

# NTT IndyCar Series News Conference

Wednesday September 18, 2019

## Press Conference

### Jay Frye

IndyCar President

THE MODERATOR: Good evening, everyone. Both here in the room and for those of you watching wherever you're watching around the world on the IndyCar app. We've got a great night ahead here at the Wave Street Studio, which is very impressive. They do weddings here, they do music, they do Yoga, none of which you will see tonight. We will have some fun, that's for sure.

I love these events because it gives us all a chance to kind of regroup and think about what a wonderful year we've all experienced. The best part is, it's not over yet, right? If you can hear a voice, it's Santino Ferrucci up the back of the room doing something (smiling).

What a weekend ahead for the Firestone Grand Prix of Monterey, to finish off what's been an unbelievable 2019 NTT IndyCar Series. This championship run, we're very fortunate on our side of the fence when we have to tell the stories and give the information. We're aided by a terrific guy called Russ Thompson, who is our stats guy. He rang me just before, I know you're doing that function tonight, make sure you tell everybody this is the 14th consecutive year that the IndyCar Series title will be decided at the last race. That's pretty good, right? It's pretty good. It just keeps on going.

That naturally builds real drama, and it's good for us to help on the broadcast. All the fans on the world know it's going to come down to the crunch. We get to hear from those four championship contenders here tonight.

You excited that IndyCar is here at WeatherTech Raceway, Laguna Seca. This is Monterey speed week. This is the first of many to come. Speaking with Tim earlier, get a lot of momentum, let's build this, make this an annual thing. We're up and running.

Anyway a great night ahead. We have lots of people to hear from. I'd like to you to join me in welcoming Mr. Jay Frye. Or as I like to call him in our competition meetings, El Presidente. We all call him the boss.

JAY FRYE: 14 year in a row thing was mine. I don't know what to talk about now (smiling).

THE MODERATOR: I'm sorry. We can elaborate on that. Pretty cool to be here on a night like this and reflect. What are your reflections? There's a feel-good



factor about the NTT IndyCar Series at the moment. Do you feel good?

JAY FRYE: I feel great. Coming back here is great. Glad to be here. I think if you look at this year as a whole, we've had seven different winners, seven different pole winners. I think is the biggest one. There's been 18 drivers who have had a top five finish, which shows the depth of this series. Our races are spectacular, the drivers are spectacular, you guys are spectacular, do a great job.

We're excited about where we're at.

THE MODERATOR: I think 'fun' is too easy a word because you work incredibly hard, a lot of responsibility on your shoulders and on your staff. Is it fun to work with IndyCar circa 2019?

JAY FRYE: Absolutely. Thinking back when we started, '16 we came up with the five-year plan which we use to operate, which is a paddock-wide initiative. We're in the plan. The plan actually goes to 2027. We have a cadence to it, the whole paddock is involved in it. They're a pleasure to deal with. It shows it's working. We have some good initiatives coming up. We're excited about the future.

THE MODERATOR: I think more than people realize, you have a lot to do with the people in your position in other series, where it be sports cars, NASCAR, a lot to do with the FIA on a global. What is the global view of IndyCar right now?

JAY FRYE: I think very positive. We get a lot of calls about what we're doing, how we're doing it, this plan, how it worked, how did you get to that point. It's flattering to a degree.

We as a whole, we think the motorsports world, we need to work more together, we're all kind of in this together. What we can do together is better. I think if you look at even when we were working our schedule, there were some things that could have been perceived as conflicts. We made sure not to have them, to take care of our other series we deal with.

I think it's real important we work together.

THE MODERATOR: We haven't finished 2019 yet, but people always look forward to the next year. 2020 schedule was just announced. Richmond returning.

We'll go back to Circuit of the Americas and come back here to WeatherTech Raceway, Laguna Seca. What are your thoughts on the new schedule?

JAY FRYE: We're certainly excited to be here this year. Thank you. This is a phenomenal facility. Actually this is my first time here for a race. Just to see the place kind of come alive today, it was fun to be out there.

Richmond is obviously a place we were at before. There were some things at the end of the tenure with Richmond where the racing might not have been that good. This car that we have currently, we think it will race really well there. Comparable to Iowa. Iowa with the manufacturer car a couple years ago, we had, like, 300 passes, last year we had a thousand, this year we had 800. We think it will be a great race. We're excited to go back.

THE MODERATOR: You were in the position where you got to make a lot of good announcements and plans for the future, hybrid technology for the future. Excited about that?

JAY FRYE: Very. We're really getting started with that. How that works is we send out 10 different RFPs to different people. We talked to other OEMs about our plan and how it looks. They seem to be enthused about it. There's a lot yet to happen, but it's in motion.

We have the aero screen, which is in motion. This week we just got our first two pieces. We have the top frame and actual glass. It's been put on a car already, so we're going to test. The first test is October 2nd at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. It looks like a fighter jet. That's what we thought it would. Obviously we think it's going to do some great things for safety, enhance our drivers' safety, cutting edge technology other people will look at.

We'll test at IMS the 2nd of October, Barber the 7th, Richmond the 15th, back to back to back. A lot going on. The season is not ending Sunday night.

THE MODERATOR: Do you get a break at all?

JAY FRYE: No. It's funny, the season ends, we talked about this a little bit ago, when we're in a race, we're in a routine. When the season ends, that's when really the next season starts. That's when lots of things start happening.

But it's very random. You're going different places. We all do it, it's great. Between now and Christmas, it's pretty intense.

THE MODERATOR: We have the top three drivers in the Rookie of the Year contenders coming up. A lot has been made about the rookie field this year, how good it is. Drivers from all over the world, from other series as well, coming here to show us what we can do in

IndyCar. Your thoughts on the rookie field this year?

JAY FRYE: The rookies have been spectacular since day one. They fit right in right off the bat. Competed at a high level. You wouldn't know they're rookies. They're competing with the best of the best right out of the box.

If you look at our rookies, you look at the drivers who are competing for the championship, there's a lot of youth there. It's a young group.

The sport has skewed very young the last few years. We still have some veterans that are doing great, too. I think the future is very bright.

THE MODERATOR: Did they behave?

JAY FRYE: They did. One of them you're going to talk to tonight, had to have a little talk to him about some things, but it was all good, fine (smiling). He didn't mean to do it. There's certain things that are okay, certain things if it's on camera, we all learn from that.

THE MODERATOR: If you could wrap-up season 2019, what would you say?

JAY FRYE: It's ending too soon. Feels like we're just getting going, we're coming to a great conclusion this weekend.

I couldn't be more proud of our paddock. This is a group that really works hard, really works well together, really works well with us. Our drivers are spectacular on and off the track.

The NBC folks, it's been a great first year with them where we had the entire season. Certainly glad to be back here, glad to be going back to Richmond next year. We're really excited about the future.

THE MODERATOR: I'll let you into our world just for a moment. As busy as Jay and his staff are, every single race weekend, Jay and Kyle and their staff give us their time to come to the TV compound and walk us through anything that may be important, pertinent to that particular weekend, we should communicate to you guys, to IndyCar fans all over the globe. We appreciate that.

JAY FRYE: It's great. We learn from you guys, too.

THE MODERATOR: To get it from the horse's mouth is really important to us. I know I can speak on behalf of everybody in this room, everybody watching, congratulations on getting IndyCar to where it's at. Let's finish with a great weekend and bring on 2020.

JAY FRYE: Thank you. Another thing with bringing NTT onboard has been spectacular, great company, great group of people. I think you're going to really see a lot of cool things coming out this year. This year was

a good year to get going. Different technology with apps, it's going to be fun to watch next year.

THE MODERATOR: When you say that, it has been a massive year. NTT coming on at principal, naming rights sponsor, at NBC our first single season broadcast partner all the way through, the technological advancements, new tracks, old tracks returning. It has been busy.

JAY FRYE: We're all very tired (smiling). But we're excited about this weekend.

THE MODERATOR: Ladies and gentlemen, Jay Frye.

JAY FRYE: Thank you.