

# IndyCar Media Conference

Sunday September 16, 2018

## Alexander Rossi

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Alexander Rossi. Kind of a long afternoon of chasing a title that probably wasn't to be after the first lap. Talk about the first lap.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: A lot of information, because I haven't seen it. It was unfortunate because I thought we got a good start. Just two cars going for the same spot type of thing.

At the end of the day, the 27 NAPA team did an amazing job of getting us back to a point where we could at least be in contention if something did happen to Scott. You know, it didn't.

At the end of the day it was going to be a tough battle, no doubt, to kind of overhaul him with us pretty much having to win. It wasn't meant to be this year. Nonetheless, I think it's an awesome 2018, and something that we all can be very proud of at Andretti. Obviously having three cars in the top eight in the final points is amazing, a huge improvement from where we've been in the past.

Ryan was on a different planet today. Really a good overall year for the team, especially the second half. We'll take the positives and try to improve on the negatives and see where we can end up next year.

THE MODERATOR: After you got back on the lead lap, there was a caution. Did you allow yourself to feel real optimism for how this might conclude better?

ALEXANDER ROSSI: I knew it was probably a 1% shot at getting anything done at the end of the day. I just tried to attack it, move up as many positions as we could. If Scott did have some sort of failure or something, we still needed to be towards the top six or seven. That was the goal.

Once kind of the final round of pit stops came, we kind of chose to come in earlier than everyone else in hopes there would be a yellow, it would cycle us to the front. But it didn't come. They all covered me in case that happened, which was the right thing to do.

Yeah, from once the final pit stop kind of happened, there was no yellow flag immediately, I knew it was pretty much the day done.

THE MODERATOR: We'll take questions.

**Q. How much fun was it during the middle section there when you got back on the lead lap, got to attack and pass some cars?**

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Yeah, I mean, it was more just kind of trying to save a situation, put ourselves in a position to maybe capitalize on something. It wasn't fun at that point. It was more of just pure necessity to try to get it done.

I think we had a fast racecar. I don't know if we had a fast enough one to beat Scott and ultimately win. For sure, it was a car that was quick enough for the podium had the turn one thing not happened.

Yeah, I mean, there's always would have, could have, should have in scenarios like this, in this sport. Can't focus too much on it. Just got to take the things we didn't do well this weekend and make sure that doesn't happen again, we can improve upon it if we're in this position again next year.

**Q. You damaged your wing. Was it Andretti that hit? Which turn was it on?**

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Kind of the kink before we went up the hill.

**Q. When you overtook plenty of cars, was there at one time during the race a problem that you were out of the fuel window, that fuel was an issue?**

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Not at that point. It was a problem at the end. We had to let Sebastien go. Yeah, I think we could have finished sixth pretty easily. I think there's a small miscalculation on the fuel number we needed to get. I was told we looked pretty good till the end, so I started trying to close the gap to Marco. In doing so, we used too much fuel. That was already after we had done our final stop.

Two separate things, but obviously doesn't make a difference at the end of the day. Sixth or seventh for us is pretty irrelevant.

**Q. There's a common thought that once you get in position, you can't do a lot of passing, advancing here. You proved them wrong. Talk about advancing.**

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Sure. I don't know, I mean, it seems to be kind of a common theme of our 2018 for whatever reason that we've had to go out in a couple different races and try to put on a highlight reel all by ourselves.

You have to have a great car to do that. I did. I think that's shown in the results with Ryan. Pretty much I think he must have led every single lap. Marco finishing in the top five. We had great racecars.

I had the tools that I needed to go do that. We just tried to maximize that and take advantage of it, and hope that something would come of it. In the end it didn't. It was some kind of gratification for us because it feel as lot worse to finish 19th in a race than seventh.

At the end of the day it was good from that standpoint. Ultimately didn't really mean anything.

**Q. After the first lap incident, how much of the game plan goes out the window and you're adjusting on the fly?**

ALEXANDER ROSSI: We had a pretty aggressive strategy kind of going into it. We kind of stayed the course. We lost the better part of a minute. That obviously puts you back. We saw what happened in Portland with Scott, right? There's always the potential that there's a yellow, then you catch back up, then there's another yellow, all of a sudden you're in the front.

You don't panic really too early. You just kind of hope that you get a break and it comes back to you. We got half of a break which allowed us to challenge to be in the top five, but we didn't get the other half of it that cycled us to the front where we could try to go for the win.

**Q. When you were able to get back on the lead lap, passing cars left and right, you've proven you can pass on tracks where you're not supposed to. What is it about you that you're able to do that?**

ALEXANDER ROSSI: I don't know. I don't want to be in that position. I mean, Phoenix, I don't want to be two laps down. Indy, I don't want to qualify on the last row. Here, I don't want to have a broken wing on lap one.

You have to be able to make lemonade out of lemons sometimes. Unfortunately we've had to do that a couple times this year. That's the way it goes.

To win a championship, you got to have excellent days all the time. I'm sure Scott is more than capable of doing the same thing. Fortunately for him, he was never in the position that he needed to. Now he's won five championships. Yeah, pretty hard to beat.

**Q. Marco, Ryan. Would you attest any of that to the team focusing to try to get you this championship?**

ALEXANDER ROSSI: No. I mean, I think all the Andretti cars have been strong all year. I think the second half of the year we made a pretty big step forward on road courses. I mean, Ryan, we were 1-2 in Portland when I caught that yellow. He was in a really good position to win, kind of got taken away from him. He was on the pole this weekend.

I think the cars have been strong really from day one, but really from road courses from Mid-Ohio onwards. We definitely found something then. We've been able to kind of carry that forward, not just be a flash in the pan sort of progress. It's been progress that's been quantifiable and repeatable. That's a huge testament to the effort that the team puts in.

I have every expectation that they're going to continue this development process this off-season and we're going to come back in 2019 even a bigger step ahead than we were this year.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.