

IndyCar Media Conference

Friday September 14, 2018

Will Power

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Needing no introduction after he just serenaded us, we're now joined by Will Power, driving the No. 12 Verizon Team Penske Chevrolet for the team this weekend here at Sonoma Raceway, a three-time winner here at the track, also a five-time pole winner. Will, so far a pretty good weekend for you, fourth overall on the overall time charts, considering both first and second practices, and obviously moving into qualifying, which is something you're very experienced and successful at here at Sonoma. What in your opinion makes the perfect qualifying lap here at the track?

WILL POWER: Yeah, it's going to be very difficult. The track is very low grip. Obviously we have less downforce this year, and it's just so hard to put a mistake-free lap together. I'm not sure anybody did. Maybe Josef did. So yeah, it'll be a very interesting qualifying session. As you can see it's very tight at the front, then the middle pack is very tight. It's just tight all the way through, and that's just IndyCar now. You can't pick a bad driver out of that lot. You look at the rookie award, that's super impressive first time out. That guy has definitely got some talent.

THE MODERATOR: You see your fellow championship contenders also up there on the time charts; what are some things that you're noticing from them just as you were running out there in practice with them today?

TONY KANAAN: Yeah, obviously Dixon and Rossi are very strong. It's just a matter of who got a clean lap and who didn't. You've literally got two laps on tires and then it's done. If you didn't get it done at that point you're never going to get it. So it's hard to time that perfectly to get a run without mistakes and get in traffic. It's sort of hard to tell who's where, but it gives you a pretty good indication.

THE MODERATOR: I know you've been asked this a thousand times, but it's no secret you need a lot of things to go very right for you in the race in order to clinch your next series championship. What are your thoughts heading into this weekend in general? You never know what can happen, we saw a race in Portland where Scott Dixon was being almost taken out on the first lap. Are you prepared for that to happen and to take advantage of an opportunity like that?

WILL POWER: Yeah, it would be just an amazing occurrence for that to happen, like to have an engine

issue or a gearbox issue. Yeah, it could happen. I've had both this year, and then you need Rossi to have a bad day, as well. So obviously it's pretty stacked against us, but all we can do is just focus on putting ourselves in a position to win, which yeah, the others we can't control.

Q. If one of the four drivers was going to win the pole, run the table, lead the most laps and win the race, don't you think you more likely would do that other than the other three?

WILL POWER: No, if you look at Newgarden is very good around here and he's in the same car, and he won last year -- no, he didn't win last year, Pagnaud did, and Simon, obviously, my other teammate. But yeah, that's what needs to happen. We need it put it all together to be on pole, lead the laps, all that stuff. But got some fierce competition. So just got to focus on my job and see if I can nail that.

Q. Do you pretty much feel like Scott Dixon did in 2015 when Montoya came in here with the big lead and Dixon had to pretty much go out there and run the table and win the championship?

WILL POWER: Yeah, I mean, Dixon, I remember that. He was able to take risks on restarts and went for it while we kind of got in each other's way, actually. But yes, from that respect, can be quite aggressive, nothing to lose. Obviously Scott has got the most to lose, and then Rossi really has nothing to lose, too. I mean, he's probably just going to have to get after it, as well, because he probably has to win the race to win.

Q. Sector 2 is where you were missing out to Josef on your best run. Did you make a mistake, or --

WILL POWER: Yeah, I did. Yeah, it must be Turn 4. I just have terrible brakes at the moment, just losing everything on brakes. Like it's just a bad set of brakes, and it's really frustrating that you've got to go through brakes and find a good set, but that's what I have right now.

Q. Have you detected any difference between Chevys and Hondas so far regarding strengths at different parts of the track?

WILL POWER: No, not really. I mean, it's such a handling track. The engine hardly comes into play. It's just such a drivability handling track, it's just such low grip.

Q. Is there anything they could really do tire-wise

to make this track, give you a little more grip back, or is it just kind of you've got what you've got?

WILL POWER: Yeah, well, you could resurface the track. That would give you a lot of grip. But it's just that doesn't necessarily mean it's bad. It just means it's challenging, which is good for drivers, and it's hard to get the setup right and put the lap together. Yeah, I don't mind that. That's a good thing. Hopefully it creates good racing.