

# NASCAR Media Conference

## Press Conference

Sunday, March 26, 2023

An Interview with:

## Tyler Reddick

**THE MODERATOR:** We'll continue with Q&A for our winning driver, Tyler Reddick.

Questions.

**Q. On Friday you seemed pretty optimistic, pretty confident about it. Could you talk about then being able to pull that off, and certainly restart after restart after restart... Pretty tough to maintain.**

**TYLER REDDICK:** It was. I honestly wasn't doing the best job on those restarts. Few of the times giving up one, two spots. All but that very last one I'm having to battle for position down into the S's, which is a very tricky area of the racetrack, considering track limits, all those things. One bump, one thing goes wrong, you might be getting penalized. Definitely putting ourselves at risk there.

If I have one thing looking at the whole weekend I wish I could have done better would have been qualifying and cleaned up those restarts a little bit.

Yeah, there is things to learn, for sure. But it all went really well. The last one, got off of turn one without any real threats.

**Q. During the Saturday media sessions, while talking about the newcomers, you said hopefully we race with respect out there, it often goes away on restarts and finishes. You were in front of it all, but what are your thoughts on what happened behind you?**

**TYLER REDDICK:** I have no idea. I was just focusing on my restarts and what I had going on.

Obviously there was a lot of cautions at the end. I mean, the way that things kind of have progressed, the front and rear bumpers of this car are really resilient. You can really hit someone pretty hard without knocking the nose of your car out. The rear bumpers are really tough, too.

We saw that at the Clash, people being able to lean on each other front to rear. It kind of brings that to light at the end of these races.



But seriously, though, you look at turn one here, turn one at Indy road course, they're very inviting corners with a lot of room. It's just a product of restarts and the nature of NASCAR racing and how aggressive all the drivers are. Someone's going to be on the short end.

**Q. What is your vibe in the car? Are you nervous? Was your stomach worse today during the last restarts than a week ago?**

**TYLER REDDICK:** Thankfully things had returned to normal this morning of all things. Good timing. Feeling a lot better.

Yeah, the only thing that was really on my mind today was just how to kind of hang on. We've been having some issues with the Coolshirt plugging in. Unfortunately today from lap one we could never get it plugged in, so it was a little bit warm in the car. The shirt got pretty hot.

I was able to hold on till the end. Thankfully we had one last overtime finish or I may have been in trouble.

**Q. Are you calm?**

**TYLER REDDICK:** At times certainly. Before we had all the cautions with 10 to go or whatever, I had gotten back around William, settled in. Definitely hot, but I was comfortable with the car and everything. Certainly we got to the end, I got warm again. My ice had melted. So, yeah, I was getting a little hot in the car.

By the time we were taking the restart, kind of gotten back to where my heart rate and calmness needed to be to focus.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

**TYLER REDDICK:** I wouldn't say 'nervous'. Just the stress was high in the car today. Just circumstances. But thankfully not too high. Still able to execute and get the job done. I didn't quite get every restart done perfectly, but we got the ones that mattered: the last one.

**Q. In regards to the start to your season, Billy and Denny talked about the bad optics of having your points position, but that you felt you still had speed. From your perspective, has it been frustrating?**



**Disappointing? How have you handled the beginning of the year?**

**TYLER REDDICK:** I mean, it's just racing honestly. That's all it was. It's just how racing can be sometimes.

You look at what happened, it wasn't like we flat out sucked this weekend. It wasn't this or that. It was just circumstances.

Some of it was mistakes that were made or things we could have definitely done better. But they were all things we could learn from.

In the grand scheme of things, when you have the entire year in front of you, it's good to learn from things early in the year. If it comes later on down the road, I'd rather have these things around early than later on.

For me, it didn't really affect me. From my perspective in the shop, didn't seem to be affecting the team. We just kept focusing, Next weekend we're going to bring the best car we can, start over, go from there.

The only frustration I would say that we had was when we would have a bad weekend or something go wrong, it would really screw up our qualifying metric for the next weekend, put us in a tough spot to qualify well and start better. That was the only part of it that was slightly frustrating, but nothing crazy.

**Q. How validating is this to get this victory for 23XI, given how much confidence and belief Billy and Denny had? How did you handle the emotional side of the intense battles you had today?**

**TYLER REDDICK:** Yeah, you just got to remove emotion from your thought. You're being emotional in a moment, you can't have the mental clarity to get the job done. You just have to remove all that from your brain.

As much as, yes, it can be frustrating to have caution after caution, almost made it back to the start/finish line, it didn't go our way. You just have to remove all that from your brain. It's done and over with. You have to reset, be ready to go for the next restart, because everybody behind you is grinding their teeth, doing everything they can to get an edge on you.

You can't be feeling bad for yourself. You have to get back to work and execute and just do it again.

**Q. There were obviously a lot of green-white-checkered attempts at the end. Would you be opposed to NASCAR stepping in and limiting**

**the green-white-checkered like they did back in '05?**

**TYLER REDDICK:** No, we'd be robbing the fans of a finish. That's what they deserve. They deserve a good finish to the end. They deserve to see us make it back to the white flag. Whatever happens after that, yeah.

I think the rule the way it is is the way it should be. The fans pay a lot of good money to come out here, watch a good race, a good finish. Deserve to put that product out there for the fans.

**Q. You were obviously the fastest driver and car this whole weekend. Your comments on bringing that speed to Toyota, which last year obviously struggled on the road courses, what you'll bring to all the road courses for the rest of the season?**

**TYLER REDDICK:** What was the last part? The rest of the road courses?

**Q. What talent you're going to bring to the rest of the road courses this year.**

**TYLER REDDICK:** What talent?

**Q. Speed.**

**TYLER REDDICK:** Speed.

Yeah, hopefully it applies. Obviously every road course is kind of its own animal. But the braking zones we have here, there's a lot of time to be made and lost in the braking zones here.

I feel like when you go to Indy road course, some of those similarities apply. Not as much elevation, gain or loss. The Chicago street course, the layout it has. Being really good in the braking zones, not making mistakes and going wide will be really critical with the tight corners and the tight narrow confines on the street. You miss a braking zone, there's nowhere to go, you're going to go into a wall.

Things that we were strong with today hopefully will apply in some ways to those other places. In no way do we get super comfortable or content with how we do. We're going to: How could we be better, what things can we clean up. I definitely could have done things better at the end of this race on restarts.

Certainly to go from where we were at the test in January, the tire test here, how we stacked up against the 8 car, Kyle Busch, Austin Cindric in the 2, to make the gains that we did, make our cars better, it was certainly a really good sign.



Obviously I would love to see all the Toyotas get better. Certainly we're all going to work together, share notes, hopefully get the rest of them up there soon. Good step in the right direction.

Like I said, it was a really big point of emphasis for myself coming in here to try to help Toyota to get better on the road courses. Yeah, I'd say that was a success.

**Q. It seems like a while ago, but the middle of the race, towards the end, you and Byron had that battle. Separate strategies. Now that you've seen them in action, what is your opinion on having the no-stage cautions at the road courses?**

**TYLER REDDICK:** Well, it certainly allows the race to play out more naturally, which I feel like in the spirit of road course racing, in my opinion, that's what it should be more about. We had the natural cautions towards the end there with people having tire failures and issues to bring out the cautions to have the exciting green-white-checked finishes.

Like we saw in the Truck race, like we kind of saw in the Xfinity race, I think allowing the race to play out naturally, to me it's what road course racing is about.

You look at other forms of motorsport that has road course races, not always is there an exciting finish at the end. The stage racing, obviously...

From my perspective, I enjoyed it more today. It was about maximizing your pace on the racetrack and minimizing the mistakes because depending on what strategy you had, if you made a mistake, you're going to be costing yourself track position as the race just played out.

**Q. This probably seems like a long time ago, but what was going through your mind early in the race when you made the first pit stop and were mired deep in the field?**

**TYLER REDDICK:** Some concern just the initial first couple laps. Joey got back. Austin Dillon got by. Recentered myself. I remember AJ literally getting stuck behind Aric Almirola yesterday, stopped on the racetrack, fought back from it and won.

Thinks the Cup Series, not the Xfinity Series. I looked at how that played out, thought we could make it happen. For the most part, as the race was playing out at the end, it was the right calls, the right strategies I think.

Having a strong car really helps, whatever strategy you go

with, work. But with the pace falloff and everything, the strategy we were on was going to work out better. Yeah, it was enjoyable for sure.

**Q. Was it weird and/or extra motivating to have the 8 car that you're battling for the win?**

**TYLER REDDICK:** Kyle races with a lot of respect. I know he gets a bad rap from a number of fans out there. Pretty much from day one coming into the Cup Series, Kyle and I have raced really, really well around each other for the last couple of years.

I knew he was going to give everything he had. I knew that team would. But certainly you heard him talk about it, right, just the respect in the garage not being what it used to be. He's one of the few drivers that certainly really still races with that honor and integrity and wants to race fair, race hard, race clean.

I knew he wasn't going to do anything too crazy. There were other cars lined up behind me during the day that I was concerned about a dive bomb or a bump or something like that.

When you got one of the best in the business behind you in Kyle, you know you are going to get raced really hard and you know you have to execute perfectly, and it's going to be really, really clean.

**THE MODERATOR:** Good luck in Richmond, Tyler.

**TYLER REDDICK:** Thank you.

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