

# NASCAR Media Conference

## Press Conference

Sunday, November 7, 2021

An Interview with:

## Noah Gragson



**THE MODERATOR:** We'll take questions for Noah.

**Q. When you hit the wall, was that just trying to find extra speed, find the extra cushion, or was it missing a mark?**

**NOAH GRAGSON:** I don't know. I tried looking on Twitter just to see a replay of it walking over here. I have no clue. I felt like I was pushing a hundred percent. I don't feel like I jumped over it. It just shattered the right rear tire. I didn't know if I had a tire down, if I hit oil, what it was, if I got into marbles on entry. I was definitely trying to push the tire to its potential.

I didn't feel like I overdrove into the corner. But, yeah, pounded the fence. Just kept sliding and sliding. Threw it away. We're kind of disappointed just with the overall speed we had this weekend. We just got beat by those guys. They brought their A game, and we didn't have the balance we needed to go compete.

We never quit. Had an opportunity there at the end. That's what matters most. Sure, it's disappointing, but I don't feel like I overdrove it. I got to go study and see why, if something was on the track. Nobody else spun out. I don't know what it was. I wish I knew. I wish I could say, I just (expletive) up. I don't know what happened.

**Q. After making that contact, you guys didn't pit I'm sure because of track position at that point. You know that would have taken you guys out of it. How did the car drive after that contact? You feel after that restart you had any shot?**

**NOAH GRAGSON:** I felt like I had a shot under caution. I knew I was going to be a little tight and whatnot. Got a good restart. Was hoping the 18 would clean out the 22, then we could just stay in front of the 16. Kind of perfect scenario. Never really happened. It was a good race back to the finish line.

That's what the Xfinity Series is, it's hard racing. Once I got into turn one, just in tight, on the splitter. I hit it really bad. But we never quit. I don't know, 12th. Not where we wanted to be, but we were a little off today. Had to try

something on the restarts and stuff. Just came up short.

**Q. Did any adjustments help the car at all, especially after gets the one pit stop there where the tire nearly got away?**

**NOAH GRAGSON:** Yeah, I need to look at the rules again. I thought for sure we were getting a penalty. I'm not sure if NASCAR missed it. I think they do a great job. Ended up being okay. We just had a long pit stop.

Just nothing really seemed to help this weekend with the balance of our car. We were just disconnected with being tight in the center, then loose off. No adjustments, nothing really seemed to get it neutral again or help both ends of it, either help the drive or help the center and make the drive worse.

We just missed it as a whole. Try again next year, learn from our mistakes.

**Q. You obviously hope to be back here next year in a similar position. What do you think needs to be done to improve on this racetrack with this team?**

**NOAH GRAGSON:** Make it into Homestead.

**Q. The body part they were talking about, did you have any second thoughts about signing that, or were you always going to do that?**

**NOAH GRAGSON:** Huh?

**Q. The body part --**

**NOAH GRAGSON:** Oh, I try to go above and beyond and fulfill the fans' request to an extent. I felt with the social distancing of my fingers on the back of a Sharpie, it was acceptable (smiling).

**Q. Final race with Dave tonight. What were those emotions like post-race?**

**NOAH GRAGSON:** We really haven't had too many discussions. Just last week was really special. We felt like we could come into this race and win during this past week.



I rode up to Martinsville with Dave and back down, back home with Dave afterwards. Just getting to spend that time with him was special. I'll miss him. He's not going to be there, but he's not going anywhere either in my personal life.

Just thankful to get to know him over the years. Would love to have a good crew chief step in for us. We don't really have anyone right now. I don't know if Chad Knaus or something is available. We'd love you to come to the 9 team, Chad, or someone else.

**Q. How was tonight different? Is this just like any other race or truly not? Compared to previous years where you weren't racing for a championship on this night...**

**NOAH GRAGSON:** I'd say just different kinds of nerves. The confidence is still there. You just don't want to be wrecking somebody if you're not in the Playoffs, wrecking a Playoff guy or something early in the race. You don't want to get involved, where we were last year.

This year you just don't want anything dumb to happen. You kind of expect there's going to be stuff, prepare. That's where your preparation comes from.

Yeah, just different kind of nerves really. I feel like the confidence of being able to go fast, be decent on restarts, keep the car in one piece, I know we hit the wall, but still had a fighting chance from where we were in the middle of the race till the end.

I'll take it.

**Q. How do you decompress from this? Will there be certain things you want to focus on or look back on in the coming days, weeks or months before next year?**

**NOAH GRAGSON:** I feel like if we have a Homestead performance, go out there and dominate tonight, then yeah, you hang your head on it. We really weren't that good all weekend. It wasn't a lack of hard work or trying by any of the guys or girls at JR Motorsports. Everybody tried their best, tried to bring their best piece. We guessed wrong and got beat.

**Q. You and Daniel clashed earlier this year. You've since raced cleanly. How do you see him as a competitor next year?**

**NOAH GRAGSON:** Yeah, I got some buddies on the 18 team. Charlie Brock, their crew chief. I'm happy for those guys and their team. It takes a lot of hard work and effort to not only win a championship but just to get to the Final

4.

I'm grateful to get to race against that team. I'm happy for those guys. Not happy, but congrats to the 18 team for winning the championship.

**Q. What was the body part that you signed?**

**NOAH GRAGSON:** Just like some hairier skin or something.

**Q. What are you going to do for the next couple months?**

**NOAH GRAGSON:** Probably run the Snowflake down in Pensacola. Might go to the Chili Bowl not to race. It would be cool to race, but I don't really know if there's an opportunity for that. Just get everything sorted out. It's going to be pretty busy come January 1st with different opportunities that we got for next year, getting that all sorted out.

Yeah, look for a crew chief, spend time with him, all that kind of stuff. I don't know. I don't know yet. It's going to start with probably a Red Bull vodka tonight, kind of see where the next few hours, days or months go.

**Q. Why do you need to stay up late tonight?**

**NOAH GRAGSON:** I didn't party after Martinsville just because I want to be really clear minded coming into this weekend. Tried to stay dedicated to the workout program with Josh for the last couple months. Waking up Monday morning at 6 to go on a run over at Josh's house at 7, you can be a little hung over on Sunday, but I try not to carry that over to Monday or anything throughout the week these last couple months.

Yeah, it's just kind of really let the dogs out.

**THE MODERATOR:** Noah, thank you.

**NOAH GRAGSON:** Thank you, guys. Thank you all for your hard work this year. You guys still got tomorrow, so... I don't know if that's good or that sucks for you guys. Thank you all for your dedication to the sport. We really appreciate it.

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