

IndyCar Media Conference

Saturday August 18, 2018

Josef Newgarden

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We will get started with our post qualifying press conference. Joined by Josef Newgarden, driving the No. 1 Hitachi Team Penske Chevrolet for Team Penske, reigning series champion and also ties his best career start here at Pocono Raceway. Also his sixth front row start in the 2018 season.

Josef, it seemed like Team Penske in particular had a lot of speed coming out to qualifying this weekend. How did you feel about your qualifying effort?

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Yeah, pretty happy with it. We had a good run. I was really happy with my two laps. Just wasn't enough for pole, unfortunately. I felt good going into it. I thought we'd have a good run. With where it stands, it's great. 1-2 for Team Penske, can't be mad about that. We have a good start for tomorrow.

Now we just work on our racecar, try to get that dialed in as best as we can, see what we can do for 500 miles.

THE MODERATOR: Your mentality is to take one session at a time. What is your mindset coming into this weekend knowing the championship is going down to the final few races?

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Same as always: maximize the result for the weekend. We have to focus on building a fantastic car in the race. If we have that, try to get the most out of that. If we have a first place car, try to finish first. If we have a fifth place car, try to finish fifth or better. We'll try to maximize our performance capability for tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: Coming into the weekend, weather was a bit of an uncertainty. Things appear to be clearing up for tomorrow. What are your expectations on what we might see in the race?

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Yeah, I hope the weather holds up. It looks like it's definitely gotten a lot better for tomorrow, which is great. It's always a bummer when you come to this type of race and it rains. Especially if you have to come back the next day, no one wants to do that. None of the fans want to see it.

Excited to run. Racing-wise, I don't know. I think we'll have a similar race to Indianapolis. Will it be much different than that? I don't know yet. We didn't get

much race running in in that first session. It was pretty jumbled up just trying to get our feet underneath is really fast, qualify the car.

If we run this afternoon, we'll have a lot better idea. I think we're all going into it a little bit blind on to how the race is going to unfold.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Josef.

Q. How did the new aero kit fare out there today?

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Good, I think the speeds were still pretty solid, which is great. It feels similar to last year. A little tougher I would say. I think we were lifting a lot more this morning. T3 we were lifting more in race running than last year. T2 is a lot harder right now. Really the same with turn one. Old track has become a little bit more difficult from a grip standpoint.

But with this aero kit, we've seen it has great drivability. You can get it sideways, have more room to catch it. I think it's performed similar to what we've seen all year.

Q. How similar are the Penske cars trimmed out or set up between you and your teammates? Identical?

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Pretty close, yeah. Simon was probably the most different. Me and Will were very close, very similar.

Q. Your last lap was the same at Will's last lap. First lap a mile-and-a-half slower. Any reason for that?

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Yeah, good question. I don't know, man. That's all I had. I was trying to hop in the seat to make it go quicker. That was the speed.

I don't know. I wish I had that mile-and-a-half somewhere. I don't know where it was.

Q. With the new bits that they've put on the front wing, how do you think that's going to maybe enhance passing tomorrow? Indianapolis is a different track, but there are long sections here similar to Indy. Would you think they're going to do the same thing for next year in May for Indy?

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Yeah, I mean, I think we're doing everything we can to make the kit as racy as possible at a place like Indy or here. With the extensions on the front wing, I don't know how much it will change the racing. I don't have a great feel off of that one session we've run.

I don't think it will be too different, but I don't want to speak too soon. It's really just to allow us to get more balance. That's what those parts are for. More front downforce in the car, that's the idea of them. Is that going to change the racing product drastically? I don't know yet.

We'll find out in the race. If it's not enough, we want to do more, we'll work with IndyCar to find more solutions.

THE MODERATOR: Josef, thank you.

JOSEF NEWGARDEN: Thank you.