

IndyCar Media Conference

Saturday August 18, 2018

Will Power

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Joined now by our pole winner and reigning Indy 500 champion Will Power, driving the No. 12 Verizon Team Penske Chevrolet. His first pole here at Pocono, but he is a two-time winner here, in fact has won the last two races here in a row, and also the last three 500-mile races in the Verizon IndyCar Series, making his ninth front row start. With his 53rd career pole, ties A.J. Foyt for all time second on the poles list. How does that sound?

WILL POWER: Sounds very cool. I never thought I'd be up in that sort of company. To be next to A.J. Foyt's name, I wouldn't have expected that when I started my career. So amazing.

THE MODERATOR: Mario is at 67. How do you feel about that? Is that attainable?

WILL POWER: I thought about that. I thought about how many times I've lost pole by like a hundredth this year. But it is possible to reach that. That would be amazing. I don't know, but just happy to be next to A.J. Foyt.

THE MODERATOR: Qualifying run today, quite a bit faster than your teammate Josef Newgarden. When did you find in those laps that gave you that speed?

WILL POWER: I trimmed out a bit more. Obviously the car was handling reasonably well. Very, very good, solid first lap, big first lap. Obviously dropoff in the second lap. Had to lift out of one, but still fast.

We just nailed the gear and everything for that run, so it was very nice.

THE MODERATOR: Like I mentioned, you come in here as the winner of the past two races here at Pocono Raceway. You are contending for a championship. You have a little bit more work to do than some of your other competitors. Do you feel an extra level of confidence when you come into a place like Pocono?

WILL POWER: I really enjoy the track. It's such a competitive series. You never know how you're going to stack up week in, week out. We've been quick everywhere. I expect to be running at the front tomorrow.

We just need to have a good day in relation to Scott,

because that's the points deficit that we need to close. Couple of guys in front of me that are easily able to be caught, but Dixon's lead is pretty big for me. I need him to have a bad run, I need to have a good run, have a good shot at him at the last race.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Will.

Q. What have your thoughts been about this new aero kit, especially today?

WILL POWER: I think they nailed it in a lot of respects. It looks better. It definitely performs better as far as racing goes. Obviously they're still tweaking on a few things for certain tracks, but all in all it's a very nimble, fun car to drive.

I think Jay Frye, Bill Pappas, Tino Belli really have done a great job this year in every respect. Such a strong group on the competition side to have at IndyCar.

Q. From practice to qualifying, around five miles quicker. You mentioned gear and trim. Was this the main reason why you went quicker in qualifying?

WILL POWER: Yeah. I didn't get a good run in practice because of the yellow at the end. I was just in traffic. I didn't really have a feel for how much we should trim, how difficult it was going to be.

Yeah, it was just the fact I was in total clear air there. It was the potential of our car.

Q. How noticeable are the seams out there? How hazardous can they be in the race?

WILL POWER: I think there's a seam going into three that rubbers up pretty well anyway. I mean, this track takes rubber well. The track starts out quite difficult, then by the end of the race, as you saw last year, it starts to become really hooked up. It's good racing.

All the seams and bumps and that sort of thing is real character for tracks. When they're dead smooth, yeah, it's all right, but it's just the way it is.

Q. Is this almost like driving a road course with all left hand turns because it does take some finesse?

WILL POWER: It does, yeah. It's like Indianapolis in that respect, you're taking a racing line. It's not kind of like a mile-and-a-half oval, but it's a very cool, unique track. I really enjoy it. It's a great layout. We have really good racing here. It's fun to drive.

Q. Obviously you had a very quick car today. How much does weather, cloud cover, play a role in what you were able to accomplish here today?

WILL POWER: Yeah, I think weather and rubber. Obviously the cooler the track, the better it is. The more rubber that goes down, the better it is. For sure, if you're at the tail end of the run, the cars going out, you're going to have a better track. Incrementally slowly gets better, yeah. That's the way it is.

They don't draw it out of a hat any more, which is great. You earn your position in the line.

Q. What kind of race do you expect tomorrow? I know at Indy there wasn't as much passing this year as there was in the previous year. How do you think it's going to be here with this new package?

WILL POWER: It's difficult to say. I think this car drafts really well. Just didn't get a feel for it in practice. I think it will be good racing, similar to Indy. I mean, Indy this year, with the worst-case scenario as far as grip goes, it was such a hot day. Doesn't matter what body kit you have on a hot day like that, it's difficult with a track temp that high.

Seems like a pretty nice day tomorrow as far as being cool. So, yeah, we'll see. Time will tell.

Q. New front wing configuration, was the team able to do simulations before you came?

WILL POWER: Yeah, I'm sure they ran it in the wind tunnel, got as much information as they could. As you saw, a few different configurations of the bits you're allowed to use. Every wind tunnel gets different reads. Yeah, just put the front wing in a better range basically.

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations. Thank you very much.

WILL POWER: Thank you.