

# IndyCar Media

## Conference

Saturday June 23, 2018

## Robert Wickens

## Sebastien Bourdais

Fast Six Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We'll go ahead and get started with our Verizon IndyCar Series post-qualifying press conference. Joined now by Robert Wickens, driving the No. 6 Lucas Oil SPM Honda for Schmidt Peterson Motorsports and starting fifth in tomorrow's Kohler Grand Prix here at Road America.

Robert, what a difference a year makes. We talked to you earlier this weekend about making your IndyCar race weekend debut last year, now starting fifth in tomorrow's race. Your thoughts on the qualifying session and the performance of your car.

ROBERT WICKENS: I thought Q1 went well. The track was quite a bit different than it was in practice 3, but we made some small changes to the car to try to improve and try to keep changing the track, and I think maybe we should have just left the same car because I was a lot happier with the car in final practice than I was through qualifying. We just kind of never got the balance back to where I was fully confident to challenge for pole position.

Luckily we made it to the Fast Six. Starting fifth tomorrow, anything can happen, but I think it's hard to be like really happy with the result because I guess we've been fairly strong all weekend, and I think we all expected to be at least in the top three this afternoon. But nevertheless, fifth isn't the end of the world. I'd happily start here compared to sixth or seventh, so we'll see.

THE MODERATOR: What does that say about the strength of your team and the confidence you have in your team that you are starting fifth in tomorrow's race and I sense a slight disappointment in that result?

ROBERT WICKENS: Yeah, I mean, I think when you start a weekend as strongly as we have, you kind of have that confidence going in. You know, I like to think I'm always pushing the guys more and more even though we're quick and always trying to find ways to be better. But sometimes you've got that little bit of extra speed, sometimes you don't, and to be honest, this weekend I thought I had it, but then qualifying rolled around and now we're fifth. Just goes to show how strong the Verizon IndyCar Series is. But tomorrow is a long race, and I think we have a pretty good race car.

THE MODERATOR: Starting next to you will be Sebastien Bourdais, driving the No. 18 Team SealMaster Honda for Dale Coyne Racing with Vasser-Sullivan starting sixth in tomorrow's race, a former pole winner, a former winner here at the track. Sebastien, it's been a while, but it seems that you've gotten your car in a position to possibly challenge for a win tomorrow. Is that how you feel, as well?

SEBASTIEN BOURDAIS: Yeah, I don't know. I'd like to say so, but I'm not sure I believe it myself. It's been a bit of a tough day. I thought after yesterday we thought we had everything under control, and things were looking good, and this morning we rolled out and struggled with grip, and then we went into qualify and really struggled for good. I think I only did one good lap to be honest with you in Q2 on that new set of option tires.

Yeah, everything was really scrappy and really difficult to put anything together. In Q3 I really didn't get anything done properly. We tried one lap on both sets, but I'm not convinced it was the right thing to do, hindsight 20/20. Yeah, just one of those where you come out of the car and you're not quite sure what else you should or would have done, but not super happy with the way things have gone. The guys did a really good job, but I just -- yeah, I'm struggling to read anything that's happening out there, it's up and down, making a lot of mistakes, so don't really feel great about it.

**Q. Sebastien, will you do any changes or your engineers to the car? Is this maybe a question mark what will happen tomorrow in the race?**

SEBASTIEN BOURDAIS: I mean, there's always a -- you can always throw the kitchen sink at the car, but at the end of the day, it's not really a smart thing to do, especially, like you said, when there's no warmup. So I think we'll probably go for minor changes, things that we can have a good idea what they're going to do to the car that either we've done before during the weekend or things that are kind of for-sures. But honestly, it's not really that much about balance. I'm not really worried too much about the balance or anything. I'm just struggling for grip and predictability. It is what it is. We'll try and take a good look at everything we've done today and see if we can find out what ways we can make the car better.