

# IndyCar Media Conference

Friday August 31, 2018

## Will Power

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We will go ahead and get started with this afternoon's press conference. Joined now by Will Power of the driver of the No. 12 Verizon Team Penske Chevrolet for the team, who was fastest in this afternoon's session, actually second fastest overall throughout the day, with a time of 57.4053 seconds. In fact, both drivers who were fastest throughout the day were underneath the previous track record set by Justin Wilson, again, not a track record until we get qualifying, but Will, it seems like the drivers were able to find a lot of speed in the track today. What did you notice from the test that you gathered yesterday that you were able to apply today?

WILL POWER: Yeah, it was just a lot of rubber going down, very, very high grip surface, probably the most -- the most grip we've had all year at a track. It's really hooked up around here.

I think it's actually a lot of fun, very technical track, and just really enjoying driving around here.

THE MODERATOR: You have made a couple of starts here at Portland previously; does it feel like a completely new track with the 2018 aero kit?

WILL POWER: Yeah, it's -- the old track, before it was resurfaced, it had patches in the middle of the corners and was definitely nowhere near the grip of this, and this car, I think, has more grip anyway. It's definitely fast in these cars, and fun.

THE MODERATOR: What's your mindset heading into this weekend knowing that you're making gains and there's a lot of buzz going on about the fact that you seem to be surging at just the right time? Do you feel like you still have a very reasonable chance to win a championship, and what goals do you have for this week in particular?

WILL POWER: We simply have to finish ahead of Dixon and Rossi. There's just no other two ways about it. That's what we have to do. If we don't, we really don't have a chance at Sonoma.

That's what we have to do, and that's what we're setting out to do.

**Q. You said that you absolutely have to finish ahead of those two drivers, so how do you play that out throughout the race? Do you go about the**

**race trying to win it, or are you going to be fed information about where they are and when they're going to pit and such things as that?**

WILL POWER: Yeah, we'll see after qualifying. If we're ahead of them, it makes the job a little easier. Ideally we need to be on pole. You know, and if we're around them, obviously got to race them very aggressively, need to get by them at the start or at some point. Yeah, it's just take it as it comes. Obviously no one knows what's going to happen or how it's going to play out, but we've got to be on our toes and make the right decisions.

**Q. At some road courses, not everywhere, some traffic and overtaking is not easy. What's the overtaking situation here, the possibility in a traffic situation?**

WILL POWER: It's really hard to say right now. I don't know. I really couldn't tell -- feels like it's going to be difficult to pass because there's very fast-lying corners, but you just don't know. Seven might be a place that you can make some moves, so we'll see what happens.

**Q. Were you expecting a greater gain from the red tires? Do you think you actually saw representative lap times from reds this afternoon, or did going through a heat cycle before Simon put it off, did that hurt?**

WILL POWER: No, it didn't really hurt my reds because I just trickled out, trickled around. Yeah, that's pretty representative. The gap seems like it's six tenths, half a second, something like that, between reds and blacks.

**Q. You said the surface was the highest grip maybe anywhere all year. Is that just because it hasn't aged and it acts like a new surface? Why is it so high grip?**

WILL POWER: Because it actually takes rubber. That's the reason. Like a lot of these tracks don't take the rubber, and that's what's gripping this track up so much is it's actually taking rubber, so it's just rubber on rubber, which is creating good grip. I don't know why some don't and some do. It's kind of like Watkins Glen when it was resurfaced had a lot of grip. It doesn't really take rubber, either.

**Q. Will, if you're able to come back and win this from 60 down with two to go, would that help make up for some of the championship disappointments you've had earlier in your career?**

WILL POWER: Yeah, most definitely. It really would. It would be fantastic, obviously, to come from that far back. Once again, at the halfway point or around Toronto, if you're not in that -- within that gap, you get that situation I have right now. Having five DNFs you just put yourself in such a hole. But still, every time we finish, we finish strong. We just haven't finished enough.

That's the situation, and I'm very determined and just doing the work to try to put ourselves in a situation where we can potentially win it.

**Q. Will, do you believe in fate? And what I'm getting by that is Dixon and Rossi have had such good runs here of late. If you were in their position, would you start worrying is my luck going to run out in the worst time possible?**

WILL POWER: Well, I just know being around racing for so long now, it's just so rare to have a season without a bad race. It's just so rare. But you know, eventually if you have enough seasons, maybe that falls into place and maybe that's what's happening with Dixon. But yeah, you're right. I mean, it's just -- yeah, I mean, you have years like that where it all falls into place, but it seems as though you will always have a bad race. Maybe that won't happen this year. Or maybe it will. We need that. I don't wish anything bad, but if he could just have a bad pit stop or something, that would be nice.

**Q. What are your impressions of the way Rossi has raced this year?**

WILL POWER: Yeah, he's definitely gone after it and been aggressive and kind of raced to win a championship. Yeah, that's what you've got to do.

**Q. The last time that you raced here with Champ Car, they had a standing start here on the front stretch. Would you want to see that return here, especially at a track like this?**

WILL POWER: Yeah, I mean, I like standing starts. I think they're pretty cool. But IndyCar has always been rolling starts -- well, for the most part. Yeah, it's -- I don't know. Either way, I don't care, as long as I'm starting at the front. That's the main thing.

**Q. With Turn 1 being the way it is here, do you anticipate kind of like what we see at the IndyCar Grand Prix about the way that race starts and how dangerous it could possibly be?**

WILL POWER: Yeah, I'm very sure it's going to be a tough start. Like I just can't see how everyone is going to make it through. But it may -- they may. Yeah, it's just that type of corner, right?

**Q. Turn 1, relative to people exiting from the pits, that seemed like it did not work out well at all.**

WILL POWER: Yeah, that's going to be some interesting scenarios, you could say, in there when people come out of the pits on cold tires and there's

someone on track. There's always going to be a bit of give and take. I guess the beauty of it is there's a bunch of run-off there if you don't quite make it.