



F1 Debrief – Insanity personified in a circle

Christine: This is F1 Debrief - Insanity personified in a circle. Coming up on this show, we bring out the big guns to talk all things Indy 500. Our last F1 Debrief show was all about Fernando Alonso's Indy 500 adventure, which is now just days away - very exciting! We got quite a bit of feedback telling us we didn't know what we were talking about, which is a fair assessment. So to rectify the situation, we've roped in Pat W of the I Watch Too Much Racing blog, and Lukeh, both of whom are IndyCar fans and experts and can tell us where we're going wrong. So, hopefully from this chat we can all learn a bit more about what to expect this weekend, and I'll be taking copious notes in case this situation should ever arise again.

Mr C: Pat, firstly, give us the rundown on what's going. What is Fernando Alonso doing?

Pat: Well first of all, hello, it's good to be back. It's been a while. What's he doing? He says he's going for the triple crown which is the three biggest races in the world, arguably. Which is the Monaco Grand Prix, which he's won already, the Indy 500 and the 24 Hours of Le Mans. Part of me wonders if that's what he's doing, whether that's his real motivation, or whether he just wanted to do something different because he's bored. But I think he does want to do Indy, genuinely. Whether he has a chance of winning the triple crown, maybe we'll come onto that later, but I think he just wants a fresh challenge, something to get his teeth into, a change of scenery whilst he has the opportunity. Just to test himself against a different genre of racing, a different niche, against different drivers.

Mr C: And is he wise? Would you say this is a wise strategy? Like, are you backing him to do this?

Pat: I'm backing him because it's been a long time since this sort of thing has happened. Apart from Nico Hülkenberg at Le Mans, an active F1 driver going to a different big race, big championship event, it just hasn't really happened certainly in my lifetime. Unless they've switched wholesale to that championship, like Jacques Villeneuve did, or Montoya. Whether he's wise in doing it, I don't know, because he's obviously got the rest of the F1 season to go, so if he has an accident or something then he could be out for the year. But arguably you could say, well, he's not going to achieve much this year in Formula One anyway, so if he does break his leg or whatever then, does it really matter?

Mr C: Well, let's discuss that because this is a concern. So on the podcast that we previously mentioned, my concern was this is dangerous. So ovals are a more, or my understanding is, ovals are a more dangerous form of racing than we are used to in Formula One. Is that true, have I got that right? Or has safety been improved?

Pat: It is, yea. As we saw last weekend, with Sébastien Bourdais, it is very dangerous. It has improved. I know we used to watch, a few years ago, when we had the old cars and they were a lot more dangerous. They've definitely improved since then. And even since the new cars have come in, the Dallara DW12, they aren't the specification they were in in 2012, when they were introduced. There have been other accidents since then, as a result of which they've added side impact protection into the cockpit. So they've been upgraded. They've added extra, you know in NASCAR where they've got the roof flaps, when a NASCAR car spins round and goes backwards, you've got the flaps on the roof which slows it down?



Mr C: Yes.

Pat: They've put those flaps on the back of the rear wing of the IndyCar. So when that spins round, the flaps are supposed to flip either up or down, it might be upside down, and that's supposed to stop it flipping the car, because in like 2014, I might have the year wrong, in practice leading up to the 500, lots of cars went upside. I say lots, it was three or four, but that's still too many.

Mr C: Far too many, yes.

Pat: Yea, it's very dangerous. So they did those improvements and possibly some others, so for the last two or three years, going upside down hasn't really happened as much, but obviously it did with Bourdais. I'm sure they'll be looking into why that was. But they are quite proactive.

Mr C: So, can you explain the Bourdais thing to me? Going into this race, my understand was this is gonna be a disaster, Alonso's not going to come back in one piece, oh my goodness, please don't hurt him. And then you open up social media and there's a picture of an upside down Bourdais and a couple of hours later, there he is in hospital. And it sort of looks like, okay, this really is exactly as bad as I thought it was. What happened to Bourdais and what's the likelihood that might happen to Alonso?

Pat: It looked like, if you watch... a lot of the clips only show him entering that corner, but if you watch the whole run... in qualifying in Indy, I should probably first explain, they really trim the cars out. No downforce at all, even the rear wing is actually negative wing. I don't quite know, I don't understand, I'm not an aerodynamicist so I don't know why it's negative but rather than creating downforce it reduces drag. But that unsettled the back of the car. So if you watch him going through the turns, the back end is sliding out towards the wall, so he caught it to correct it but he ran out of road and went straight into the wall at 220-something, 230 maybe, which is why it's such a violent impact, unfortunately. And there's not a lot you can do about that.

Mr C: So his experience didn't help him. Like, if Alonso was in the same situation, it wouldn't be worse for him but it arguably wouldn't be any better either?

Pat: It would be just the same, to be honest.

Mr C: You can't catch that.

Pat: At that speed, it's just reactions. I mean, Bourdais, like Alonso, is a road course driver, he's not someone who has spent decades of his life on ovals. He's done some ovals, perhaps someone who'd spent twenty years doing oval might correct it in a different way but his instinct was to catch the slide, drive into it, and he ran out of road. I think Alonso would have just done the same thing, he would have just instinctively corrected it and that would have been it. I think it would have been a similar incident. The race may be better... well it will be different, because you won't have... you have more downforce in the race, so the car won't be so on edge but you will have more traffic and a lot of disturbed air, especially if you're lapping traffic, in a lot of traffic. So that could upset a car, and also at the end of some of the races in the past, in the last five or six years, there's fuel saving, there can be, not every year. So at that point in time, you might find some cars going a lot slower, the way that Rossi did last year, but there are faster cars who are



pushing like crazy trying to get to the finish and that mis-match in speed causes an accident. And Mike Conway had a terrible accident in 2010 I think, 2011.

Mr C: Is Mike Conway the guy who said he will continue to race in IndyCar, but he won't do ovals?

Pat: Yes. That's it.

Mr C: That's the kind of voice in my head saying, of all the tracks, of all the races, why is Alonso doing an oval if it's so dangerous Conway won't even consider it.

Pat: Because it's the Indianapolis 500. And he wants to win it. He wants that trophy.

Mr C: This is a good time to bring Lukeh in. Is he crazy, Lukeh?

Lukeh: Yep. I think he is... oh and hello, by the way. Nice to be back. It is crazy! Indy, the Indy 500 is dangerous, it's insanity personified in a circle. It's just, I mean, you've got that, and the only thing I can think of that would match it in terms of the craziness is probably the Isle of Mann TT, because that is just at the same level of, the amount of speed, the amount of average speed per lap, the constant Gs on your neck, it is... he's... they're all insane to do it but they're all motorsport drivers, they know exactly what the Indy 500 encompasses, they know exactly what to expect, and they know exactly the risks that come as part of racing it. I'm sure if you asked any of the drivers, Alonso or any of the other rookies, or any of the experienced drivers if they would swap the risk and the adrenaline for anything, they'd probably say no, because it is the whole experience I imagine, for the drivers. It's a different world from F1, but I think that's also one of the reasons why Alonso wants to do that. It's an exciting new challenge, and it's one that pushed every bit of adrenaline out the body.

Christine: And it seems like so far, he's been doing okay. I think he qualified... qualified quite well maybe?

Mr C: I like your confidence!

Lukeh: He qualified up in fifth which I know is a whole world away from where he is at the moment in F1, which, that alone is, you know, I'm sure he's delighted to see just what the front row looks like again, without it being lapped after the first lap. But I think he's done really well so far, at the end of the day he's never done oval racing before, he's never done anything like this as a major thing to focus on, he's always been a circuit, a track racer like Pat said. He's come here, he's pretty much nailed every session that he's gone into, and qualifying, he's managed to succeed again. You know, he was in the fast nine, he was holding provisional pole for a couple of drives before some of the big hitters came in, and the interesting thing for me is gonna be seeing how he now handles traffic, and fuel management, and everything that the actual Indy 500 encompasses, which is gonna be a whole different kettle of fish from just going around doing qualifying and practice laps.

Mr C: So, Pat fill me in, because Lukeh's already mentioned a whole slew of words there that I do not understand. So, as a Formula One fan who has a vague recollection of IndyCar, what have we missed up to this point? What has Alonso achieved and what's been going on so far?



Pat: Well, at Indy there's about a week and a half worth of practice, which is partly for traditional sake, because it used to last a month and they used to have 70 or 80 cars for the 33 positions. He's had a lot of coaching, I think it's fair to say, from people like Gil de Ferran, who was a very good IndyCar driver from the past, he also ran the Honda F1 team for a while. He's got, obviously, the Andretti team. Michael was very successful in IndyCar, so was his dad Mario, and Marco his son's okay...

Mr C: Is he not very good?

Lukeh: He's kinda got the Andretti name going for him.

Pat: In fairness, his speciality is Indy, but he probably should have done better than he has done, which is a shame.

Mr C: How important is this team that's around Alonso, then? He's in a team with four or five other drivers?

Pat: Five others. One of whom you could say is the de facto team leader, Ryan Hunter Reay, so he won the 2014 Indy 500 and he's the 2012 champion of the series. He usually leads the team. Marco Andretti, as I say, helped set up the car in his first practice session and the rookie test, he got that dialled in ready for him, made it nice and compliant so he can learn. And we've also got Takuma Sato.

Mr C: Right! Who we definitely know from Formula One.

Pat: Blast from the past.

Mr C: Presumably, Sato used to work with Gil de Ferran, didn't he, at BAR?

Lukeh: At BAR, yep.

Pat: Yea, I think so. So if you can imagine Sato's reputation from then... it hasn't changed.

Mr C: On an oval.

Lukeh: But now it's faster.

Pat: And he actually starts alongside Fernando, which is slightly worrying. Because he starts fourth.

Mr C: Right!

Pat: So, yea, he's a bit wild on an oval, and his qualifying laps were scary to watch those. But he's fast, he knows what he's doing but he does still crash a lot. And the other guy is Alexander Rossi who stood around the back of the Manor garage for a bit and did a few races, and then came to America in his first year and won the Indy 500 in his first year.

Mr C: Didn't he drive in F1 in the Caterham?



Pat: May have done, yea. He was with Caterham.

Mr C: So he won the Indy 500 last year, so he's got to be one to watch.

Pat: Oh definitely, and he's starting third. So he's... we didn't really know what to make of him last year. A year ago he was, he definitely wanted to go back to F1 and he just didn't really like being in IndyCar, I think. He just wanted to get away, but then he won the 500 and his life changed. He said, 'right, I'm not going back there.'

Mr C: So he's the man in IndyCar now, is he?

Pat: Well, he's really good, yea. His form is a bit up and down, he's still a rookie effectively, it's his second full season. Still a young guy, still a lot to learn, but lots of potential. He seems to be the real deal.

Lukeh: I don't know if you mentioned Jack Harvey as well, that's another teammate that Alonso's got this year, that's also a rookie alongside Alonso. He's, you know, one of these young drivers coming up through the ranks and it'll be interesting to see how he does alongside a rookie like Fernando Alonso in your team.

Pat: I hope he doesn't get overshadowed, that's the real thing.

Lukeh: But I think that's what's interesting about this Indy 500. Rookies, Alonso is classified as a rookie but for all we know one of the actual rookies, as in a lot less experienced racing, could overshadow Alonso, for all we know. Look at Rossi last year, he came out of nowhere and he won it. It's... there's so many kind of facets to this year's Indy 500, it's fascinating.

Pat: Well yea, anything can happen. And Jack Harvey was second two years running in the Indy Lights championship, which is effectively their GP2, F2, so he's definitely one to watch. As for how... you asked how Fernando's got on this month so far, he's basically impressed a lot as Lukeh said earlier. He's picked up, in the practices, he was quick basically every session that he ran in. He definitely did more laps than anybody else, whenever he had the opportunity, he was out there, even on the windy day. Wednesday last week, the weather was so windy that there was no meaningful testing, and it's too dangerous a place like that to have gusts of 40, 50mph, but he jumped in the car, did a slow lap around, and the guy's did pit stop practice, and he did that time and time and time again. So he's thinking of every angle, learning everything, soaking up as much as he can, and he's been asking questions of De Ferran and the Andretti guys and his teammates.

Mr C: So regardless of how he does in the race, then, he's already impressed?

Pat: Oh yea.

Lukeh: I'd say so, yea. Definitely. He's got a bright future this Alonso.

Christine: So it is actually a possibility that he could win it?

Pat: Oh it is, yea.



Lukeh: I don't see why not.

Christine: And what happens if he does win it? Doesn't that make everyone else look a little bit stupid?

Pat: Well that's the danger. Two F1 guys parachute in in the space of two years and win, beat the regu-lars. That's the worry.

Mr C: How much of it could be down to skill, how much of it was down to luck? Was Rossi's win a lucky thing or genuine talent and he earned it?

Pat: It's a different type of skill. I mean, he was coached a lot by Bryan Herter. He's running in Bryan Herter's car, his team merged with Andretti's. And Bryan is very good on the radio, and he was coaching Alex all the way through and they made a call pretty early on to save fuel and to skip a pit stop, and the only way that would work was with safety car's timed at specific moments and it just happened to fall their way. But he still had to make it work, he still had to save the fuel, back off when he needed to. There's no dials on the steering wheel like in F1, where you can turn it down, I don't think anymore. There might be two or three settings but certainly nothing like as complicated. So you have to do it with your right foot, and drafting. Because if you get in behind another car, you use less fuel because they're pushing the air out of the way, and you're rocking along behind them. And what happened last year was two of his teammates tangled in the pitlane, which is Hunter Reay and Townsend Bell was in a one-off car, about halfway through. So they ended up two laps down, so what they did was, they positioned themselves in front of Rossi, towed him around... towing is, you get in the slipstream, F1 people call it slipstreaming... and allowed Rossi to save a little bit of fuel here, a little bit there. Once Rossi got out into the lead, which he did, I think he did later. I only watched the race again last week, so it's fairly... I should... So between the two of them, they basically sat in front of him, it didn't matter that they were about to go another lap down because they were out of it already, so that helped. But it was as much team strategy but he still had to drive it, he still had to think. So rather than being about speed and passing, and do-or-die overtakes, it was about using the brain, or what fuel number do we need to hit. Like in Formula E when they're reading out these numbers on the radio, you got to hit those energy numbers, it's the same thing, you've got to hit the fuel number, and that's what he did.

Mr C: That's fascinating. So, is Alonso gonna have that experience then? Lukeh, you mentioned earlier what you're looking forward to looking out for in the race. What are we still, what don't we know and what's still to be discovered come race day?

Lukeh: Well this is the thing. Now we need to see how Alonso handles the entire race with constant traffic around him. We've seen him in practice occasionally and I don't think he was... no, not during his qualifying laps. During the practice laps, we saw occasionally that he was drifting in and out of traffic, so he's obviously confident enough to not be too apprehensive about how he's gonna drive during the race with cars around him. But it's still very much an unknown, how he's gonna handle it for the entire race with traffic around him. How with, like I say, with the car being towed with cars ahead of him, how he'll handle the fuel management side of it, if fuel saving does come up like it did with Rossi last year, or there's still a great lot of... I mean, even away from all that there's still the whole, the fact that this is several hours of average speed of 200+ mph, this is... I mean, F1's physical but as far as I'm concerned the Indy 500 is just the next level up. It's constant for hours and hours on end. There's still a lot that I'm sure Alonso can say 'oh, I've built confidence, I've got the right team around me, I'm happy with the speed I can produce on the



track, I'm happy with how it's going' but I'm sure that deep down inside, there's still so many little questions that, you know, 'how am I gonna handle the start, how am I gonna handle with cars around me at the start, how am I gonna do pit stops'. I'm fascinated, to be honest, I'm fascinated more than anything to see how he does handle the start with so many cars around him, bearing in mind this is a three... IndyCar has a three car, um, three car's per grid... what's the word?

Mr C: As in three wide?

Lukeh: Three wide.

Pat: It's a tradition.

Lukeh: Yea, three wide start. Again, he's right in the middle. He's going to have Sato to his left and I believe J. R. Hildebrand to his right.

Pat: Yea.

Lukeh: In fourth and sixth. And of course, we all know what Mr Sato is like. That'll be interesting alone. That's the thing, there's so many unknowns that are different to how he normally treats an F1 race, especially at the moment, considering most of his F1 races last half a lap. This is a whole different ball game. This is in a car that is genuinely fast, it's got the power, it's got the aerodynamics totally different to F1, the feel totally different to F1, and it's for a good couple of hours. So yea, there's a lot still to discover to see how Alonso's going to handle it in the actual race.

Christine: You mentioned the race start there and I was just worrying that actually given previous form this year, Alonso might not make the start, or he might break down on the way to the grid. But are Honda actually good in IndyCar?

Lukeh: Well, they're better than F1 but that's like saying bacon is better than nothing. They're two totally different worlds. Honda have, I think Chevrolet is still, in terms of manufacturers, have got most wins this season, if I remember. I think Honda have got two this year, and Chevrolet have got three or four, I might be wrong about that. In terms of their performance compared to F1, it's a totally different ball game. And Alonso, I mean, the entire Andretti team have all, you've seen in all the sessions so far that he's, like Pat said, he's going out, he's been consistently fast, he's showing that he can do it and he's got a car under him that he's obviously comfortable with and does the job. You kinda wish, in a way, you could go yep, we'll take that Honda engine to F1 and let him use that. If only it was that simple. This is the thing, I don't know if you've seen any of the coverage, or any of how Alonso seems. He looks so much happier at the moment, than I think I've seen him in about three year's in F1. Like, I don't think I've seen him stop smiling in any of the IndyCar coverage so far. I think he is just embracing the fact that he's got a car that is fast and that he can drive it well. He just looks so happy. It's a totally different ball game from the Alonso that is just slumped at press conferences or slumped in interviews saying the team tried their best but our car's crap, essentially. He just seems like he's embracing everything and loving every second of it, and I think that's a big thing as well, the mental side of it. When you've got that Honda engine constantly falling under par and constantly letting you down, to actually have a car that is taking you out for hours and hours and being fast the entire time, I mean, he must be dancing around delighted with what he's got in IndyCar at the moment.



Mr C: And Pat, your thoughts on Honda?

Pat: Yea, much the same really. Last year, it was more Chevrolet were good on the road courses and Honda are better at the ovals. This year, it seems much more even, so there's a lot more chances for everybody I think, rather than one manufacturer being left behind.

Lukeh: I think we've had a different winner every race this season as well, if I remember correctly.

Pat: Yea, yea we have.

Lukeh: Which goes to show how even it is at the moment. It is just five or six races, five or six different winners.

Pat: Yea, although three of those are with Penske, so there is a slight Team Penske dynamic involved. Though they are strangely nowhere in qualifying, so it'll be interesting to see whether they come through from nowhere effectively, and overtake everybody. But certainly so far this year, we've had, I'm just looking at the list now. We've had Bourdais in the Honda, Hinchcliffe - Honda. Newgarden, Pagnaud and Power, those three are all Chevy Penske's. But then Scott Dixon with the Honda is on pole, so you can't really predict it, that's the great thing about this series. Especially at a race this long, three hour endurance race effectively, you can have the best engine on the grid, but at Indy anything can happen.

Mr C: So, you've sold it to us, I think.

Christine: It sounds good.

Mr C: Yea, it does. If we're F1 fans who are interested in following this, what do we do to watch this race, this weekend?

Pat: In the UK, it's on BT Sport at 4pm, I believe. And this year they're pushing the boat out a bit more. They've got a London studio with Suzi Perry presenting, and they'll have, I think Mike Conway, who we mentioned earlier, is in the studio as well. And some other guests. They'll go to the US coverage as and when they are able to. They're actually, when there's green flag racing in the US and the US broadcaster goes to a break, BT will often stay with it, they won't cut away to an ad break which is brilliant. So we actually see more of the race than they do.

Lukeh: Especially when you consider how many ad breaks American television coverage has.

Pat: It is a lot. Yea, that's where we can see it in the UK. In the US, it's on ABC, one of the biggest networks in American. Unfortunately there is no live streaming. There was for a lot of the practice sessions, and qualifying, but because of the rights restrictions with ABC, they don't stream the race. But if you do miss the race, or if you don't have BT, every race is uploaded YouTube within a week say, edited out with all the commercials taken out, so you can watch it whenever you like.

Mr C: Okay. Well, we're gonna... are you gonna watch this, right, Christine?



Christine: I'm gonna try.

Mr C: Yes. This sounds good. So you've got the Monaco Grand Prix, and then we've got a bit of a break and then we go to BT Sport's coverage.

Pat: I think Monaco finishes at about 3pm, assuming there's no red flags or anything. BT starts at 4pm, so you've got about an hour of watching the post-race podiums, interviews and suchlike, and then if you can get across to BT by between 4 and half past, or in the US that'll be between 11 and half past Eastern, I'd certainly recommend it because of all the build up, which is something Indy does...

Lukeh: A spectacle in itself, yea.

Pat: Yea, they call it the greatest spectacle in racing and half of that's the pre-show.

Mr C: Is that the national anthem and the aircraft or something?

Christine: What do they do?

Lukeh: It kinda feels... it reminds me of the Superbowl in that it's so...

Pat: Oh yea, exactly.

Lukeh: All the drivers, well, I don't know whether the Superbowl introduces everyone one by one, but the IndyCar does. The IndyCar 500 introduces everyone, they make a big thing out of it. They introduce everyone by name to the crowd, and anthems, and aeroplanes and America and yea!

Pat: It's interesting to hear the crowd, whether they boo or cheer when the driver walks out and their name's introduced.

Christine: Aw, that's a bit mean to boo someone before they've even started.

Lukeh: It's a dog eat dog world. It's interesting to watch after the race as well, because one of the things you'll notice if you've never watched the Indy 500 before is, one of the first things the drivers are presented with is, is it a gallon of milk, Pat, or just a big jug of milk?

Pat: I think it's a gallon, or it might be a quart, I don't know.

Lukeh: So instead of your usual, in F1, you'd all get on the podium, you'd have champagne and then have a terrible interview. It's just a big gallon of milk and a huge wreath as well.

Pat: Oh yea, laurel wreath.

Lukeh: I think that's what makes the Indy 500 so unique as well, it's just in its own fascinating world to watch from the outside. You kind of can't help but love it because it's so different anyway.

Christine: Please tell me no one drinks milk out of a shoe, because I'm not watching that.



Pat: I certainly hope not.

Lukeh: I'm surprised Will Power hasn't done that, one of the Australian... one of the leading Australian drivers. He's usually outspoken as well, he's... no, we haven't had a shoe yet, not quite yet anyway.

Mr C: So come rain or shine, and whether Alonso does well or whether he doesn't even make it to the grid. The Indy 500 will happen and then the rest of the IndyCar season will continue. What are we looking forward to beyond this? Because this is just a moment in time but the IndyCar, there must be more to IndyCar than this after the weekend, right?

Pat: Yea, this is race 6 of 19, we've had one oval before Indy and the rest are a mixture of streets and road courses. Next weekend...

Lukeh: Double header next weekend, isn't it?

Pat: Yea, it's a double header at Detroit, the Belle Isle street circuit, or parkland circuit. So you've got a race, full length race on Saturday, and another one on Sunday around a very bumpy, physically demanding, street circuit. Arguably, you could say that's not the best follow up to Indy which is all high speed, and suddenly you're battling a street track. The traditionalists would argue that Milwaukee Mile oval, which followed Indy the week after for something like fifty years, should be back. And Detroit should move off later in the year. But that's a personal gripe.

Mr C: It sounds like IndyCar has all the same problems that F1 has.

Pat: Oh it does, every championship does. There's traditionalists, there's new people, there's people pushing for change, and then Indy itself has traditions. But for the rest of the year... the week after that we're in Texas, which is a 1.5 mile, very high banked oval. The race last year was intense. We had a rain delay of three months.

Mr C: What??

Lukeh: Out of context, that sounds ridiculous.

Mr C: It does sound ridiculous!

Christine: I think I'd have stopped Factbyte Factboxing that one, for sure.

Mr C: You're gonna have to elaborate, don't leave me.

Pat: I'm just looking it up, so I don't get it wrong.

Lukeh: I think, what, they did half the race, if I remember? Then did the second half at the end of August.

Christine: What? That's amazing.



Pat: They did about half the race, and then there was Newgarden and Conor Daly crashed heavily, and then it rained. I think it rained. And there wasn't time to get it in the next day, on the Monday, which is what they'd normally do, because they had to be on the other end of the country by Friday for practice for the next race.

Mr C: I have a question. Sorry, a question has just popped into my head out of nowhere. If this happens on Sunday, does Alonso have to stay?

Christine: Three month's later.

Lukeh: All I'm saying is, everyone book your Octobers.

Mr C: What if he's never allowed back to F1?

Pat: They'd have to find a free weekend and put it in there.

Lukeh: I'm not sure what the forecast is at the moment, but I don't know, we'll have to find out I suppose.

Pat: If it rains Sunday, they'll race on Monday. And if it rains Monday, I guess they'll just keep going.

Mr C: Okay, it's too important to leave.

Pat: The only reason they couldn't do it last year with Texas was because they had a race the following weekend, but I think in this instance, because it's Indy, they would just deal with it. Do something with Detroit, I suppose, I don't know.

Lukeh: You'd think they'd learn from last year in not putting a race the week after but I suppose it could happen at any race that there could be a rain delay. But I'm, I don't know what would happen if they did at Indy. I mean, it's Indy, it's the Indy 500, you wouldn't delay Le Mans... well, I was gonna say you wouldn't delay Le Mans to the next day but Le Mans goes to the next day! Yea, I'm not sure how they would handle it.

Christine: Okay, so we're hoping it's all gonna happen in one day.

Pat: It should do.

Christine: Just a few hours.

Mr C: Now I am, yea.

Christine: So, given that, what I need to know is, from each of you, is your prediction for the race, who is going to win, and also the one thing that you are most looking forward to.

Lukeh: Ooh. Well someone's going to win. I'm gonna have a bit of a cop-out here, and go for the easy option. I'm gonna say Scott Dixon, just because he's on pole and his average lap speed in qualifying was astonishing.



Pat: It was phenomenal.

Lukeh: Absolutely astonishing to watch. It was average speed of 233 or 234mph, I think, across the four laps, and he was just, I mean... it was a good half a mile an hour ahead of everybody else, I think. Something like that.

Pat: Yea, a mile or two more. Most of the field were in 231s.

Lukeh: It was, yea, it's an obvious option given how fast he is and the fact that he's on pole as well but yea, I want Alonso to win and I think he's going to do well but I don't think he'll win unfortunately. But then, at the same time, Alexander Rossi was a rookie, started 11th last year so... I think Ed Jones is a Brit-ish driver, he's on 11th this year so who knows?

Christine: Could happen.

Pat: I think an Andretti car will win but I don't think it will be Fernando. He'll do well, but I have a feeling he might get caught out, maybe a crash, maybe he'll have a problem or he might just roll in tenth or something. But the Andretti team is very strong at this race and I think perhaps Ryan Hunter Reay might win from tenth, so he's my pick, but as Lukeh said, it really could be, you could pick anybody in the top fifteen.

Mr C: And thing you're most looking forward to?

Lukeh: I'm looking forward to seeing what non-IndyCar fans think of the Indy 500. Because I think this, the Alonso factor, let's be honest, the Alonso factor is the big talking story this year. There's a lot to the Indy 500 anyway, but the Alonso story is the... a lot of people are going 'oh, wow, oh, hold on, woah, what's going on, he's doing, wow, let's watch this.' And even, admittedly, a couple of years ago, I only got into IndyCar about, what, six years ago, when, well five years ago or so, when Barrichello came over from F1, surprise, surprise. And even after Rubens left IndyCar after a season, the races were so good to watch and so different from F1, it was like, oh actually this is awesome, these cars are really interesting, these drivers have actually got personalities, these tracks are oh wow, I'm gonna watch. Until you've watched what an Indy 500 is like, until you've sat down, you've understood it's not just turning left. There's so much to it, there's strategy, there's watching these cars dice, walls, millimetres away from walls at 200mph. There's so much to it that until you've watched it, I think you can't fully appreciate. And I'm fascinated to see the amount of new people that'll come over from F1 or anything else that have followed Alonso's career and will just be like 'wow, this is exciting!' so I'm really interested to see what the reactions of people are who have never watched the Indy before this weekend, are gonna be by Monday.

Pat: Yea, gotta agree with that. It's, hopefully, a lot more eyeballs on the race this year. From F1 fans, it'll be really interesting. For me, I'm just looking forward to the race itself. The last few years, the passing, overtaking and strategy all through the race has been fantastic to watch. It's been a lot better than it used to be. With the old cars it was basically single file to the pit stop, and with these cars you can really... there's a lot going on, and the cameras can't catch it all, but there's a lot to follow and it's just seeing who executes in the pit stops, who positions their car when lapping, it's as much as anything, which team's do-



ing well and who is gonna come out on the other side, is there going to be a big surprise again this year like there was last year?

Lukeh: I think one of the things that Pat said earlier on, as well, is it's not like F1 in the sense that, oh okay, it's likely that Hamilton's going to win or Vettel's going to win or maybe Bottas. There's not a selection of three or four drivers maybe, it is a pretty open field of, most of the field, it is entirely open. And there's no guaranteed winner.

Mr C: Well, this has been a much better show, Christine.

Christine: We really should talk to experts every time.

Mr C: Can we ask you guys to come back after the race and maybe do a post-race discussion some time in the next couple of weeks?

Lukeh: Yea, course we can.

Pat: Yea, sure, definitely.

Lukeh: Although, I might cry if Max Verstappen is voted driver of the day. Luckily, there's not one in IndyCar, but he'd probably still win it as well.

Mr C: If anybody's listening to this show, and they think, hey these two guys, they know their IndyCar stuff, how do they find you, how do they follow you? Pat, where will people get hold of you on social media?

Pat: On Twitter, it's @toomuchracing, and I've got a blog at toomuchracing.com, where I occasionally put some thoughts, but really the Twitter account is what I'm on most of the time. A bit too often some would say, but yea, you can follow me on there. I actually have a Twitter list of drivers and teams which I'll try and get updated before the race starts.

Mr C: Ah ha, we can put that in the show notes, too. And Lukeh, how do people find you?

Lukeh: I'm only really on Twitter these days, as @lukehmuse, but I don't really blog anymore so there's no blogs unfortunately, but yea, if you want to follow me, I'm on Twitter as @lukehmuse or just constantly harrassing Mr C, so you can find me on his replies most of the time.

Mr C: And you'll both be watching the race, so if people have questions they can, like, you know... I say people, I mean...

Christine: Us!

Mr C: If I have questions and Christine has questions, we can just fire tweets at you.

Lukeh: Absolutely yea. We can. Ask whatever you want, and I'll just, I'll probably ask Pat.

Mr C: That is absolutely fantastic, thank you for your time, thank you for the insight.



Pat: Thank you.

Lukeh: Thank you very much.

Mr C: Take care!

Pat: Great show, thank you.