

IndyCar Media Conference

Saturday August 26, 2017

Simon Pagenaud

Scott Dixon

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Joined by Simon Pagenaud, third-place finisher. We saw what happened in turn one. We'll start there, unfortunately.

SIMON PAGENAUD: Go ahead. Knock yourself out.

THE MODERATOR: How did you see what turned out to be the move of the race?

SIMON PAGENAUD: I think if it wasn't me, he would be in the fence with somebody else. That's what I've got to say.

THE MODERATOR: Talk about how the evening went. Did you feel like you could pass? Did you feel like it was the kind of crowd you expected, that kind of thing?

SIMON PAGENAUD: The crowd was amazing. A really amazing event. I think the track did a phenomenal job at, you know, repaving the place. It was really a proper track for IndyCar, I have to say. A lot of fun to drive.

Not that easy to pass, but overall it was a good race. Really had to work on the racecar the whole time. We did a good job with that on the 1 car, the Menards car with Chevy. Chevy was dominant this weekend.

I'm glad we didn't leave the win to this guy because that would have been bad for the team and for Chevy, considering how dominant we were as a team. He did a fantastic job.

But, you know, overall I'm pretty happy with the night. Obviously I wanted to win. We all want to win. Sometimes, you know, it is what it is.

THE MODERATOR: Scott, I would normally say I'm not sure how you got here, but you are Scott Dixon, four-time series champion. You didn't appear to have what you took --

SIMON PAGENAUD: That wasn't very nice.

THE MODERATOR: Seemed like the Penskes had you covered tonight. You persevered, took advantage of the situation, stayed close. How did you get to second?



SCOTT DIXON: I'll be honest. We didn't expect to finish on the podium. But yeah, you know, I think we saw in the warmup that the gap had closed significantly with the trim level that we were able to achieve. I think mechanically our car was very good. We took a pretty big step in downforce off the car. We weren't kind of sure how it was going to play out for the race.

Then also we had some misfortunes that played into help us out, especially with Simon and Josef in turn one, and then also with Will at the start.

Got to be in there to win. We tried our best. Second places with very strong, I think. Honda and NTT, No. 9. Got two strong tracks coming up that we can look forward to. See how it plays out.

As Simon touched upon, it's fantastic to come back to the track. I was here in 2003. Crowd didn't look like that. It was nice to come back and see the effort that everybody has put in from the IndyCar side to the promotor here, show that we can come back to these places, put on a good race, and, you know, get people in the stands.

THE MODERATOR: You had a good look at Will's situation.

SIMON PAGENAUD: Yeah, it was tricky. Cold tires, different rubber on the racetrack. The start was very difficult to get temperature in the tires. Obviously IndyCar, with the downforce level we have, the faster you go, the more you press the tires on the ground, creates pressure. It's very difficult the first few laps. We got caught out. It was a big moment. It was pretty hectic on the first lap.

It was very unfortunate for Will.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. At the end it looks like you and Josef were running more or less equal speed, and the gap didn't become shorter. The strategy of your team?

SCOTT DIXON: It was kind of all we could do is actually just hang there. There was numerous times I had some good runs through the exit of two, even with Simon and then with Helio later on in the race. We could kind of just get to them, and that would be it.

Unfortunately with the aero kit that we have, in this configuration, it just has a ton of drag. I think for me

personally, you know, running with them was the best opportunity for speed for us. It enabled us to stay with them. I think our car was quite good through one and two. Had we been out front, I think we would have been a sitting duck.

It worked out well with how the race played out. As I said earlier, it's kind of the best circumstances we could have helped for.

Q. (No microphone.)

SCOTT DIXON: No. Chip is on the 10 car stand. All we're doing is racing. We're trying to win. As Simon touched on, we're all here to win. Sometimes you have a better weekend, better speed, more opportunity. But for us, I think we exceeded the opportunities that we had set coming into this weekend.

Q. Simon, do you lose a little bit of the trust factor racing with Josef?

SIMON PAGENAUD: Absolutely. And respect, too. He doesn't have respect for me. I've never seen Scott do that to his teammates in his career, whole career. I respect the hell out of this guy here. Four-time champ. You know you can race him. He's a perfect example. You know you can race each other. Especially on an oval it's quite dangerous if you have an accident.

As a teammate I think we need to work together. Because if we (indiscernible) work together, he wins the race, it's terrible for the team. That's the kind of thing that's disappointing. At the moment it's not something I really want to talk about with him. But it will come to a conclusion, I'm sure.

Q. Simon, along the same lines, are you surprised it wasn't reviewed?

SIMON PAGENAUD: No, because there's no crash. It's more, how do you call it, a driver rule. It's how much you respect each other. When you think the gap is open enough to risk it on an oval. I'm not talking road course. I think on a road course, that was a beautiful pass. But we're not on a road course. There we are going 40, 50 miles an hour. Here we're doing 190 there. It's completely different story.

Q. Scott, what is the closest you recall having a moment like that with one of your teammates?

SCOTT DIXON: That's a good question. I've had a lot of teammates. Too many years, too. Must have been '04, '05, blocked in my memory. Tough years.

I don't know, Dario and I had some pretty close situations. But it never turned into anything too crazy, so... So did Dan and I actually. Yeah, I don't know.

It's a tough situation. Everybody is here to race to win. High-risk game, man.

Q. Simon, when that happened going into turn one with your teammate, it looked like you had contact.

I was wondering if you were worried about your car.

SIMON PAGENAUD: Wasn't much contact. It was a bit of a bump. I was wondering if (indiscernible) quite frankly. That's all. I was just busy trying to stay off the wall. So that was it. My momentum was dead. So, you know, at the time I was trying to get around Scott again, and the car felt great. It's just a real shame I couldn't stay out front.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, guys.