

NTT IndyCar Series News Conference

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Press Conference

Santino Ferrucci

Dale Coyne Racing



THE MODERATOR: Santino Ferrucci as the top finishing rookie in seventh place.

SANTINO FERRUCCI: There's a lot of people here. I saw when they did the driver introductions, there was actually 300,000 people there.

THE MODERATOR: Did you doubt the count?

SANTINO FERRUCCI: Probably not.

THE MODERATOR: Well, you made one lasting impression on this Indianapolis 500 with a run through the grass in the middle of the trouble in Turn 3. Talk about that.

SANTINO FERRUCCI: I mean, I saw a little bit of the grass stick up getting towards the corner and the spotter comes on the radio and says, all right, just don't go high. Don't go high. Then I see everybody starting to wreck, and I'm just like, middle of the track, and then I floored it because I thought that was the smart thing to do, then I saw the grass, which to me was the only hole, and that looked like the most intelligent place to go. So we mowed the lawn in retrospect, and we came out just fine.

THE MODERATOR: Was your first Indianapolis 500 experience everything you thought it would be?

SANTINO FERRUCCI: I'd say that's an understatement. Coming here and racing in front of these fans, in front of everybody, having a solid team behind you, mowing the lawn, finishing in the top 10. That's an experience of a lifetime that you just can't beat, especially at 20 years old.

Q. Santino, how confident are you going forward for the rest of the season having had such a great result today?

SANTINO FERRUCCI: Yeah, I mean, I think in the GP we also finished tenth, and it's nice to have a rolling consistency being in the top 10 and going into Detroit will be the first time I'm back in a track that I actually know on the calendar, and I'm very much looking forward to the duels. But I kind of wish there was another 500 tomorrow, to be perfectly honest with you.

Q. Santino, you surprised us. Did anything in the race surprise you?

SANTINO FERRUCCI: I mean, the race was -- it's surprisingly longer than it looks, and the racing -- racing with other drivers was actually a lot more fun than I had ever hoped it to be. I got to battle it out almost the entire race with Hunter-Reay, who's a champion here, and I can't thank him enough because the experience that you get racing someone like that and the enjoyment and excitement of racing around other competitors like him, it was just a blast.

I think that was probably some of the best parts. It feels like a victory. We started 23rd, man.

Q. You told me media day that you feel very happy here when you arrive here, that the confidence that the team gives you. How do you feel now?

SANTINO FERRUCCI: Yeah, I mean, I think also many of us watched the last lap, I kind of -- I almost stuffed it trying to pass Carpenter for sixth. But no, when I say we had a good race car, we had something solid, and I had a lot of confidence in it. To move forward like that, it just helps you out as a young driver so much. I'm sure he can attest to that, as well, because he's won here as a rookie. But yeah, I think it was a really cool experience.

Q. How do you keep from being overwhelmed at 20 years old in front of 300,000 at your first major race in a national event like this? How do you keep from being overwhelmed?

SANTINO FERRUCCI: You don't. You become a fan. You know, you're here to be a part of the event as much as compete in it, and I think that being also a fan and a competitor, it was one of those things where you just get to be in awe of what's around you and the experience that you get and the opportunity that you get. You know, it's still overwhelming. I've never been in front of 300,000 people. I've never seen what that looks like, either. I can tell you it was probably one of the coolest days of my life.