

# IndyCar Media Conference

Saturday March 23, 2019

## Felix Rosenqvist Alexander Rossi Colton Herta Ryan Hunter-Reay Will Power Scott Dixon

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations on at least a front row starting spot.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Congratulations to you for being on the pole

THE MODERATOR: Since I'm the first one in here. How do you feel about this? You had the one-lap effort. You went with that strategy. Talk about that first and falling just short.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Yeah, I think that's our normal approach to Fast Six is just go out and do one lap to preserve tires, if you end up needing to use them in the race, especially coming out of Lap 1, was nothing out of the ordinary for us.

THE MODERATOR: We are also joined by Ryan Hunter-Reay, also from Andretti Autozport and Colton Herta from Harding Steinbrenner Racing.

Ryan, let's go to you. What kind of effort did you see today and what do you expect for tomorrow?

RYAN HUNTER-REAY: As usual, it's just super tight in this series. I mean, I was on a lap there that was challenging for pole, and just tired a little too hard in one corner and that's all it takes.

So very challenging around here to put the lap together. It's challenging circuit, very slick. Bumpy in some areas. I love it. It's fast, it's technical. It's got kind of every mix you'd want in a racetrack, so it's good fun. It's just really, really tough to put it all together and you know, Fast Six was a challenging group, as always.

THE MODERATOR: Joined also by reigning NTT IndyCar Series Champion, Scott Dixon, also made the Fast Six, but I would think you might want more than



sixth place. How do you feel going into tomorrow?

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, it's been interesting. Haven't really got the flow around this track. I think the car is quite decent. Just needs somebody to steer it in the right place.

We've seen with Felix (Rosenqvist). The car has some great speed and when I can piece a lap together, it's decent, but kind of been all over the shop. We had a bit of a rough start to the weekend with some issues on the car and never really recovered from that. All in all I will think it was fairly decent to make it here.

Both my laps in the Fast Six, just started quite well. I was quite happy with the start of it but then it was just too many corners. Yeah, I think I was all right for half a lap.

THE MODERATOR: Also joined by Felix Rosenqvist of Chip Ganassi Racing, starting in the Fast Six for the second straight week. You have to be pleased with that progress, although you had had a strong practice performance. Mixed emotions here?

FELIX ROSENQVIST: Yeah, a little bit bittersweet for sure. I think especially after the second shootout there, I think my mindset was definitely on the pole. But anyways, when you put on the second set or the used set of Reds, you never really know what you're going to get.

It was a great day. We were up there again and we were in the Firestone Fast Six for the second time in two weekends, so cannot complain about that but as Scott said, I think we probably aim for a bit more today, but yeah, probably try to make it through Turn 1 there and should be good.

**Q. 56th pole for Will Power of Team Penske and a shot at \$100,000 if you can win the race. You've done that 16 times in your career. Which is about 30 percent of the time.**

WILL POWER: Yeah, it's time to win another one. Kind of disappointing when you win pole and can't complete (the sweep). Didn't have as good a car on new tires. Came in well on used tires, but very good qualifying sessions. Really happy to get poles. Never held my breath so much. Really had to dig deep, but yeah, good battle.

**Q. Colton you made the Fast Six for the first time.**

COLTON HERTA: Super excited. Did a good job to get out there and practice2. all the boys and engineers from Honda. Yeah, I think kind of showed that our practice pace was true here, that we had in February, so yeah, it's unfortunate that we can't go for the hundred grand like Will can but we can still go for the race win.

**Q. (Question about weather conditions)**

SCOTT DIXON: I think it stayed pretty similar. Normally we see a 30-degree or more shift in track temp. I think it was maybe four or five degrees this morning. I think the wind picked up a little bit but for me personally didn't notice too much. Ideal conditions for qualifying.

**Q. (Question about performance on old tires vs. new tires).**

FELIX ROSENQVIST: Yeah, it's like Will said. His car came alive on the old tires, and I think our car was really brilliant on new tires. Yeah, you never really know what it's going to be like. All the cars are different, and our cars really excelled on the new Firestone Reds.

Yeah, it's just a question mark every time you go into qualify. I think we got a bit surprised with that, but yeah, that's the way it is.

**Q. (Question about Power's success in qualifying).**

WILL POWER: Yeah, it's obviously a lot of experience doing it. You understand how these sessions go and when it can go Reds, so you to have to put yourself in position to get there first, and that's absolutely my focus, not trying to get P1 in the first two, so going a bit earlier when the track isn't as good and that sort of thing so kind of manage the risk, and obviously in the Fast Six, you just have to go for it in every respect, so that's why we did one lap of fuel and one lap tires and then did that twice. I thought that gave us our best chance.

**Q. (Question about Herta backing up practice success in qualifying)**

COLTON HERTA: Super important. I think we were kind of good on old tires at the test so you knew our race pace was going good so it was a question mark on the qualifying pace this weekend. To show we had the pace during qualifying is really reassuring because I know we can back it up in the race.

**Q. (Question about tire degradation).**

WILL POWER: Yeah, we do, depending on the track. We had one yesterday to understand how the degradation is going to work. Have a think about it tonight and make sure that we have a car that looks after the tires. I think clean air is probably going to be a good thing in the race, as well. So hopefully we can keep that for the whole race, that would be nice.

**Q. (Question about how much of the \$100,000 he would get).**

SCOTT DIXON: No, I haven't. I don't really care. I want the million at the end the year (Laughter). That's much better than the hundred.

**Q. (Question about length of the session).**

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Yeah, I don't know. To be honest, is it longer? Yeah, I think it is already longer.

So I don't know. It was close for sure but I think we kind of put ourselves in that position because we waited quite a long time to be the last car out on Reds, so we made sure that we didn't make that mistake again in the second round. It was close. We were lucky to have a good lap on Blacks

**Q. (Question about what kind of race they expect)**

RYAN HUNTER-REAY: I think it comes down to tire degradation, who is going to be able to take care of their tires and that will be very key to the race in the outcome to show itself. We'll see. I don't think anybody really knows what they have until they get out there and run it 20 laps in a row, 18, 15 laps in a row.

**Q. (Question about the start and Turn 1, Lap 1)**

WILL POWER: Yeah, obviously plenty of room to throw it up the inside and that sort of thing. It's a long race, and most of the guys at the front know that you can't win around the first lap.

So hopefully everyone's smart and thinks about it, but yeah, you know, it is what it is, and it is racing, so you've got to go for it.

**Q. (Question about tire strategy)**

ALEXANDER ROSSI: What's your strategy, Will?

WILL POWER: I don't know what it was last week, it didn't work. Got to review what we do. Yeah, don't know. I think the Reds are going to be better. I think, one second difference in qualifying, surely it's going to be better in the race.

I mean, they do. I don't know -- enough (Laughter).

**Q. (Question about Indy Lights Race)**

COLTON HERTA: I hope our race -- it was good. Pretty exciting.

SCOTT DIXON: I think it was battle for second -- passed like 40 times in that race (Laughter).

RYAN HUNTER-REAY: It was a good race.

**Q. (No microphone).**

ALEXANDER ROSSI: No, because we still did all but three corners on them, and I still went out on them. I don't know, so no, I don't, is the answer to your question. I would love to.

**Q. (Question about rookies)**

WILL POWER: Yeah, they are all super strong. Super

strong. Hope they just stay --

RYAN HUNTER-REAY: Doing a very good job. Too good.

WILL POWER: I like my job. Wish they would go away (Laughter).

SCOTT DIXON: It's great. I think it's fantastic for the sport. I think it's fantastic for the future of the sport, and yeah, some of us are getting pretty old. (Laughter). I looked at you Alex

ALEXANDER ROSSI: I'm not that old.

RYAN HUNTER-REAY: Compared to these two.

**Q. (Question about no warmup)**

WILL POWER: Get to sleep in a bit more because we already had it on Saturday. I actually had a better time when it's warmer. Better indication.

**Q. Felix, the Fast Six, you've led a lot of laps -- (no microphone).**

FELIX ROSENQVIST: It's a long season. It's been going a lot better than I think we could ever imagine. It's been, you know, no big dramas. No crashes. No nothing.

So let's hope it keeps that way but I think the challenging part is going to come at Indy and after where we approach a lot of these tracks that a lot of these guys have done a bunch, but I haven't done anything. I've driven St. Pete before and here as much as anyone else, and it's been easy so far but it's going to get tough for sure, especially on the ovals.

**Q. (Question about qualifying format)**

FELIX ROSENQVIST: I think it's great. I think it's a fun qualifying. It's almost like you want it to be done after the first stage and then you do it again three times. It's good. It's fun that it can change around. It's not like someone is first every run. It's always different and so we're ending up first in the end, and yeah, it's a good system for sure.

**Q. (Question about how Indy Lights prepared him)**

COLTON HERTA: Having 45 minutes on one stint of tires helps. The degradation is going to be pretty big this weekend. I think everybody kind of knows that, and that's really prepared me for it, as well. Racing on old tires is a lot tougher because there's a lot more of a margin for error. You make a smaller mistake on old tires, and it makes a bigger difference.

For sure, yeah, it's prepared me well.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

FELIX ROSENQVIST: Actually it wasn't that set that I was driving on but being up first, maybe you do a couple corners more than the others when that red flag

came in that first stage, but honestly I think it's all the same. It's the difference of a couple hundred yards. Ask the engineer if that makes a difference or not.