

IndyCar Media Conference

Wednesday December 13, 2017

Trevor Carlin Charlie Kimball Max Chilton

Press Conference

MODERATOR: Thank you. Welcome, everyone to today's IndyCar media teleconference. Tuesday top British open-wheel team, Carlin, announced it would join the Verizon IndyCar Series with a two-car entry for Verizon IndyCar Series veterans Max Chilton and Charlie Kimball. Both drivers will drive Chevrolet powered Indy cars in 2018, with Chilton being backed by international insurance brokerage risk management and consulting firm, Gallagher, and global health care company Novo Nordisk supporting Kimball.

We're pleased to be joined today by team principal Trevor Carlin, as well as Max Chilton in the U.K. and Charlie Kimball from his hometown in California. Gentlemen, thank you for taking the time to join us today.

All right, Trevor, we'll start with you. Congratulations on the announcement, and welcome to the Verizon IndyCar Series, when you brought your team to American motorsport in 2015 to compete in Indy Lights, you stated to the goal was to be in the Verizon IndyCar Series. Why is it the right time to move.

TREVOR CARLIN: Well, I mean, we've been here in the States racing now for three years. We still need to learn the ropes and understand the culture of American racing. We started off very well in 2015, had some great results. We had Max and Ed, and sort of closed the job in 2016 and won the championship, which I think is always crucial to any team or any driver moving up the ladder.

We had a year of consolidation in 2017 where we increased the size of the team slightly. Now with the new aero kit and the new regulations, 2018 was the obvious time for us to step forward. Then with having the possibility to have two ex-Carlin winning drivers for us with Max and Charlie, that the stars really aligned. So it was one of those things that was destined to happen, really.

MODERATOR: You talked about race winning drivers for Carlin. You look throughout the Motorsports world and you see drivers who have raced for and won for Carlin. What will it be like for you to have your own cars in the field with Max and Charlie and see so many



familiar faces on the Grid, drivers like Josef Newgarden, Robert Wickens and Takuma Sato?

TREVOR CARLIN: It will be great fun, really. It's like a reunion in the paddock with so many of the guys that have raced for us. It will be fun with we're on the pit row and chatting, but also when the drivers get in the car, it gets serious. We'll be doing our best to beat them, but race them cleanly and fairly.

At the end of the day our job is Carlin. For Max and Charlie, you have to give them the best tools possible. To go out and be super competitive. So we can be friends off track, but on track, it's going to be serious.

MODERATOR: All right. Max, you moved to the States to race in Indy Lights with Carlin in 2015. It's been a team that you've had great success with throughout your junior career. How excited are you for the 2018 season to begin with Carlin?

MAX CHILTON: I'm over the moon. It's been a long-time coming. Myself, Colin Hale, Trevor Carlin and Stephanie Carlin have put a lot of time and effort in plotting and planning to make this happen, and it's finally happened. I always say to people, Carlin to me is like home. It's where my heart has been. It's where my heart will always be.

I've always left to go to other teams such as Marussia, Formula 1, and the Le Mans program and Chip Ganassi. But there was always part of me back at Carlin. I've been waiting for this to happen. My whole career, the best years of my career have always been Carlin. I've never not won for them in British F3, GP2, and Indy Lights, so I'm hopeful that we can get a victory in 2018 season. That would be remarkably good. But actually, we can keep that consecutive wins going.

The other thing, which is so exciting is I say Carlin are arguably the best single-make Formula team in the world, and IndyCar next year is going to be the nearest to it one makes it's ever been. So it's the right time, as Trevor said, to jump in and go guns blazing. I think we've got the right programs aboard to get quick.

I'm not saying we're going to be right there at race one. But I think by the end of the season or at least middle of the season I'm going to be trying for some pretty decent results and finish fairly high up in the championship. So it's very exciting. I've been wanting

this step for a long time, and it's finally happened.

MODERATOR: Max, what does it mean to you as a British INDYCAR driver to be driving for a British INDYCAR team?

MAX CHILTON: For me, I'm very passionate about Great Britain. That's why I choose to still live here. This is where my heart and home is. It's something which has happened before with Lotus and McLaren, but not for like official championship run. They've done one-off races, many in the 500.

So it's a change of time for IndyCar to have an International Team come in, especially British, which has such a huge part of global motorsports, to come in with a British driver, and Charlie that's already racing for the team, to come in and I'm hopeful we can have some good success. But we've also got Gallagher, who is my partner on the American side. So there is a nice sort of American-British feel to the team.

MODERATOR: Charlie, as we mentioned by Trevor and Max, you have a history with Carlin as well. Does this feel like you're kind of doing a homecoming as well by moving to Carlin for 2018?

CHARLIE KIMBALL: Absolutely. Racing for Carlin has always felt like family. In fact, my sister met her husband, my brother-in-law when he was working for Carlin while I was racing for Trevor. So there are more than just that familial feel with racing for the team. It runs deeper than that.

Especially this week, you understand the importance of family and this announcement, to be able to rejoin Carlin, I've always felt a part of Carlin since I first raced for them in 2005 and finished second in the championships to Alvaro Parente. It was a great season.

Then in 2007, going through that transition of getting diagnosed with type 1 diabetes, and starting to build a relationship with Novo Nordisk, because you mentioned, a global health care company that makes the insulins and delivery devices that I use every day to manage my diabetes, Trevor and his team were there with me through that transition.

So we've had great times in Victory Lane and doused in champagne, and we've also gone through challenges together. So rejoining them and bringing Max as well, I think maintaining that relationship as teammates, I feel very confident and extremely excited about how 2018's going to start and develop and grow. I think the future for Carlin here in North America is very bright, but also for the Verizon IndyCar Series.

It's proof that this series is growing and becoming more viable globally, because Carlin is a British team. Gallagher and Novo Nordisk are international

companies. I think that is a great indication of the State of affairs in IndyCar Racing at the moment.

MODERATOR: Seven seasons under your belt in the Verizon IndyCar Series, including a few with Chevrolet Power. How does your experience working with Chevy and in the series benefit the effort at Carlin?

CHARLIE KIMBALL: Well, it's great to be back with Team Chevy. They are definitely committed to being successful. I think since the manufacturer's competition has been reintroduced at the IndyCar Series, they've won every single manufacturer's trophy, and I know that their goals from when I raced with them in '14, '15, and '16 remain the same to this day. And that is to win the Indy 500 and win the Manufacturers' Championship.

I'm hoping that as a Chevy team we can help them achieve those goals. Having worked with them, I have a lot of confidence and a lot of faith in their technical partners with Pratt & Miller and Elmore Engineering. And it's nice as an American to represent that tie on such an iconic American motor brand on the engine cover and on my fire suit.

Q. Trevor, you guys have had now three years in Indy Lights, but you've actually got to race against a number of IndyCar teams that have Indy Lights programs. How did that level of competition prepare you guys for the graduation into IndyCar?

TREVOR CARLIN: Yeah, it's a big challenge. We obviously knew going into Lights we would be going up against Andretti and Schmidt. So we knew we'd have to be on our A game. And it was really tough to begin with.

We may have won the first three races, but there was a lot of learning to be done. So it wasn't as easy as it looks, and we've got massive respect for these teams.

And because of that respect, we worked harder than we've ever worked. And in the end we got the result because we understand the resources these guys have got. So it was good to see that we could beat them on a level playing field in Lights.

I think it's going to be a lot harder to beat them in IndyCar because they've got years of engrained knowledge. So we've got to play catch-up very quickly.

Q. Max, since you've seen the team at three or four different series, how has the team stayed as competitive as it is and as quality as it is in different championships, because since you have to adjust to different rules or different schedules or what have you?

MAX CHILTON: I'll say it comes from the top, and Trevor is really at the top. He's a super consistent sort of, let's say, manager of people. He gets the right people involved.

But, most importantly, people aren't afraid of him. I've been at teams where people are sort of like the boss walks in and they treat him like headmaster and you can see them sort of squirm up and they don't want to talk to him. That's not the way a team should run.

A team owner, team manager, should be speaking to every single person on the team regardless of what level of job they're at to see that everything is going well there and bringing everyone together.

And he won't run the IndyCar program any different than a British Formula 4 program. It's about managing people, getting everyone so that they're working efficiently and giving the drivers the best tools to do the job.

And I've never seen it not that way. Every team I've driven for here in the different categories, we're always given a good well-prepared car, probably the best prepared cars I've ever had. That's part of it. The cars we touch are very reliable, and it's always a pleasure to drive for Trevor.

Q. Trevor, you guys obviously are located in Florida now. Is that the plan to keep the team located in Florida?

TREVOR CARLIN: Yeah, our main base will stay here in Delray. If you look at the schedule, you'll find that there's pretty much six months of downtime between the end of one season and the beginning of the next. And then obviously the winter testing takes place down here in Florida.

So logistically for six months of the year this works very well. We will have a satellite base in Indianapolis, which we're just in the process of taking on now, and we'll -- and I will be dropping in and out of there and obviously be there for the whole of the month of May. So we'll be there for three months.

But being Brits, we do like a bit of sunshine and we try and escape the snow. So, yeah, we've become snowbirds for the winter.

Q. You moved over here, I think the first time I saw Carlin in operation in the U.S. was at a test at Nola. And you were changing tires and you were helping with that. But the one thing I noticed is that obviously preparation is important to you guys. Was there someone like a Penske that you looked up to as a team owner or someone in Europe that you looked up to that drove that preparation side of the team?

TREVOR CARLIN: Well, I mean, obviously being based in the UK, we're surrounded by Formula 1 teams. And the level of all, every Formula 1 team, from the top to the bottom, is extremely high. So we always model ourselves on the Formula 1 teams, as do all the other European teams, really, be it an F2 or F3 or F4.

But obviously the absolute role model in the U.S.A. is Roger Penske's team because he operates at a Formula 1 level.

So, yeah, we strive to be as good to be an F1 team and strive to be as good as Roger Penske. Double pronged. We always do our best. There's more we can always do. That's the philosophy on the team: We can always improve.

Q. Trevor, for the present, is your sponsorship mostly coming from overseas or the U.S.? I'm sure you'd be happy for U.S. sponsorship.

TREVOR CARLIN: We're dealing with global corporations that operate everywhere now. A.J. Gallagher, their head office is in Chicago. It's an American-based company. Novo Nordisk, I believe their offices are in Denmark, but they have a massive presence in U.S.A. We've dealt with the U.S.A. marketing and branding department.

So in theory all our sponsorship is U.S.A.-based which we're very proud of that, being a British team and operating abroad, it's great to have U.S.-based sponsors.

Q. Speaking of Great Britain, going into 2018, you got Lewis Hamilton coming off another world championship. What is your perception? I know you're an ex-pat now working in the United States, but what is your perception of the interest in the UK and Great Britain in IndyCar? Where does it stand?

TREVOR CARLIN: Well, it's growing all the time. And it helped massively this year by Fernando Alonso coming over and doing the Indy 500. And I operate with the junior drivers in motorsport.

And last year I had a huge amount of interest. People asking me about racing in the states, the youngsters asking about USF2000 and all the way up to IndyCar. So hopefully we can be a bit of a showroom, a window for the European guys to see what's possible in America and we can bring some people over here, drivers and sponsors, let them realize what a great package it is and obviously send it around the Indy 500, which is the ultimate showcase of motorsport in the world, the number one event.

Q. Trevor, who are you bringing in for engineering on the two cars?

TREVOR CARLIN: We've got some good guys already employed by Carlin, some Indy Lights chaps and some guys from Europe. We've taken on some guys from another team, which I'd rather not say their names over the interview, if you don't mind. We'll do probably a formal announcement of the team lineup in January when we start testing.

But we've got a real mixture of experienced guys in IndyCar and then experienced race engineers in other

formulas, who will be learning about IndyCar. But what we're pushing for is I have a really young, energetic team, with their eyes wide open and open to ideas and open to a new challenge.

So it's a bold step. We haven't just gone for a whole team of existing experienced guys. We want to sort of have a fresh approach to it. And it's worked for us in the past. And fingers crossed it will work for us again this year.

Q. As to the folks whose names who shall not be mentioned here, are they folks who were in the paddock last year?

TREVOR CARLIN: Yes, they are.

Q. Charlie and Max, I'm just curious what sort of advantages you guys believe you'll have going into next year after working together for the last two years.

CHARLIE KIMBALL: The biggest advantage is that Max and I having worked together for two years in an existing IndyCar team, one that has a lot of experience, we've been able to help each other -- I've learned a lot from Max about different approaches and concepts and I hope he's been able to learn from some of my experience in IndyCar.

And having that dialogue, that relationship, that communication, that foundation already built means that when we get to the racetrack for the first time, we're not learning each other as people or as drivers, we're just getting to work on getting up to speed.

And, Max, I'll let you chime in on your thoughts there.

MAX CHILTON: Yeah, Charlie sort of nailed it on the head. But the important thing is we've got a very short period of time between when we first drive the car and the first race. And so there's no learning phases.

I know Charlie and I, for the last few years, we shared the same room in the Ganassi bus. So we know each other as friends but we also know how we sort of like to engineer the cars and drive. He's raced with the team before. I've raced with the team before. And actually some of the mechanics who mechanic my car in 2009 would be on my car in IndyCar.

So there's so much less learning for a new team than usually. So that's going to speed up the process. And I'm really looking forward to getting on with it and hopefully getting some success soon.

TREVOR CARLIN: I would like to add something to that question. For a team to have two experienced guys like Max and Charlie, our first day testing will be a massive bonus to the team, because we know we can rely on the drivers to do the job. So we can just focus on the job we've got to do.

So both those drivers are a massive asset to our team. And they're going to be a big part of pushing the team forward very, very quickly. So we're very fortunate to have both those guys.

Q. Trevor, you've got success in so many categories all over the world. Can you just talk about the history of that success and how it's kind of led to this point?

TREVOR CARLIN: I mean, we started off as a team, 17 or 18 years ago with just one Formula 3 car and the reason that team worked so well then was because of fabulous Australian engineer, a guy called Bruce Carey, passed away unfortunately a few years ago.

But he taught myself and my other mechanics and engineers how to do a job properly and not take shortcuts and take your time and do things right. And what we've done now for the last 17 years is applied that principle to everything we do, be it a Formula 4 car, Formula 3 car, Formula 2, Indy Lights, Porsche Supercup, all these things we've done.

We've used the same approach in everything we do. We're patient and we're methodical, and we work hard. And because of that we've instilled that into the company and everybody, I'm very proud to say we've got 80, 90, probably 100 people by the time this program starts, on board, and they all share the same vision that we work hard and we are super competitive.

We're fair. We don't cheat. We do things properly. And the results that you have seen over the last few years come from that philosophy and I'm very proud of the team and very excited about the future and if we can pull off some big results in IndyCar in the next few years, then that will be magnificent. So just simple, really, just hard work and patience.

Q. Going into IndyCar next year, obviously it's a new body. There's all things that are completely different compared to a year ago. But you're also undertaking returning to F2s. Could you talk maybe about the challenge of that process of going into two different series that are going to be undertaking a lot of different differences in their own right?

TREVOR CARLIN: Well, the first thing I have to say is that all our teams operate independently. So the only crossover between the teams is myself. So the Formula 2 team has its own technical director, own team manager, mechanics and engineers, and does the IndyCar team, which is headed up by Colin Hale. They're treated individually.

And we're working in the same way. But as a challenge, the only challenge really is for me to work out which events I'm going to be at because I obviously can't be at all of them because there will be clashes.

So, yeah, it's really -- we've done this sort of stuff

before. It's our day job. We enjoy it. We enjoy the challenges. And if we can win races in Formula 2 and be competitive and win races in IndyCar, then that will be job done, really.

MODERATOR: Thank you.