

# NTT IndyCar Series News Conference

Sunday May 26, 2019

**Press Conference**

## Alexander Rossi

Andretti Autosport

THE MODERATOR: Alexander Rossi joins us now. Maybe there's no other way to say it. It's disappointing.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Yep.

THE MODERATOR: Can you talk us through the battle? He obviously knew you wanted the inside lane and just seemed like you couldn't get it.

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Yeah. I mean, there's not much to say. I think you all saw it. We just didn't have the straight-line speed. There's not much we can do about that from my side inside the car. Obviously the 22 guys fully deserve it. They were on pole. He led probably 70 percent of the laps. Yeah, I mean, he was a deserving winner for sure. But that last yellow really hurt us because we were doing a lot better on fuel mileage than he was, so that was the first kind of nail in the proverbial coffin, and yeah, the second one was just -- we didn't have the speed out front. I mean, I was flat for the last 15 laps, and there's not much more you can do.

THE MODERATOR: You had the slow pit stop, obviously the fuel issues. That was as animated as we've seen you probably in your time here. How long did it take you to recover from that mentally?

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Not long. I mean, when you come here four times and three of the times you can't get fuel in the car, I think you can understand why I was upset. It can't happen. I mean, it wasn't a human error, it was a mechanical problem, but still, it's not something that we can have here. It's the biggest race in the world, and 75 percent of the time we can't get fuel in the race car.

We need to address that for sure, but I think the whole 27 NAPA Andretti Honda boys did a great job of recovering. Rob Edwards, as always, is exceptional at being the kind of steady voice and very, very helpful for me in terms of kind of getting back to center and just focusing on getting back to where we needed to be. So ultimately it didn't affect the end result. I think we're lucky that it didn't, but yeah, at the end of the day, they recovered nicely. Our last pit stop was mega, got us back into the lead before that final yellow came out, which, as I said before, was probably the thing that ultimately cost us the race.



**Q. You did get by Simon (Pagenaud) once in those last several laps and stuff. As you went by, were you just saying to yourself, can this thing stick? What were your thoughts, or did you think the finish was going to be inevitable?**

ALEXANDER ROSSI: I mean, it was pretty inevitable. I mean, I think you saw on the last restart, like he just drove by us. There was the opportunity there to get the lead. I had been working on it for 12, 13 laps, and it finally came, and I didn't have a choice, I just had to hope that maybe he would lose so much behind me and that Takuma (Sato) or Josef (newgarden) or whatever would get him, and I would be able to have enough of a cushion for the final two laps. But I passed him in 1 and he was straight back by me into Turn 1, so there was nothing I could do.

**Q. How badly do you want to get right back in the car and go 10 more laps right now?**

ALEXANDER ROSSI: I mean, it would be the same result, so not that badly, to be honest.

**Q. Can you take any solace knowing you gave it everything you had? That was 100 percent.**

ALEXANDER ROSSI: Maybe in time. Ultimately it was a good day for the team. You know, I think that we put a huge focus all month as we always do on the race car. The car was by far the best in the field in terms of what we could do and pass at will when I needed to. I didn't see anyone else doing that. So a huge testament to the whole Andretti Autosport organization for really my fourth year here giving me a car that was capable of winning.

So that's a great thing, and I'm very, very thankful for that.

But as I said, leading up to this many times, once you've won this thing once, the desire to win just ramps up exponentially every year, so it sucks to come this close and really have nothing that we as a team could have done differently. I'm proud of them. I'm proud of the effort that they always put in, and yeah, when we get No. 2, it's going to be probably a huge explosion of emotions because we all want it really bad.

**Q. Did you consider protesting what appeared to be blocking by the leader on the last lap?**

ALEXANDER ROSSI: I mean, yeah, he was moving in reaction for sure, but the last lap of the Indy 500, they're not going to do anything about it. It's kind of irrelevant.

**Q. Another issue like the fueling that probably wasn't a factor ultimately, but Oriol Servia, can you talk about the skirmish you had?**

ALEXANDER ROSSI: I think it was one of the most disrespectful things I've ever seen in a race car, to be honest. He's a lap down and defending, putting me to the wall at 230 miles an hour. It's unacceptable. It's unacceptable for him, and it's unacceptable that INDYCAR allowed it to happen as long as they did.

**Q. What is your role with the engine problem you had today that could possibly see it fixed moving forward? Can you go to Honda? Is it something we could see changed by year end?**

ALEXANDER ROSSI: What engine problem?

**Q. The horsepower deficit you mentioned.**

ALEXANDER ROSSI: No, man, things ebb and flow. We've been a strong team for a couple of years, and then it goes in cycles. Honda is doing a great job, and working their butts off to continue pushing this engine that's been around for the better part of a decade to continually bring updates. I think the step that they took this year compared to last year was good. It got us a lot closer. Ultimately it wasn't enough, but no, I think they're doing everything they can, and until there's a change in the regulations, it's just everyone is kind of at their maximum. We are definitely, I think, stronger on some tracks, they're stronger on others, and that's apparently -- the parity is kind of what makes this series what it is. You're never going to have it completely go your way as much as you'd like to, but no, I don't think there's any fix necessary. They're working hard every day to try and make it happen.