



2019 Open-Wheels.com 500 Mile Race

Press Conference

Saturday, November 9, 2019

Yang Ou

Driver, No. 23 Logitech/Peak Antifreeze Snake Pit Dallara IR-18 Chevrolet

MODERATOR: Now joining us in the Media Center, today's Pit Lane Parley Pole Award winner – the driver of the No. 23 Logitech/Peak Antifreeze Dallara IR-18 Chevrolet for Snake Pit, Yang Ou. Yang, thanks for joining us tonight.

YANG OU: Thank you for having me, Tanner.

MODERATOR: Making that second qualifications attempt today – you were second-fastest when you withdrew your first attempt – talk about your decision to pull that attempt and your confidence in making a quicker run the second time out.

OU: The decision was pretty straightforward for me. The first run, I did a 39.3 on the first lap because of a mistake I did in Turn 3 coming to the green. So I knew there was plenty of time on the table, and I never settle for second on the grid – I am too used to getting poles, I think. Especially because I have the speed, it was a no-brainer for me to go for it. Seems like I just did enough. I was, I think, a little bit conservative on my second attempt, but (I did) just enough – by nine-thousandths of a second per lap.

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MODERATOR: Yang, how much work this week... how much time did you make up? Did you anticipate being this strong? How did that play out over the last six or seven days.

OU: I didn't have any expectations coming into qualifying because I have no idea how to set up this (Dallara) IR-18 (Indy car). It is completely different... If I look at my setup now, 50% of my settings are in the opposite direction of how I

used to set up my Dallara DW-12. So I can't tell you how I made the car fast, because I don't even understand. I just click and go out and see if it works. We put a lot of effort into the qualifying car this past week, only because I started driving the car around a week-and-a-half ago, so I needed to learn a lot. It was definitely a very big surprise that we managed to get pole today."

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MODERATOR: You mentioned that you just started driving the Dallara IR-18 Indy car, and you've taken quite some time off from competitive racing here on iRacing. Describe your reasoning for coming back after a multi-year hiatus.

OU: Yeah, I guess I grew up. I was pretty much in high school when I was still driving back in 2011 to 2013. If you want to be competitive in the IndyCar community, because (of) how many good drivers we have here, it takes a lot of your time. I needed to get back to real life and focus a little bit more.

But this event, Tim (Doyle) has really been advocating for it. He said that Tanner (Watkins) has made the event as close to reality as possible, and (Tanner) gave me a presentation about the vision of the event, and it is something that I don't think I've ever participated in before.

I have run several league races before, but not to the scale of (this) event. To me, that was really impressive, and I knew I was right (about making a return) today because when I was sitting on pit lane with my run getting closer, I was getting



more nervous. Because you have been sitting on the pit lane for 30 minutes, and you think that you will be perfect, but when that time comes, you're never sure.

Today was the first time I actually understood why real drivers sit in the car and close their eyes to visualize your run – I never had to do that before because in iRacing's official series, you practice and then you jump straight into your qualifying server. It definitely made it the closest experience in sim racing to real-life that I've experienced so far, so I am very glad that I did decide to join this event.

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MODERATOR: What do you need out of your race trim car between now and then to be as competitive as you expect or need to be?

OU: We just need to find a little more speed. We actually haven't done so much running in traffic – that is something that my teammates have told me is quite different from the IR-05/DW-12 days, so that is something I have to learn about throughout the week. But so far, they say that car is good in traffic, but when I tried it we were running 40.7 (-second laps) by ourselves, so I think we are way off pace.

Hopefully we can trim the car out and keep its ability in traffic, but we will have to see. That is going to be tricky. I think the race setup is completely different than the qualifying setup, so it is a new beginning for us and (I) am looking forward to the whole process and looking forward to the race.