



2019 Open-Wheels.com 500 Mile Race

Press Conference

Saturday, November 9, 2019

Wilson Neto

Driver, No. 421 Bitdefender/SimRacingNews/Reiza Interlagos Motorsport Dallara IR-18 Honda

MODERATOR: Now joining us in the Media Center, today's provisional runner-up qualifier on Pole Day, Wilson Neto. Wilson is the driver of the No. 421 Bitdefender/SimRacingNews/Reiza Dallara IR-18 for Interlagos Motorsport. Wilson, thanks for joining us – how was your day?

WILSON NETO: Yeah, good evening, Tanner. Thanks for having me here. It was a pretty intense day... it was such a unique experience, trying to put our best qualifying laps together in this format was pretty intense. We definitely feel the pressure and it was pretty fun, but in the end, fortunately for us, I had a bit of luck and it all went well at the end of the day.

MODERATOR: Wilson, just like Yang (Ou), you were safely in the field after your first attempt but you were compelled to make another run. Where did the confidence to make another run come from?

WILSON: I decided to take my chances because I knew I had a car that should be at least in the top five. If we were going to be on the front row, of course it would have been under (favorable) race track conditions because it was playing an important role on the lap times tonight. But at least I knew I had a car for the top five.

Unfortunately, during the morning I knew I was going to have a tough run because I was 43rd of 45 cars, so I had a track in really bad conditions. But either way, I think if I was able to hit my marks early in the morning, I think I was probably able to be in the front row in the morning. But unfortunately I was way too aggressive in Turn 3

on the second lap – I almost spun and hit the wall. That definitely killed my tires and almost killed my run.

I did a high time and I was basically in the middle of the field, so I decided to take my chance because for me, it is the same (whether) you are starting P20 or being in the Bump Day (Sunday). It will be pretty much the same, so let's do (a) second attempt and give it all you got to be at least in the front row, and I got a bit of luck to be the second car on track. That is very important because we were able to put in good lap times.

But again, Yang Ou was on a completely different level today. Even on a better track condition, I was not able to beat his time. But at least it was close, and it was fun at the same time.

###

MODERATOR: Wilson, what does it mean for you to lead Brazil in day one qualifications after you all have had so much success in the last year at Indianapolis.

NETO: It is an honor and a pleasure. Of course, I was planning on bringing the pole to Brazil tonight, but unfortunately that didn't happen. Congrats to Yang – he definitely deserves it and he was much better than us tonight.

I was pretty happy, at least to be first in all of our country, and to work with Marco (Aurelio Brasil) and Silvio (Sanchez). We run different cars because we have completely different driving styles, so basically we try to help each other. Marco had a good car for tonight as well, but he



wsa definitely playing it on the safe side as he was already in the top-10 and didn't try to take his chance on a second run. But I had nothing to lose, so that's why I did.

Silvio is struggling a bit over the longer run – I think he is in the neighborhood of P25, I don't remember exactly where he is on the qualifying board right now. He had good pace with Marco and I back in May, but as we have an extra lap (in qualifying format) now, it is much more related to driving and it skews driving styles. I think my driving style fits better to handle the car in worse conditions, which allowed me to be in front of them tonight.

###

MODERATOR: Final question – we are just one week to race day. What do you need out of your race trim car to ensure that you are competitive in the race itself?

NETO: I think the most important test will be the official (iRacing series) week (at Indianapolis). We have in front of us this week the iRacing official races, so I will try to do a couple races throughout the week to see how strong the car is in traffic. I know I still have stuff to improve, but unlike last May, I basically was working the last couple of weeks on my race setup in race conditions.

I was not that concerned about qualifying, and I was lucky to be P2. This week will be important for us to test our car in official races and, of course, in other practice. I think, maybe for this race, we are getting more prepared for the race and that dream we had back in May. Hopefully I can (have) a better race this time and be in the top three at the end of the race.