

IndyCar Media Conference

Sunday May 27, 2018

Roger Penske

Tim Cindric

Jon Bouslog

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Roger Penske, along with Tim Cindric, Jon Bouslog.

Congratulations, gentlemen. A familiar place at the podium, another victory, 17 now for Team Penske.

Talk about that as a team accomplishment, then we'll talk about Will.

ROGER PENSKE: All I can say is when I came here 1951, I guess something bit me. I can never get rid of it for so many years.

We started competing here, as you know, in '69. The success we've had has really been all about the team members, the people we've had, the great drivers, sponsors, and obviously Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

As I said many times in the last couple days, to be able to race on Memorial Day in the biggest sporting event in the world, have America the way it is, that's what I'm going to take away from this race. To see what we have, to see what Will has been able, 10 years with his engineer Dave Faustino. He's won many road races, all sorts of poles. He won this race today because he was the best, there's no question about the speed at the end, his out laps, the pit crew I take my hat off to, Jon, and Tim Cindric, because we had four great cars. That's what you have to have here. You have to have four bullets, three bullets, whatever it takes.

I'm just so thrilled. 17 wins. Now I have to worry about 18. I'm not going to look back, I'll look forward. We have to be back next year.

THE MODERATOR: Tim, talk about the couple moments in Will's career, he stands in for Helio, then he breaks his back, but you stayed with him. Now 34 wins I believe it is, ties Al Unser Jr. on the chart and is moving up. Great career he's having.

TIM CINDRIC: Yeah, when you look at it, there was a lot of discussion, took him a long time to win a championship. Had so many wins. When you see he's third in overall poles in IndyCar right now. The one thing he always talked about was, I have to win the Indy 500, I have to win the Indy 500 to get where you



need to be.

Having seen what he's gone through with our team, what we've all gone through collectively, like Roger said, Dave Faustino has been at his side from day one. He's been the one that's listened to all the ups and downs. He's been on-call 24/7. The rest of us kind of check in and check out with Will. Faustino, he's there more than his wife, and she's a close second. Between the two of those people, they're really his support group at the end of the day.

The crew, like Roger said, they were prepared. Will was agonizing during dinner as far as what his setup was, what his gears were going to be. His mind never leaves this sport. He's fully committed. He has made a lot of sacrifices. To see the culmination. I think you saw how excited he was today. You don't see that out of Will too often. Great day for us and the team.

THE MODERATOR: Jon, talk about the strategy that was playing out, what may or may not have been in front of you with a few laps to go.

JON BOUSLOG: Well, we really didn't want to see the caution come out. I think the key to it was, like Roger said, he was good all day. When he got clear, he could run fast laps, which was big for us.

The thing was is he was so focused on the win, doing well, that it was his day. He was going to make sure it was.

The guys, great stops today. The whole team performed well. So many things go into it.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Mr. Penske, talk about how this win essentially completes the journey for Will now that he's won a championship and the Indy 500, but the journey is far from over.

ROGER PENSKE: Look, this closes the book for what he wanted to accomplish in IndyCar: win a championship, now is tied for winning the most races as an Indy driver for the team, and the Indy 500 is something that he wanted to do from the very beginning. He's had some ups and downs. Championships slipped away from him, two or three almost in a row. You'll talk to him. He's in a different world right now, which is important.

TIM CINDRIC: He's always in a different world (laughter).

Q. Mr. Penske, will you go back on Will's radio at Detroit next week?

ROGER PENSKE: I don't know. I think I got fired. Won two in a row now. I'll have to have a discussion on that next week. We'll see.

Q. Quick memory check. I believe 12 different drivers had contributed to your 17 wins here. Their personalities range every aspect of the spectrum in terms of being different guys. Can you think of a common thread that might have united all of them to win for you here?

ROGER PENSKE: I think teamwork, working together. If you saw what these guys have done from Mark Donohue, Gary Bettenhausen in '72. They work together. Only one guy is going to win. But if the team wins, you win, and that's what happened today.

Q. Roger, I saw you pump your fist when the two leaders came down pit road. How concerned were you they might be able to make it?

ROGER PENSKE: Well, the concern is that they were out there, had there been another yellow at the end with two or three to go, it would have been all over, the 64 or 25 would have won the race.

We knew they were close. My concern was, and Tim's, that they would run out at high speed or something, we'd get into an accident.

Look, he was coming. There was no way. We had the fuel, which we needed. They didn't. A great gamble, by the way. A lap or two difference, someone else would have been the winner.

Q. Roger and Tim, what did you see 10 or 11 years ago in Will Power that told you he could be that kind of racer?

TIM CINDRIC: If you remember back to the situation that Helio had there, Will honestly wasn't on our radar screen. I talked to him a little bit before, but we didn't really have a spot.

It was obvious Helio wasn't going to be there for the first race in St. Pete. Roger and I, we made a short list of kind of who might be the right one for that situation. But with Helio, we weren't sure how that was all going to turn out. I don't know anybody was.

When we met with him, the one thing that stood out for us, at that point we couldn't commit to a full season, we couldn't commit to more than one race, we couldn't make a lot of commitments because we were loyal to Helio's situation. We didn't really want to add another car.

He looked at us both and said, I'll run one lap, no laps, any laps. I just want to be on the team.

He was a team player from the very beginning. He did a great job. Should have won St. Pete. I remember being on his pit box. He was running the Marlboro car at the time. We ran the session, he was P1. Helio had just been cleared. I said, Do you want the good news or the bad news?

What's that?

Well, you're P1 and you're getting out of this car after this session, we have another car for you. At that point Roger told him, that night, Hey, no matter what happens, you have a ride at the Indy 500. Verizon stood behind him. They were really a big part of his career, going to another level when he signed with us, and he took it from there with his talent.

Q. Roger, how has Will been able to turn a weakness, which was oval racing, into a strength?

ROGER PENSKE: I think most road racers have been able to transition into oval racers. Probably you've seen Wickens, some of these guys even this year. He just is a talented guy. He didn't like ovals to start with, I can tell you. He struggled initially.

Once he got going, what was the race, I think Texas, one of them, where he absolutely was dominant. I think that's when he broke through, was going to be a great oval driver.

You could see it out here today. Look at his line, 223 miles an hour the last couple laps. He drove everything he could. In fact, he said at the road race, he had never driven harder in a road race in his life when he was on those black tires. He had the (indiscernible) in his this month for sure.

Q. The strategy, were you aware that the rival engine could do it?

JON BOUSLOG: We knew they were close. I got to say I was a little surprised they pulled in like they did. We didn't want to see that yellow come out because it gave him a chance. But we knew with the pace of the car that regardless if they could make it or not, Will had pace to pass them. We still had a chance. We were still in it even though some of us were thinking might be over, especially if another yellow came out because of the length of the yellows.

Once it got down deeper into the race, five to go or something, a yellow came out, it could have ended under yellow. We were happy that they went green. That's been kind of the thing with Kyle Novak, tries to get back racing as quick as he can, which is good. That was good for us. Gave us a chance. He capitalized on it.

Q. Roger, Castroneves didn't end the way he wanted. As soon as he finished, he made a claim he would like to be back. Do you expect to have

him back again?

ROGER PENSKE: It's hard to say no to him, isn't it?

I have to talk to the president here. He'll figure that one out for me (laughter).

TIM CINDRIC: He's going to be back. He will be here next year in one of our cars. I'll say it, so... That guy was sitting here this morning before I walked in, sitting in his fire suit next to his engineer ready to go, about 6:30 this morning. He's been in his yellow suit, I don't think I've seen him out of his yellow suit since we got here this month. He's ready to go all the time.

Q. This is the first time in your owners career that your driver is Australian. 17 wins you have, 10 U.S. drivers, seven foreign drivers. How do you see in the last couple of wins, you have always a foreign driver? Do you think the dominance of the U.S. driver is irrelevant? Why are the foreigners dominating?

ROGER PENSKE: I don't look at their passports when we hire them. That's the first thing. Number two, an American driver won the championship last year.

Look, we're trying to get the best people we can. Obviously Will is kind of special from Australia. We're racing down there, having success. We have a big business down there. You could say this might be Will's home track away from home.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much, guys. We'll see you next week.