

IndyCar Media Conference

Thursday May 23, 2019

Jarett Andretti

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Jarett Andretti, driver of the No. 18 Window World car in the Indy Lights presented by Cooper Tires. Can you express how you feel about driving at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway?

JARETT ANDRETTI: Yeah, I mean, it's always a little bit different feeling when you're rolling into here as a driver as opposed to your dad driving or as a fan or doing a press conference like we did one year or I believe two years ago, so this is always something -- it's a little bit more special. Unfortunately the weather hasn't been cooperating that well, but hopefully we get some better weather here, clearing up here soon, and it's really hard to put into words what it means. But just taking a glance at the pagoda my second or third time around will be something I won't forget.

THE MODERATOR: So many members of your family have driven here at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. What is it about the family legacy and trying to continue that here? Your cousin Marco is in the 500.

JARETT ANDRETTI: Yeah, absolutely. There's something about this place. There's an allure here that you can't replicate for the speedway, for the Indianapolis 500 and for the speedway in general. Obviously being born in Indianapolis, it has an even more special meaning and seeing your dad compete here amongst all your other family members. It's also a testament to Michael. He's still involved in the sport as an owner; Marco is driving, giving me the opportunity to drive in the Lights race, so it's a real family effort to stay involved.

THE MODERATOR: Can you talk a little bit about the relationship with Window World jumping on your car and that relationship going back to your dad here at the speedway.

JARETT ANDRETTI: Yeah, Window World has been a great partner of ours for probably over 10 years at this point. I think over 10 years. So it's pretty amazing because I remember I used to fly down with them to watch Dad race, and now those kids that were younger than me are graduating high school and going to college, so we're really part of the Window World family, so it's really nice to come here with companies that have supported you for a long time. Superior Auto has been on my sprint car since 2013, Mike Harding was on our sprint car; MI Windows and Doors has

been with us this year with the GT4 stuff. So we've really become engrained in these companies and they've become more like friends and family than sponsors.

THE MODERATOR: Finally, what are your expectations for the weekend?

JARETT ANDRETTI: We missed a little bit of track time on Monday, so hopefully we get some practice in this morning, do a couple Q sims and then get running more in traffic. I really don't know what to expect. I think the car is fast. Obviously Andretti Autosport, they put together fast cars. We're working on trying some different things in the setup, and hopefully we get it right and we can be up front. We've got to be in the top 5 the last three laps here. It's such a crap shoot anymore, this race, and it's usually the best race of the weekend. Sometimes -- I would even say the best race in Indiana all year.

Q. A popular story line is you're driving for your dad, but knowing him as well as I do, he'd tell you to drive for yourself or your team, right?

JARETT ANDRETTI: Driving for -- could you repeat that?

Q. Well, I mean, the popular story line would be you're inspired to drive for your dad, but he'd be wanting you to drive for yourself and your team.

JARETT ANDRETTI: Yeah, absolutely. I mean, you don't do this for any other reason but for -- you do it for yourself, right, you do it for self-satisfaction, do you it because you want to. And the fact that it's something that he's wanting to see is a bonus. I think the situation that he's going through, he's going to gain even more appreciation for it maybe. I know I do.

So I think that you just -- it doesn't matter, you just drive as hard as you can and see where you come out on the other side.

Q. Jarrett, you just mentioned normally you're doing GT4 seems like for McLaren. Is this a work-supported entry? Did you get any help from the headquarters in England or your team?

JARETT ANDRETTI: McLaren has been -- they've been very good to us. They've obviously been great partners of Andretti Autosport, and I hopefully can continue the relationship with them and at some point end up being either a factory driver at some point in their GT cars or possibly they keep kicking around

LMP1, they keep kicking around over here in the IndyCar stuff. You just never know if you get tied to a manufacturer of that size that's so involved in racing, you never know what might happen.

Q. The second question, did you have a possibility to test the Lights car before you entered the race?

JARETT ANDRETTI: Yeah, we went to Kentucky for a day and ran. So that kind of got me comfortable, do the seat fit stuff, do all the other little things that you have to get taken care of, and we're still working on some of that here, but I got most of that hammered out there at Kentucky and kind of got comfortable. Now it's learning the track and kind of learning through the setup changes to know what does what on the car so you can make the right calls in the race.

Q. You've obviously got a lot of family that's raced here, other teammates that have done IndyCar here. Is it information overload from all of them, or is it just you've got to soak it all in and try and use it all?

JARETT ANDRETTI: Well, you've got to soak everything in, but obviously there's so many people that have run here and raced here and your family and stuff, so you just try to take it all in as much as you can because everybody has a different perspective, and they talk about different aspects, whether it's driving or whether the race craft or whether the way the races unfold. So you just try to take all the little pieces from everybody and hopefully put them all together. Everybody just wants to help, and I'm never going to turn down help and take what I can away from it.

Q. I was just going to add to that, especially with the lack of practice, how much do you have to lean on your Andretti teammates going forward?

JARETT ANDRETTI: I'm going to lean on them for sure, especially for setup stuff, things -- when we started, we started in a little bit different spot than they did just because I hadn't driven the Lights car that much. We've been working towards our setup, but we know we missed an hour of practice and now possibly, I don't know what's going to end up today. But I think that that's going to be the biggest thing is I haven't been able to run through bar changes and things like that and testing and all this stuff throughout the winter, so I don't know exactly what it does. So I think as they make the right calls, hopefully I put it on my car and we can just maybe be in a better spot, a better time to take advantage of it.

Q. How is John?

JARETT ANDRETTI: He's all right. He's already texted me this morning, so he's usually up pretty early, and I talked to him I don't know how many times yesterday, a lot. We were watching Terre Haute last night, the sprint car race, and he was in North Carolina and I was in Indiana, and we're watching, texting back and forth talking about the race, and he watched my in-car video from the Lights stuff. We're in constant contact,

whether it's about the GT4 stuff, about the sprint car stuff, or about the Lights stuff.

Q. Obviously the family name is popular, but do you realize how popular John is around here? I know there's Marco and Michael and Mario, but John is a really popular guy here.

JARETT ANDRETTI: Yeah, he is, and I guess I didn't realize how popular until everything happened and people started to -- that's when they tell you the stories about, oh, he did this for me or he stopped me here or took a picture with my son and all that stuff because they want to share their experience with you, and that's something that I really appreciate, and that's when you really hear it. I think Dad has a special -- he does have a special affinity here and he was raised here, so I think that creates a tie-in there. We call him "Hoosier" anyway, so I think that gives you -- really he's really the only Andretti that's really considered a Hoosier.

I was raised in North Carolina. I was born here but raised in North Carolina, so I'm a southerner.

Q. Michael mentioned, I think, at Long Beach, I know I'm getting ahead of myself, that he was hoping to maybe make this Indy Lights thing last more than one race. Is that something you're hoping to make come true after this?

JARETT ANDRETTI: Yeah, I'm always leaning on him. I'm in the office, in the shop every day, and I walk by J.F.'s office, and I like to lean on him a little bit, hey, what about doing this, yeah, yeah.

So I really want to do a road race. I really like the road race stuff. I've run Gateway in a Crown car, and that would be cool to do in a Lights car, but I think there's some classic road courses here at the end of the year that would be really fun to do. We'll just see how the Freedom goes, see what happens, and have a good run and you can lean on him a little bit harder.

Q. I want to go back to your GT program. Over in Europe you have a GT4 European championship with former Formula 1 drivers. Any chance you will enter a race over there one day?

JARETT ANDRETTI: I've been leaning on McLaren to do some European outings. I went to Paul Ricard about a month ago, month and a half ago to test over there, so you never know what might happen, but I'm looking for more experience, and I think they do some longer road races there, longer endurance races in the GT4 stuff. Hopefully I can get something put over there and do some racing over there because obviously they look at the United States and they want to come to the classic tracks like they want to come to street courses, they want to go to Mid-Ohio, they want to go to Road America, Watkins Glen. I look at it, I want to go to Spa and Monza and Hockenheim and all the places that they go, so I think that there hopefully there's an opportunity there eventually for me to do some stuff.