

# IndyCar Media

## Conference

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**Helio Castroneves**

**James Hinchcliffe**

**Sebastien Bourdais**

**Simon Pagenaud**

**Scott Dixon**

**Will Power**

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Let's welcome Helio Castroneves, who qualified second today in the Firestone Fast Six. Missed it by that much.

HELIO CASTRONEVES: Another one. Iowa was another one we thought we had it. Obviously Newgarden and my teammate Pagenaud, in Detroit, two of them were really good. Now Dixie.

What can I say? I know what I say. Shell-Pennzoil Chevrolet car was really good. First session was not good. All credit to Jonathan, he hit the right spot on the car on the setup. The second I put the reds on the second session, my car was like whoa. Back in the game here.

When we went out again on the third one, about to repeat the same lap time we did on the first run. But again, we did not want to wait until the end, since the track always got a little bit better, we did not want to wait till the end because of a yellow or red flag coming out and then would have screwed up with our laps because we knew we were only dealing with two laps.

Ganassi is not a rookie team. They're champions. They know what they're doing. Good job by Scott.

THE MODERATOR: Did you brush the wall on one of your laps?

HELIO CASTRONEVES: I felt it. I'm not sure. If you're saying that, I think it's when Will came in front of me. I was actually on a very good lap, about the same lap time, whatever I did on the previous one. As soon as I start braking, because he wasn't in front, in front, but



unfortunately the dirty air sometimes upset a little bit.

I lost about a 10th. I got to make that up because this might be it. When I came off turn six, I just wham it. I start coming in, I might brush. Okay, I got to do another lap. End up doing another lap, which was the fastest one.

It was very good. This is the type of thing that's fun for me. Qualifying is very cool. At least we're in the front row, which is extremely important in this place, and looking forward to move to the front.

THE MODERATOR: We'll open it up to questions for Helio.

**Q. Could you have maybe gone one more lap?**

HELIO CASTRONEVES: No. We calculated fuel for those three laps. Like I said, we didn't want to be in the situation that the red might come out and we might be in trouble. I wouldn't have enough time to put fuel and go back again. There would not be enough time.

**Q. On the red tires, you say you were happy with your car.**

HELIO CASTRONEVES: Yeah.

**Q. That should be good for the race tomorrow?**

HELIO CASTRONEVES: Absolutely. The car, first session, we went on the blacks. We did about 60.7. I thought it was really good, too. We found a good balance from beginning. Friday we kept changing, changing, changing. Even sometimes I'm comfortable with the car, we kept trying stuff. But now we found a good balance, so watch out.

THE MODERATOR: We welcome James Hinchcliffe, qualifying sixth today. Your fourth Firestone Fast Six of the season. Talk about how it went today.

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: Pretty well. We ended up in the Firestone Fast Six. That's usually a good Saturday for us. Top Honda was a great result. Two weeks in a row starting shotgun, nice to reverse that trend.

The guys did a great job between this morning and this afternoon. The car was good on those Firestone reds. We got to put the lap together, which is so tricky to do here, with all the service changes, the bumps,

everything. The tires only last about a lap and a half really. You kind of had to get it done in pretty short order.

Huge thanks to the guys for giving me the car to do it. Pretty sure it's my best starting spot here, so that's exciting, as well.

THE MODERATOR: We'll continue with questions.

**Q. Hinch, how does starting sixth give you more momentum, it being your home race?**

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: That's the goal week in and week out. We've seen that starting from the back isn't always fun or easy to move up. So I'm much more pleased we're going to be starting the front end this time.

It's good. Hopefully we can stay in touch with the leaders. Obviously those guys had quite a bit of pace in qualifying. We had a problem with the car that was costing us not an insignificant amount of speed in a straight line. Hopefully we can get that sorted overnight and be a little closer to the front in that sense. We'll try to stay with them.

Being up front means you're less likely to get caught up in a mess in turn one and turn three, which is almost inevitable here. So we'll see how it turns out.

**Q. James, we heard that Bourdais was being investigated for something. Can you give us the details on that?**

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: Yeah, sure. Six cars on track, we have a two-mile racetrack. They decided to send him right in front of me with that 30-second buffer to catch one lap in qualifying. I'm not mad with Sebastien because he is doing what he is told. I'm going to go buy KV a calculator because clearly they can't count.

Maybe it's the conversion. They thought they were going to be further ahead with the dollar, but it guess it doesn't happen with math (laughter).

**Q. James, we've talked all week about how important getting good qualifying is for you. Is this the best possible scenario for you to pick up that first win of the season, especially here on your home course?**

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: Yeah, I mean, certainly it's almost as far up as we've started. I think we've been a little bit better so far this season.

It's really tough to win races from outside the top 10 in this series, especially at a track like this. There's good opportunities for some passes here. But like I said, the guys in front of us have pretty solid pace. We're going

to have to find a little bit in ourselves over the course of the evening and warmup tomorrow.

Definitely we're in as good a position here this weekend as we've ever been here. It will be nice, like you say, to get that first one of the season. To do it here would be second only to the 500, so it would be pretty cool.

**Q. James, could you elaborate a bit on the problem with the car that kept the speed down on the straightaway or is that secret?**

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: I'm not sure that I can. Frankly, I don't know. It's one of those things that they don't let us touch.

Yeah, let's call it a calibration issue that was costing us a decent chunk of time down lake shore. Calibration issue. My favorite was always like back in the day, a car would have a phenomenal engine failure, smoke, oil, they would get on the radio and be like, When you get out of the car, tell them it was an electrical issue. The guy, Oh, yeah, we had an electrical issue.

Yeah, we know that. Catastrophic. It melted down.

I'm going to go with calibration issue. I also hope that you don't have a calibration issue, but if you do, use that word.

**Q. Do you feel racing as it is today lacks pure hate-filled rivalries?**

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: No, I hate him. Like I really strongly dislike this man.

HELIO CASTRONEVES: This is just an act. We're very good actors.

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: We're all PC. But seriously I would punch him right now.

HELIO CASTRONEVES: They say I'm always happy. You should see me back there.

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: Likewise. Giggles over here. That's all an act. He's a dark person.

HELIO CASTRONEVES: I don't think we need to have that kind of thing. We do get upset. Don't get me wrong. Everybody is human here. We do have feelings. Sometimes we're upset.

Personally, I think Hinch is similar to that kind of personality. But I feel after one or two weekends, after you cool down, forget about it. Let's move on and keep going. Here we go.

Do not tell them what we just talked about, the next

three.

Can I just go?

**Q. Helio, you're starting on the front row. Let's assume the start is going into turn one as opposed to moving the starting place. What is your strategy tomorrow?**

HELIO CASTRONEVES: I will see where Scott's going to position himself. If he's inside, I'll go outside. If he's outside, I'll go inside.

We got to be aggressive, but obviously we don't want to put ourselves in a bad situation because he has a very good car. I feel that I want to win this race as bad as anybody. We've been close many times. But Toronto, the last time I won here was Indy Lights 1997, just to give you a fact. That's 20 years.

THE MODERATOR: You were like six years old.

HELIO CASTRONEVES: You remember that? I was really young. So I want to do it again.

THE MODERATOR: We're now joined by Will Power, qualifying fourth today. Talk us through qualifying today, Will.

WILL POWER: It was good to get through all the rounds. The last round there, actually I was nice to Helio. I let him go, got marbles on my tires. Spent a lap and a half getting marbles off my tire, but still a good result, starting P4.

THE MODERATOR: Simon Pagenaud, you've been in every Firestone Fast Six this season. Talk us through today.

SIMON PAGENAUD: That's cool.

Yeah, it was okay. I mean, the PPG car was tremendous all weekend. Kind of missed the balance a little bit. Q1 was fantastic. We started picking up quite a bit of understeer. We couldn't really adjust the car anymore for the round. We start a little bit of pace starting in Q2. We gambled on the black tires in the end, which I thought could have worked actually.

Dixon coming out of pits in front of me, it was a little difficult for me. It broke me out of my rhythm. It's not him. He didn't block me or anything. It just took me out of my rhythm a little bit and I didn't extract the best out of the car that lap. That should have been the lap that did it.

You should always be happy when you're in the Fast Six. Third is a good place to start. Last time we won we were third with the PPG car, so happy.

THE MODERATOR: Sebastien Bourdais, you qualified fifth this season. Talk us through your qualifying session today.

SEBASTIEN BOURDAIS: Yeah, I mean, the car was really quick this weekend. Just kind of slid a little bit behind the eight ball during qualifying. It was a little weird. We tend to struggle a little bit as the grip goes up, we pick up a bit more and more understeer, run out of tools to dial it out.

It is what it is. To be honest, we kind of shot ourselves in the foot a little bit in Q3. We only did one lap on the last run. We were planning to do two. There might have been a couple of 10ths, but nothing to go and get Scott. Maybe the best would have been to try to challenge Simon.

Just happy to be in the Fast Six and see what we get tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: Scott Dixon, snuck it in there at the end. How did you do it?

SCOTT DIXON: A little bit unexpected. After the first two laps, we had a really slow in lap in Q2. I think we had a lot of buildup. Each lap I'm like, This sucks, we're not going to be very quick. Each lap kept getting better. We made the timeline by a second to get the next extra lap. Just kept getting negatives on the splits. Gave up a little bit in turn eight. Obviously just enough to bump pole.

Pretty happy. We struggled with understeer, especially on the reds, throughout all qualifying sessions. We just kept trying to put some front wing in to see if we could get it turning, which it did, but it was definitely pretty wild to drive.

THE MODERATOR: We'll open it up for questions.

**Q. Scott, you touched on turn eight. How different was it with the wall moved back? Was it better today?**

SCOTT DIXON: Yeah, I think so. It's where it should have been to start with, I think. It's a place I think more for racing. It's always difficult to pass there, but it's always another option. On street courses you need as many options as possible.

It would definitely help the racing. It helped the corner a little bit. Wherever the concrete is here, especially on the apexes, one, three, five, eight, even through the last section now, just gets polished. It very slippery.

Credit to the track for getting those changes done for everybody, cover everybody's requests.

But I think it was definitely an improvement to go back to how the track was last year.

**Q. Scott, what about Toronto do you like? What is working for your car?**

SCOTT DIXON: I think it's always a fun place, not just qualifying and the technical areas and the flow of the track. It's always very hard to get confidence in a car and really get after it here, to really extract as much as possible.

It's typically a place that creates good racing, too. If you've got a fast car, you can pass. I think that's key to what we need.

But, yeah, I don't know, I'd like to think our cars are all generally pretty good on street courses and road courses throughout the year. But Toronto is definitely a favorite after 2013.

**Q. Having gone through the weekend to this point, how do you think the track changes with the pits moving, the narrow portions of the track, how do you think that's going to affect the character of the race?**

WILL POWER: Yeah, I think it will be harder to actually follow in 11 just because of how accurate you have to be not to hit the apex wall. The wall juts out a little bit. It's going to be tough to get a run on someone there into one.

You still got good passing zones in three. It makes it a more challenging track, honestly, the way it is right now.

**Q. Would you prefer, with 11 being so tight, to start further down at a slower pace? Yesterday Pagenaud and a couple guys talked about possibly starting on the backstretch.**

SCOTT DIXON: I think we should start on the front single file (laughter).

SEBASTIEN BOURDAIS: Let's have a crack at it on the back straight, see how many cars we can take out in turn three. It would be awesome.

WILL POWER: I saw Indy Lights made it supposedly two-by-two through 10 and 11.

SIMON PAGENAUD: Long Beach, we can't go two-by-two in the hairpin, so we can do it.

SEBASTIEN BOURDAIS: If we were to pair up coming to the last corner, you'd still have all the rows by the time you throw the green flag, if you wait long enough. I don't see a problem for it.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

SEBASTIEN BOURDAIS: It's a long way down to the stripe. I mean, they can do whatever they want.

**Q. Scott, on your last lap, were you just kind of lurking in the shadows waiting for the track all to yourself? Did you know you really had the extra lap left in those tires to knock off Helio?**

SCOTT DIXON: That sounds like a good plan, but no. To be honest, I was not lurking anywhere. I was just trying to get the most out of it, man. Each lap kept getting a little bit better. That was the gist of it.

It's not what we planned on. We only planned to do three laps. We luckily had a little more gas in the car to do the fourth. We caught the timeline at the right point. That's it. Worked out nicely for a change.

**Q. Will, not to pick on you, but you seem extremely disappointed with your qualifying position. Do you feel you could have done something differently, other than not pulling over for Helio?**

WILL POWER: Actually I'm happy I'm in the top four and made it to the Fast Six. It's something else that I'm worried about.

**Q. It seemed at Detroit, other than Pagenaud, I think I counted something like 13 drivers came in and pitted within five laps and switched from the reds they started on. Being a rough surface, other than the concrete patches, do you think you can go a whole fuel stint on the red tires? Will they hold up?**

SIMON PAGENAUD: I don't know. I guess we'll see. Detroit is definitely the oddball. You see year after year it's just really hard on the concrete. Here I think it's a little different, especially if you lead. If you're in dirty air, for sure you'll be struggling no matter what tires you'll be on.

SEBASTIEN BOURDAIS: It should be interesting, for sure. But it's going to create good racing, too. It's that game of when you put those red tires on, do you wait for the track to get better at the end? Do you put them on at the start? Do you put new ones on, used on? There's a big difference between a new set, starting the race on the new set and a used set? That makes a big difference on your tire life.

Then you have the black tires, which seem to be pretty consistent, pretty fast, too. That's a strategy call. That's why you won't hear much today. But, yeah, we all going to have to decide what we're going to do, what the best strategy is.

**Q. Simon, at yesterday's practice you were fastest. Today you're not fastest. The changes they made**

**overnight, did they make you less happy with the track? You were raving yesterday?**

SIMON PAGENAUD: I still like the track. I still love it. It's pretty tight competition. We were within a 10th of a second. It's not like I missed the boat completely.

Like I said, we tried to go on black tires. We were the only one on blacks in the Fast Six. Like I said, I think I had the lap, but I didn't do the best job I should have.

I think I had the lap in the car, but I didn't extract it. That's the end of the story really.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

SIMON PAGENAUD: Not at all. The track is fine. I like turn eight the way it was before. I like it now. It's fine.

THE MODERATOR: Gentlemen, congratulations. Thank you.