability that we need. But there's a lot.

It's probably less complicated than the current car, but that doesn't mean the adjustability is in the car, too, right? It's just easier to get to it.

Q. How much testing or data are you looking for for mile-and-a-half tracks like Texas, after the race you had in June? The drivers are hoping it kind of runs closer together, but I know you probably want to spread out a little bit more. How much data are you looking for for a track like Texas or a mile-and-a-half?

JAY FRYE: The IndyCar portion of this testing plan, which is today, Mid-Ohio, Iowa and Sebring, is as much just checking boxes. I mean, today we have sort of things we want to do. Once we do that, we're done.

I mean, once the manufacturers get ahold of the car after our IndyCar tests are done, the teams get ahold of the car after that, those will be much more elaborate test plans.

Having said that, we do plan on next year, IndyCar has an open test situation where we'll go to Phoenix again, we'll go to Barber again, and we'll probably go to Texas as a group to sort through that, to figure that out, yeah.

So last year what happened is they repaved, which is great. Then we had an open test. It wasn't so much an open test. We had a tire-type test because they repaved. There were some issues at that point with we weren't able to get as many cars out there as we wanted to. We went back to the test. It was cooler than what was anticipated.

So we'll go back and sort through that whole thing again.

Q. Is that more on IndyCar or the teams to figure that out at that point as far as the racing you're

looking for at tracks like that?

JAY FRYE: Well, again, it's collaborative. An open test, being the whole field, will go, different groups, different kinds of setups, see what's best. Again, you try to predict what's going to happen weather-wise, you know, the temperature when you go back. Just go through it again.

Again, Texas will be different a year from now, too, because the paving will have a year to set. Yeah, but it will probably be one of our open tests.

Q. After today, cars go back to Dallara, I'm assuming?

JAY FRYE: Yes.

Q. Teams can't touch them? Teams have access to the data or not?

JAY FRYE: No. What happens is we collect all the data. Once we're done with our sign-off testing, we'll get the data all collected, give it to the manufacturers. The manufacturers will distribute it to all the teams. It will be even amongst all the teams.

Q. Then these cars will get turned to road course kit?

JAY FRYE: Yes. So, yeah, go back to Dallara. Again, they're impounded at Dallara. Honda has a room. Chevrolet has a room. They're separate.

But, yeah, we work out of there. Obviously Schmidt is here, so it's easier for them. Penske, we talked about, a burden. Again, they have to come from North Carolina. They've got a couple people that are staying here in Indiana or Indianapolis to manage the program, so that's good.

But that's a commitment. Again, there's another thing. The teams have been spectacular. The whole paddock has been spectacular at getting us to the point we are today.

Just excited to see what happens next.

Q. Speeds may be a little bit quicker. Is the goal to eventually maybe threaten the track record here, maybe slow them back down?

JAY FRYE: A lot of it, what we've got going, when we designed the car, I mean, you don't ever want to go backwards. In that range we hit this year is what we're looking for.

Organically, if it goes faster, that's great. Again, when we built it, it wasn't set out to do a new track record. But organically if it happens, it happens. But you certainly didn't want to go backwards either. You're more conscious of not going backwards versus going forwards.

Q. How optimistic were you going through this that the new OEMs would be interested in what you're doing?

JAY FRYE: We're optimistic. Again, we've come up with a five-year plan. We have a business model. Actually we had other manufacturers who aren't our current partner manufacturers be part of the process. So as we were going through it, we showed them what we're doing, give their opinion, ask what they thought. They've been involved.

We wanted them to have equity in where we're going, what we're doing, because there's a lot of fans from other OEMs that are fans of ours, participated in the past, whatever. So it's been fun to do that. So now I think we've eliminated a hurdle.

Does that mean they're coming? Not necessarily. But it means we've eliminated that hurdle. So now we just got to keep doing what we're doing. They understand where we're going, what we're doing. Hopefully they'll want to join and be part of the process.

Q. Is there a timeframe you would expect that would be the best time for them to join?

JAY FRYE: It would be really tight for '19 right now. I mean, '20 or '21 would be more -- '20 would be probably the first point of entry that they could come.

Q. Would a new entry or new manufacturer be tied to a twin turbo V6? Is there a potential for other?

JAY FRYE: Probably the twin turbo V6, yeah. So again, part of the five-year plan, we also got an engine regulation extension that would be part of that, depending on when a new manufacturer comes in. So that's part of that process.

I say 'process' a lot. We've tried to have a plan and a process (laughter). So, yeah, that will probably be the direction. It's relevant that Chevrolet and Honda are enthused about it. There's other things we could do as we go forward that could change it, but still keep it in that configuration, so...

Q. Speaking of processes, from a personal standpoint you've been involved in a lot, Toyota in NASCAR, now you have this. How satisfying has this project been start to finish for you to see it get to this stage?

JAY FRYE: Yeah, again, we're going to find out here pretty soon, right? Today is a test, right? There's no preconceived notion of what's going to happen.

There are always bugs that happen throughout a test,

especially with a new product. We have some things, boxes we want to check, and that's it. We're not really here to test. It's more of a sign-off event.

But it's been great. Yeah, again, having the entire paddock involved in this, both manufacturer partners involved, sponsor partners involved with it, and the fans. So we would put something out, and once we did, we paid attention to the fans' reaction because we wanted to see if they thought we were going the right direction, because obviously that's one of the most important things, if not the most important thing.

So every step of the way we've done that. So this is a culmination of all that. You know, we'll see how it goes today.

Q. What is the timeframe of the manufacturers getting more cars and having more testing as far as more drivers available?

JAY FRYE: Well, the process or the testing plan is once we're done with our sign-off testing end of September, the manufacturers will get kits at that point. Then the manufacturers can go test with their teams.

At the end of November, the teams will get their kits, so the teams can start working on their stuff. They'll be able to start testing in January. So sign-off testing, manufacturing testing for a month and a half, two months, then the teams will get their kits, their private team tests.

Q. Are there limits on the manufacturer testing?

JAY FRYE: Yes, they get four. Four per, yes, and two cars.

Q. Choice of venues?

JAY FRYE: Whatever they want to do. Whatever team drivers they want to take, yes.

Q. Any tire testing involved with any of those teams?

JAY FRYE: There will be. Firestone is going to have a tire test here sometime in September. That might be where we bring an '18 car and '17 car to go back-to-back to see differences with the configurations. Again, fluid at this point. But, yes, Firestone is going to probably go to Phoenix to do a tire test, here. So, again, it's fluid at this point, but yes.

So today, I mean, this is their first chance to see the car with the tires on it. Today was simulation. You can be really far ahead. But, again, we talked yesterday about data doesn't drive. Today, this is the final product. Somebody's driving it and here we go, so this is what matters.

Q. Today is the day to see if the baby can walk?

JAY FRYE: Absolutely, I guess (laughter).

Again, I don't know how many times as racers you've

seen where the data shows this. Well, it's not doing that, you know, for whatever reason. And data is very good, but every now and then, you still have a human element to it. There's still somebody driving the car.

So we're very fortunate. We got two racecar drivers who have great experience that will provide great feedback today. So that will help this process go along quicker, too.

Q. Going back to process, what has been the most rewarding part of this process for you?

JAY FRYE: Again, just the collective effort that everybody's been involved. You know, I think it's good to have a plan. I think the teams, being a former team person, guy, you know, we have a five-year plan. This plan is always going to be three years out. As a team you can prepare and plan and see where we're going, what we're doing. To boot, the teams are all involved in this five-year plan. It's very transparent. Everybody understands where we're going. Everybody understands what it's going to cost.

Again, it was exciting for this to be the conduit, I guess, to put it all together, to have everybody's input. You know, it's been a real rewarding project. Again, today is a great day. We'll see what happens.

Q. Everything goes as planned today, is tomorrow just a repeat of what we're doing or a second stage?

JAY FRYE: We're going to check these boxes. If we get through all of them today, we might not even run them tomorrow, possibly. If we do run them tomorrow, doesn't mean anything is wrong from today.

We're getting a late start today from what we thought because, you know, different things. And that's fine. Tomorrow is as much a weather day. It's not just the car, the kit. The electronics have been moved, the air box. Everything is moved. So any time you move all that stuff, there's usually some bug that happens. Usually something small. But it slows you down, stops the test, you got to redo it.

We built in two days to do that. So Mid-Ohio next week, we're just doing one day. Iowa we're doing one day. Sebring is one day. Today we had two because this is the first.

Q. Thank you very much.

JAY FRYE: You bet. Thank you, guys.