

IndyCar Media Conference

Sunday July 17, 2016

Will Power

Helio Castroneves

James Hinchcliffe

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We'll get started with our post-race press conference. We welcome our second-place finisher, Helio Castroneves.

Obviously a key moment for you was midway through the race, the cut front tire. Take us through your race, please.

HELIO CASTRONEVES: Yeah, no, the car was really good. I mean, Scott and I, I'm not sure, I believe we opened up about three and a half seconds. Then I start feeling a little bit of vibration. Was making comments to the team, what's happening because I never had that before, to be honest, unless you lock the wheel or do something. I was pushing, but never to the extent that I lock the tires.

So everything was just increasing. One point between me and Scott the gap increased because the front just start giving up. Very strange. I told them the vibration is getting very, very hard, but I still okay. After I said that, next lap, the left front just gave up.

Unfortunately was in turn one. If I knew, obviously I would have pit. It's very unusual for this kind of situation happen. Understanding how the track is coming apart in turn five, I would probably thinking that's one of the causes that ended up cutting the tire.

Interesting because the gap that we open up, I feel that probably put in a different strategy. Roger came with a very good strategy, decided to pit right away, put us in a different spot. The yellow finally came to our situation and we were able to stay kind of, like, in the top five. My car was really good, especially on blacks. I was able to make some moves.

Would be very difficult to pass Will because he had six 'push to pass', as I understand. I only had three. Coming off turn 11, I was hoping for a little mistake.

It's a shame. But don't get me wrong, the Pennzoil Chevrolet machine was really strong. Second is better



than third.

THE MODERATOR: You also were able to gain some ground in the championship, as well.

HELIO CASTRONEVES: That's a plus. For sure is a plus. I'm not sure what position, but I'm assuming fourth.

THE MODERATOR: You're in third. You are 74 points behind Simon.

HELIO CASTRONEVES: There we go. That's a positive thing. Make my day even better. That's good. We're 1-2-3 in the championship now. That's what we want. We want to keep pushing this way. Mid-Ohio is next and we have some work to do.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Helio.

Q. In your post-race comments you mentioned that some people thought you were old. Who thinks you're old?

HELIO CASTRONEVES: Just making fun of it. In the end of the day, no, it's just having a good time. Experience definitely played a key in the result today. Able to make the moves on the right time. Just joking around.

When you have a car like this, you just want to win so bad. Obviously you want to keep going as far as you can.

Q. Just how bad was that curb in turn five? Caused a lot of trouble for a lot of drivers.

HELIO CASTRONEVES: Interesting. I didn't know it was concrete until I saw the repairing. I thought it was a piece of rubber. I was attacking pretty hard that curb, to be honest. When I realized that was the track coming apart, I was like, Wow! I was kind of shocked.

In fact, in turn one, the pace car towards the end start taking a little bit of the concrete out. Will and I were right there. In fact, ask Will that. He moved away from a big chunk of concrete. That's not good. We want to make sure the track at least stays in one shape.

At the end of the day, great result for the entire Team Penske, winning with Will, second with myself, and

obviously the championship alive very much. We'll keep pushing forward.

Q. (Question regarding James Hinchcliffe.)

HELIO CASTRONEVES: He's been rising, especially this year with the big momentum at Indianapolis, getting the pole position. Hinch has been with different teams. People don't realize, when you change teams, it's very difficult to adapt. Obviously what he's doing, again with a different team, he's showing the talent is there.

It's great to have another Canadian - unfortunately for me work. But the competitiveness makes myself better. I always say that when you have good quality drivers, they make myself go further. Today is an example of that.

Finishing in the top three in a very bumpy track, difficult conditions, definitely it was a great result.

Q. You were on the bad side of the cautions last week. Scott was on the wrong side this week.

HELIO CASTRONEVES: What position he finish, by the way?

Q. Eighth. But he looked like he had the perfect car, perfect strategy. The yellow throws the whole thing down the drain.

HELIO CASTRONEVES: It's about to rain a little bit on that side. I think because of the yellow, a little sunshine today (laughter).

It's frustrating. Even for me today I know Scott was fast. My car was fast, too. It's a little frustrating. What you going to do?

That's why the Verizon IndyCar Series is very competitive. Sometimes not the fastest car win the race. It makes really the level of everyone better. Today all the teams are very close to each other, but it gives opportunities for smaller teams to be in the hunt and finish well, too.

One day it's going to play on your side, another day it's not going to be on your side. Just have to keep going.

Q. Does it seem that Will Power has the golden ticket at the moment?

HELIO CASTRONEVES: He definitely did a good job. Elkhart Lake, today, Detroit. I mean, again, his luck change around a little bit. That's the way it is. It's good for the team, again. Good effort. We keep going strong. We keep pushing each other. We want to bring this championship to Mr. Penske.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Helio.

HELIO CASTRONEVES: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: We welcome our third-place finisher, James Hinchcliffe. Clearly your best finish here at Toronto.

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: Helio seems to be on the podium every time I'm on the podium. NOLA he was there. Houston maybe. I don't know. I just hope that Helio has a good day every week because statistically that makes my chances that much better.

THE MODERATOR: You had a very good day today. Take us through it.

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: It was an up-and-down day, to be honest. We had a good first stint. The car was good on reds, as we should have expected based on qualifying. Throwing some elbows with Bourdais at the start, Montoya, Mikhail, Josef, a couple guys there. Kind of good fun racing.

When we stopped and switched over to blacks, we lost the balance a fair bit. We were really struggling for pace. I was just trying to hold on to the thing, to be honest. We weren't entirely sure how it was going to play out.

For once in my career here in Toronto we caught a lucky break. It's not just that I haven't had great luck here, I've had insanely bad luck here. Today we were on the other side of that. It's part of IndyCar racing.

I feel bad for guys like Scott that got caught out by that yellow. It happens. We've been on the other side of it for sure. Will has been on the other side of it at this race. It happens. It's the nature of the beast. For the number of times it goes against us, we'll take the time it goes to us.

As the track cooled down, the cloud cover came, the car started coming to us. That was well timed. When you're trying to save fuel but keep guys behind you, it's tricky. The Schmidt Peterson guys were great in the pits. The car was good on fuel when it needed to be.

Wasn't sure we were going to be able to keep T.K. behind us, but he ran a million laps on the tires. What we had to give up on the straights, he was losing in the corners. We were able to make it stick on the last restart, get a good result.

THE MODERATOR: What does it mean to finish on the podium in the race you grew up dreaming about?

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: No doubt this will be a highlight in the career reel, memory reel. Hopefully we

can better it in the future.

It would be so great to win here. I've just always wanted to give the Toronto fans a good result because they've been so supportive day in and day out from the start of my IndyCar career.

Good, bad or indifferent, they're just such a phenomenal group of people. Really knowledgeable, really passionate fans. The support, like I said, has been incredible. Finally good to give them a good result to cheer for.

THE MODERATOR: We'll take questions for James.

Q. Were you at all concerned about the fuel saving?

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: No. I think we were able to make it. Once I saw that T.K. was struggling coming out of the pits, I could back off a little bit more and save the fuel we needed. My real concern was when that yellow flew. It was going to be a one-lap dash.

Coming off of 11, I saw the whole grandstand stand up and cheer. I thought, I can't screw this up, I can't let these guys down. Luckily we were able to hold it off.

Like I said, if it stayed green, I almost would have been happier because wouldn't have had to (indiscernible) through a restart and I would have been okay on fuel.

Q. The next few days, what happens? You have time in between races. You've been on the go forever this weekend. What do you look forward to in the next couple days?

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: Some downtime, for sure. As Helio mentioned, there will be a bit of a celebration this evening. Once I recover from that, I think we're going to run up to the cottage and enjoy some downtime up on the lake, turn the cell phone off for a couple days, try to recharge from the last couple weeks.

Q. Given the amount of effort that you put into everything this weekend, does it feel almost like a win in a way?

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: Yeah, definitely. We walked away with a podium. We had our best qualifying effort here. Top Honda. Best finish here. It's very rewarding and gratifying.

A win is a win. You can't take that away. But truly to be up on the podium is almost as good a feeling here.

Q. Does it feel that way emotionally, as well? You talked about your struggles in the past races here.

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: It's a big result. Especially with how the race was sort of unfolding mid race, it was

a big rollercoaster, a big swing in that sense.

To go from not really knowing how it was going to play out, but not really expecting anything awesome, to be able to pull this off was very special.

Q. How do you control your emotions going into that last restart?

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: I mean, it's tough when you know that Tony Kanaan is behind you, that's for sure. I got a little bit of extra boost, like I said, seeing the crowd stand up in turn 11. I knew all my family and extended family and friend group were sitting on that grandstand. Like I said, that kind of gave me a little boost just to make sure we got a really good run off of turn 11.

I knew we had an extra overtake compared to T.K. that might come into play. I was feeling good, feeling confident. We were keeping him behind us before. There was no reason to think we couldn't do it again.

Q. (No microphone.)

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: It can. I've been on the losing side of that one before, too. Luckily it all worked out in our favor.

Q. This year it seems like the tracks where you had adversity were the ones that you tackled straight head on. You had the great success at Indy in May, then you come back here, a track where you struggled, and you pull this off. How proud are you of the effort that you've made in looking at these adversity places?

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: Yeah, I mean, I hadn't really thought about it like that. I guess you're right. I was pretty crap at Texas in '14. I'm still leading that one. I don't remember how I finished the last couple races in '14, but hopefully I was terrible because that would set me up for a good strong finish to the season.

I don't look at it like that. You try to attack every weekend. You try to sort every track out as best you can. There are definitely tracks that historically have treated me better than others. There's not one that I've ever felt I really couldn't get a handle on. It's just been circumstances one year or another.

It is nice, though, when you've had a bad race at a certain track to come back the next year and kind of pull a quick one on it. This one was six years in the making.

Q. Pit lane was a big talking point throughout the weekend. You had the first box coming in. Any hairy moments?

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: No. I mean, kind of the way it

played out, I think we got pretty lucky. There was no sort of, like, full field coming in under yellow sort of deals. I think I actually inadvertently qualifying last in Iowa got lucky by the way my pit box was laid out. I was glad to see there were no incidents in pit lane. We're professionals. It's good to see that we were able to live up to that title.

THE MODERATOR: Great team strategy to qualify last at Iowa.

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: 100%.

Q. How much did having Sato behind you in fourth, same situation as you are, how much did that help keep the rest of the field at bay?

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: He kept Helio behind him for a couple laps. That was welcome. Wish it could have been a couple more laps. But whatever. Knowing he was on blacks, he was in the same situation, pitted on the same lap we had. When we were both out there, I think we actually had him a little bit. Good to know. We knew there were guys like Helio coming up in the field. It was a little tense to see how much progress those guys were going to make with the remaining laps we had.

Q. At what point in the race did you get the word that you could make it the rest of the way?

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: The last lap. Seriously (laughter). Why are you laughing? When the yellow came out, that was the big thing. It wasn't just to make it, it was to have enough in the tank to use the overtakes at the end. We had two left at the end. They use a fair amount of fuel. I wasn't able to use them without that yellow. With it, we were able to do that and make sure the restart kind of went our way.

Q. Before you got the word that you can make it, were you thinking, It's going to be fuel this year?

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: No. The fact is we caught that lucky yellow. We were going to save whatever we needed to make it to the end. It was just how far down we were going to fall in that process. Luckily we had the pace. The field was strung out enough that the guys that had full fuel, could run full rich, weren't close enough to capitalize.

Q. There was a lot of concern of the 9, 10, 11 sequence. Would you like to see that widened for 2017?

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: If we could find a way to make 11 a little wider, that would not be awful. The fact that we got away with it this year doesn't mean it's perfect. Just because it wasn't an issue this year doesn't mean it couldn't be in the future. If somebody hits the wall in 10 on the exit and bounces across, that could very

easily be a track blockage. That can happen at a lot of places, to be fair.

We claimed a lot of cars in turn 11 this year. It's like the new Champion's Wall in Montréal, our version of that. You can tell who the real motorsports fans are in the room by who giggled at that.

The promoters want to make the best track that they can as well. We'll take feedback and see if there's any viable changes we can make for next year.

Q. (No microphone.)

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: Huge. It was a ton better. I'm really glad we were able to do that. A big thanks to IndyCar for going to bat for us on that one. The promotor was reluctant at first. IndyCar stepped up to the plate, got that changed. I think that made that turn a lot more manageable.

Q. Your driver's suit looks significantly different than it did yesterday.

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: I don't know what you're talking about (smiling). Vera Wang made this one for me, custom for today.

No, my association with Honda Canada, their partnership with Make a Wish Foundation, we do this every year. We'll put a suit on display on the Honda World tent. If you make a donation, you get to sign the suit I wear on race day. Obviously, this one is a bit special now. Been up on the podium. Smells like champagne and sweat.

If you look at it, there's not many open spaces left. It shows how generous the people of Toronto are. I think we raised a bunch of money for a really good cause.

Q. You're out there running your own race so you're not probably that familiar with what's going on ahead of you or behind you. Scott Dixon today had what appeared to be the perfect car. He comes out of here in eighth place all because of the yellow falling at the wrong time. As a race driver, how hard is that to get over?

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: Yeah, I mean, it's tough, for sure. But it is the nature of IndyCar racing. It's what kind of throws us these off results every once in a while.

As I said before, Will has been on the losing side of that one a bunch of times. He caught it today. Same as Helio. Less times for me. I've done it, too. I had an almost certain win in Houston taken away to a sixth place because of the way the cautions fell.

I think of all people in the world, Scott will be the least

ruffled by that than anybody. He's had his fair share of success here as well.

But it's what makes IndyCar racing kind of unique in that sense. I think keeping the pits closed under caution is the safest way to do it. Ultimately that's number one. If it shows some shocking results once in a while, that's good for entertainment. It's going to bite you some days, it's going to help you some days. I think it kind of shakes out over the course of the season.

THE MODERATOR: James, thank you. Congratulations.

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE: Thank you, everyone.

THE MODERATOR: We welcome to the podium the winner of today's race, Will Power.

Your third win in the last four races, making the charge up the championship chart. Talk us through your day.

WILL POWER: Yeah, I think there's always a risk in the first stop if you stay out. We had enough fuel to go a couple more laps, but we opted to pit on the same lap as Dixon. It didn't give us a chance to jump those guys.

But, you know, that worked out for us in the last stop. The team called me in just at the last minute. Perfect timing. I mean, I can't tell you how many times it has gone the opposite way for me at this place, and many other places.

But I was so stoked to see yellow lights as I was going into pit lane. It's not often you catch a yellow like that.

We ran the top three all day. Had a fast car. It's very difficult to pass, so it was going to be a pit stop sequence if you're going to get by anyone, or a restart. So, yeah, a solid day again.

THE MODERATOR: This is your third win at Toronto, ties you with Dario with three, Michael Andretti with seven. 28th career win, moves you ahead of Johnny Rutherford, moves you into 13th place. Keep moving up the historical charts, as well.

WILL POWER: Once you start heading to 30 wins, getting there, getting close, that's good. It's good to get this momentum for the team going forward for the rest of the championship. Five to go. All good tracks for me.

If we can close that gap going into Sonoma, we can do this, we can win this championship, absolutely.

THE MODERATOR: Missing the first race of the season put you in a big hole, now you're within 47 points. Back then, did you think you could come back and make a run like this?

WILL POWER: As long as it's mathematically possible, you should never give up. Dixon has been the example of that year after year. He said to me the other day, with six to go, he was 90 back. Just shows you how quickly that can change. He's got to keep at it and not get desperate.

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

Q. Will, in 2008 I remember talking to you after a bad qualifying effort at Watkins Glen. You were worried sick that you may not be able to have a ride in the series the following year. Now here you are one win away from tying Rick Mears. Does the way you've come from where you were to where you are today surprise you in any way?

WILL POWER: I actually remember that day. I remember speaking to you. I was quite rude to you because I really thought that that was it. Those tracks were the tracks where I could actually win the race, you know, give myself a chance to have a drive the next year. So it was a very pressure-filled year for me.

Yeah, you know, just getting the opportunity with Penske gives you that chance week after week to win races. Especially in those early days, there were times when we won six races in a year. It's such a good situation to be in as a driver when you can drive for a team like that, where you're given that chance week after week. That's a great position to be in.

You can't forget about that. You got to always remember you're with a great team because it wasn't always like that. It's easy to forget. You got to be appreciative.

Q. You had about six power pushes going into the late stages of the race. How important was that? What was the strategy behind using those?

WILL POWER: Yeah, they're big now. It's a big, big hit of horsepower. You're going to motor by someone if you've got it and they don't.

I was keeping them for late restarts. I thought that this is how this race was going. I deliberately saved them. I finished with five or six, I think, which you always feel like you didn't spend all your money. You were given a heap of money and you didn't spend it.

But it's all good. It would be good if you could take them over to the next race, like building them up.

Q. What is it about Toronto, this track, that you've enjoyed so much success on?

WILL POWER: As my engineer says, it's so hard to win. It's not simple qualify, pole, drive away. It's always mayhem, yellows falling at odd times. It's a tough one to win.

It's funny, like, I used to look when Dario beat me in the championship, I think it was three times. I always felt I was quicker in qualifying. He was just so consistent. I could see why now. I've learnt from him or learnt from experience. You can never get desperate. You just keep chipping away and things start falling your way.

I wish I had the energy that I had when I was in my 20s, but the experience I have now. I'm a much different driver.

Q. Were you at all concerned about the concrete on the track towards the end of the race?

WILL POWER: Yeah, I could see in turn five. Helio got a puncher, a flat tire. I wasn't sure if that was why, so I started not using that curb. There was a big chunk taken out of it.

When we were leading at the end, I thought, I'm just going to drive around that, not get caught out.

Q. You've been in the position where Simon was multiple times, where you're leading, big enough points lead, see it dwindle. Being in the second position, how do you think he's going to respond to that? Tough results brought him back.

WILL POWER: I had that so many times where you're leading with a big lead. I mean, he's doing the right thing. He's not being conservative. He's there week in, week out.

But just sometimes it flows your way. Like it just goes in cycles. You have good and bad runs. It's the bad days you make the most of that really wins you a championship. You have to win races at some point. But St. Pete obviously was zero points. But Indy road course, finishing 19th, that type of thing is such a big hit. It's those days you don't have the car. You just have to chill and not get desperate about it.

Q. There was a time not that long ago where you had a tendency to approach race by race and quite deliberately not think about the championship picture. You've done a complete 180. When did that come and how has that change of approach come about?

WILL POWER: Yeah, I would say I'm driving differently to the way I would drive in 2014 when I won the championship, when I just went for it all the time. Now

I just let the races come to me. I don't seem to ever get desperate or feel desperate to make something happen. I just do it. Push when you need to push. Always stay within your limits.

It's working now, it is. It's just experience. You start to work out how things fall. Almost like life, you have good and bad. You got to try to roll with it.

Q. Mid-Ohio is a track that Scott Dixon historically does well at. When you won at Road America, you called that the perfect race. Looked like for most of today's race Scott Dixon was running the perfect race. When a driver falls on the wrong side of the yellow caution light, how tough is that to get over?

WILL POWER: It's just frustrating. I'm the one that's been pushing in the series to have something to leave the pits open so people who have done a good job, like Dixon was doing, don't literally get a drive-through. It's happened to me so many times. I reckon I'd have like 10 more race wins or something if that hadn't have happened.

There's nothing you can do about it. You know the risk, though. That's the one thing. You know the risk. The risk is you can stay out longer and you'll jump the guy because you're on warm tires and low fuel, the guy is coming out on cold tires and full fuel. If the yellow falls, you know how many people would pit and how far you'll go back.

This year, my team, we've been conservative from that respect. We've always pitted early. We've always had the fuel to go, but we've just pitted early.

Q. You seem to have such momentum going right now. With the points lead, the deficit getting smaller, is it going to be hard to not start doing math in your head?

WILL POWER: You don't do it. It's impossible. How do you know where he's going to finish and where you're going to finish? You just have to execute week in and week out.

Yeah, you can look at the points at the end of each weekend, but it's absolutely the wrong focus to be looking at points. You know your limits. You know your risks. You know what is a 50/50 move. You know when to take those risks. If you're taking them all the time, you're going to get caught out half the time or more. If you do it at a time when it's necessary to take that risk, you have a good chance of pulling it off. That's how you got to do it.

THE MODERATOR: Will, thank you. Congratulations.

WILL POWER: Thank you.

