

NTT IndyCar Series News Conference

Friday June 7, 2019

Press Conference

Scott Dixon

Chip Ganassi Racing

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Scott Dixon, driver of the No. 9 PNC Bank Honda for Chip Ganassi Racing, who will start second tomorrow.

Scott, an exciting qualifying session that we had out there. Obviously, the top two drivers are the two drivers we had from our abbreviated session in practice yesterday. Ultimately, how did you feel about your qualifying run and what will it tell you about tomorrow's race?

SCOTT DIXON: Not real exciting for us, to be honest. It was close. Congrats to Taku. Did a hell of a job there.

Don't feel like we did too much wrong in that qual run. Got a little bit loose in one and two on the second lap. Definitely scrubbed some speed. I think that could have been enough. We were actually bottoming in three and four as well. Always a few things you can clean up.

Great starting position for us. I think the PNC Bank No. 9 has been running strong in all the sessions. Definitely interesting to see some of the cars struggle out there, some of the big hitters we thought were going to be very fast, maybe trimmed too much and couldn't keep it flat.

Qualifying doesn't really mean much here, I don't think. You definitely want to be in the front half of the field. I think last year we were maybe seventh or something. A little bit better. Hopefully, we can stay up front.

THE MODERATOR: Aside from the optics of starting on the front row, how important is a front row start here at Texas, which is a track that seems to be fairly unpredictable?

SCOTT DIXON: I think whenever you can try to stay out of trouble, it's definitely something you want to do. I think at any of the races, that plays true. I think once you're back in the pack, you're just a lot more vulnerable being caught up in something that wasn't your fault or losing downforce and making a mistake yourself.

It's always nice to start on the front row. I think when you start there, you just wish you could have done a little bit better and got the pole. But not today.

THE MODERATOR: You are coming in with some



momentum, being the most recent race winner here Sunday in Detroit. In a stretch of races like this, how much does that momentum help?

SCOTT DIXON: I think for us it was pretty big. We were getting to the point where we were almost out of it for the championship. We always look at that kind of hundred-point marker. We've come back from that and won a championship. You really don't want it to get much bigger than that, especially these days I think with the competition. And generally, the competition finishes a lot of races.

That was a bummer for us on Saturday at Detroit. But a great redemption to get us back there. Another point would have been great today as well.

I think there's still a lot of strong cars, a lot of strong teams, that this championship is going to be very tough.

THE MODERATOR: Your lowest point position has been fifth by the way. I don't think anyone is counting you out of the championship.

SCOTT DIXON: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. When Takuma first came to the series, everybody was afraid to race with him. He had a tendency to overdrive. He's developed into one of the top drivers in the series the last couple of years. How can you describe the evolution of Sato?

SCOTT DIXON: I think it's been really good. I think Taku has always had tremendous speed, pulled it out of nowhere, which has always been fun to watch. I remember going to Barcelona for a Formula 1 test, watching him on track. I was amazed by his car control. It was in the wet, just that he was staying on track.

Yeah, it doesn't surprise me. He's a big talent. He's a smart guy. I think he's excelled at a lot of different teams, too, which is not always the easiest thing to do.

Yeah, we have seen his race craft a little bit. It is hard coming from Europe. I think the race craft is totally different. He's definitely had to adjust. I think he's done a very good job of that.

THE MODERATOR: Scott, congratulations. Good luck tomorrow.

SCOTT DIXON: Thank you.

