

NASCAR Media Conference

Press Conference

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An Interview with:

Mark Rushbrook

THE MODERATOR: Now we're joined by the global director of Ford Performance, Mark Rushbrook. We just got done announcing the credible stats. Six of the last seven national series championships have been won by Ford, including five straight. How do those stats -- those are mind-blowing stats. How have you guys done it in the last two-plus years?

MARK RUSHBROOK: Great people, great teams, great drivers. That's how you do anything in this sport for sure. I mean, we look at them one at a time and celebrate them one at a time. So I'm not even sure I was aware of those stats until you went through them.

Every race means a lot to us. Every championship means a lot to us. Like I said, when we got ThorSport back in Ford, we knew we could do great things together. To be back here again with them and celebrating another championship, it means a lot.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Mark.

Q. It's kind of along those lines. This is becoming a trend, you coming to join us after championship races here in Phoenix. You got two more. How do you like your odds for those two?

MARK RUSHBROOK: Well, if you look at who we have in there, pretty good odds. Anything can happen in these races, as you know. In Xfinity, the strength of Stewart-Haas and Cole Custer coming back here. He got it done last year, especially on that last restart, and was incredible to see him win and proud to have Cole and Stewart-Haas back here representing us again.

For sure in Cup, the last two champions, Logano and Blaney, we got a 50/50 shot there. Looking forward to the race. Like I said, anything can happen. Great cars, great drivers, great teams, and looking forward to it.

Q. (Off microphone)?

MARK RUSHBROOK: Well, they're celebrating, right? I'm getting text messages tonight from Jim Farley, our CEO, from Jim Baumbick, Lisa Materazzo, our head of product



development, head of marketing. They're paying attention. Our employees are paying attention.

It means a lot for Ford to be in motorsports and to be competing at this level. And whenever we have that success, we enjoy it. We know how hard it is, and we've gone through long spells without getting the race wins or the championships sometimes. To be able to celebrate every one is important.

Q. So the Ford drivers that went winless in the first, you know, 14 races of the Truck Series season, and then they've since won five of the last nine, what is it about just the Ford teams or just Ford Performance in particular that they can just flip that switch seemingly when it's crunch time and then start just cranking out wins and championships?

MARK RUSHBROOK: Yeah, I wish it was as easy as flipping a switch, but that's the nature of racing, again, at this level, that it is so competitive that you think you have an advantage, and maybe you do, but it can be short-lived. When you are at a disadvantage, you just have to keep working hard on every element of your program. When it comes together, it comes together. Then you celebrate it.

Q. Of course, Ty was part of the Roush program over half a decade ago. Is it really a full-circle moment that Ty was able to win the championship for Ford after what he's gone through and bounce back to get that championship?

MARK RUSHBROOK: I was actually thinking about that a lot during the race and the amount of time that has passed from when we first met Ty to having him in different programs with RFK, and we even put him in IMSA Mustang GT4s for a while.

To see that he has found such a great home at ThorSport and to see him celebrating the success with race wins and especially this championship, it's really a proud moment for us because, like I said, it's all about the people and the relationships. To have that duration with him, it means a lot.

Q. There's some concern with Ty aware and a couple of guys that fell back but got new tires, and now they're chasing Ty down at the end of the race.



Although he started to pull away, you're not in the crew chiefs or in the cockpit driving, but you are Ford. What does it do for your nerves watching those guys close the gap and close the gap and going, oh, I hope those tires hold out? How do you hold up at the end of a race?

MARK RUSHBROOK: Yeah, you've just got to roll with it, knowing that anything can happen, and you never know when a caution is going to be thrown or not.

They made some changes on the truck on the last stop, so we know what's going on with that, but you don't know what the other trucks or cars are doing. Heim certainly had a bad set of tires or a bad setup the second to last run, and we didn't know if they were going to adjust it and make it better and come back stronger.

When Corey got put to the back with the penalty, that certainly helped, but he was still coming strong at the end.

Q. Since ThorSport came back to Ford two years, two championships, what has the connection been like for you guys?

MARK RUSHBROOK: They had raced with us before, and we had a strong relationship for sure. When they had left, we were disappointed, but understood why at the time.

As soon as the opportunity, as soon as they reached out with an interest to come back, it was an immediate -- I literally drove from Michigan down to Ohio to meet with Duke personally and to understand why they wanted to come back and how they wanted to come back, and the deal was done.

We're very happy. They're like-minded people. They want to win. We want to give them the best resources to be able to win, and it feels like family. It's just very comfortable with them.

THE MODERATOR: Mark, congratulations. Good luck in the next two.

MARK RUSHBROOK: Thank you.

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