

NASCAR Media Conference

Press Conference

Sunday, May 18, 2025

An Interview with:

Joe Gibbs

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by the team owner of the No. 20 Mobil 1 Toyota Joe Gibbs.

JOE GIBBS: Let me say, you were talking to the right guy, not me. That guy is awesome at what his job is. He made a great call tonight. Just really appreciate the 20 team, and every time I think about this, I was going to take off. I'm sorry.

But I was just going to thank -- our sponsors mean so much to us, and tonight it was Mobil on the car. That car with Rheem has been huge deal for us staying there with that car; Stanley, Black & Decker, everybody there. So our sponsors there, Reser's is just a huge deal for us and a huge deal for our company.

I just really am thankful for the fact that we can get a win like this, a huge TV night for all of our sponsors and everybody on the car. Just really appreciate them.

Q. Just a thought if you would about Christopher. Seems like when he's in pressure situations, he does best. Would you agree with that? He just seems like he's just calm and cool the harder and more aggressive things become.

JOE GIBBS: I would. I think I would. Adam is the same. Making calls like that to get a chance -- you're taking a chance there. I appreciate what he's doing so much. In football I was that guy on the sidelines, so I appreciate that because a lot of pressure on that. He made a great call tonight.

I think with Christopher, if you remember, our first year with him was COVID. He was getting put in cars without any practice. He was getting put in a Cup car. So you watched him go through all that, and he just has -- he's steadily after it. He's steadily improved. I think him and Adam have a real unique bond which is a huge deal, and you have to have it at this level.

Right now I think he's at the top of his game, to be quite truthful.

The other part of Christopher, All-American kid. I've got to



tell you. I don't think I've ever had a problem, other than getting him signed and paying him the money.

Q. You mentioned Christopher being at the top of his game. I'm curious, I know that you guys within the halls at Huntersville respect and admire him. Because he has such an understated low-key personality, do you think fans and the industry at large really appreciate how good he is?

JOE GIBBS: I pick it up all the time, Sirius radio all the time, you guys know and really respect the people that can get it done in NASCAR. It's really hard. This is a hard deal. It's pointed out all the time. Real talented people get to this level, can't do it. This is a big deal.

I think everybody in the sport that knows the car really appreciates him. I pretty much hear it all the time. People are picking him to win.

I think he does and certainly has earned the respect of everyone. I think people put him in that category. He's raced all the off-road dirt stuff with Kyle. He's gained a lot of respect there.

Anyway, I think he's just -- he's earned his way, I feel like, to be considered one of the best.

Q. Then you guys made some very publicized changes in the off-season, and last year you guys got off to a good start. I'm curious, there's always that potential of another second half swoon. Are you hands on in that regard? Do you trust leadership to be the guy that puts the pressure there? What is your role in making sure you guys don't fall off?

JOE GIBBS: No, I am not the technical person over here, so my role is to help pick the people, deal with issues that we have all the time which comes up with a pro sport, okay?

And I said the biggest thrill that I have is the first of every month trying to pay the bills. So I've got to get the money. I'm chasing sponsors and stuff a lot, too. But it's mostly the people issues where I spend most of my time. It's making sure that our competitive side has everything that it takes, and we've got great people over there.



You win with people in pro sports. It's not a single person or anyone; it's a total team effort. If you get the right people together, you're going to have a chance to win because they're going to make you look good.

But my role is you could probably say more of a minor role in this thing, is keeping everybody heading in the right direction and being able to get the resources for everybody.

Q. I know this isn't a points race, but this is still Joe Gibbs Racing first win at North Wilkesboro. How much does that mean to you to win at such a historic facility and something that will probably be in the sport for many years to come?

JOE GIBBS: Well, if you want to talk about how hard the sport is -- I think I'm right on this -- I don't know how many times we've been in the All-Star Race, but it's got to be around or, whatever it is. That was the third time we've won. We could not win this thing.

I always think back to -- we were at Charlotte, and I think we had Denny and Kyle Busch, and with three laps to go we were one-two. I had already spent the money. With two laps to go, they wrecked each other.

Anyway, we've had a tough time winning this. So I think it says how hard it is to win the All-Star Race, and I think people -- I know people really respect that. Great crowd tonight. I would say that people are probably going to give us a positive on the racing, too.

Q. Joe, we see the different development of athletes and you've seen it throughout your years in different years. How has Christopher developed? I know you said the challenges of the first year not getting that testing time and the practice time. Where is he making the next steps from potentially making the championship race to that greatness, that superstar level that you've worked with other athletes and seen? How is he making that progression?

JOE GIBBS: Well, I think our sport, everybody that's in the sport, obviously the media, all of us that make our living in it, are kind of looking to the talent. I think we respect that so much because we know how hard it is.

I think he is reaching a point, and you've got to do it. There's no way to buy it, you can't talk your way up, you've got to race your way up. I think he's doing that, earning respect. It's almost each and every week.

I think everybody considers him now one of the guys that can win every weekend, and I also think he's really good at

almost every type of track we go to for sure. He's a road racer, I think, so I don't think he has a weakness.

Hopefully what's going to happen, the further we go, you've got to earn your way and win, and hopefully as he wins, he'll keep gaining respect, and certainly being in the playoffs -- we had a heartbreak last year, but he's been in there two years in a row. For a young guy, that's a big deal.

Winning championships also is a big part of it.

It's all out there, and for him, I hope we can surround him with everything. I think he has a great crew chief. I think the pit crew is really good. So I think all of us in the support role on the competitive side, too, making the moves that we've made there can really help him reach the goals that we think he can.

Q. Every driver is different, but obviously the points leader is Kyle Larson, the guy who races a lot of sprint car stuff. Obviously I know Christopher has gotten to be allowed to do a little bit more of that. How is the comfort level of that for you, and do you see that as something that is helpful even though it's a completely different piece of machinery?

JOE GIBBS: I think -- here's kind of how I feel about it. I think these guys, some of them, they don't have other hobbies. They don't have other things they want to do. And so I think it's kind of a thrill for them, and they love that, and it gives them something to do during the week when they're not all consumed with the Cup stuff on this side. That's kind of how I look at it.

I think there's got to be a balance to it because this is where you're going to, I think, wind up making a career out of it. Obviously this is where you're financially going to make everything about -- I always talk about, I think NASCAR is the place that some day when you sit down as a granddad you're going to talk about NASCAR because that's how important it is in your career.

I think you kind of go through all that. I kind of made one decision a while back, kind of changed my mind when I saw some things that were taking place. So I think it's -- do you make the right decision? You hope you do.

Q. It's easy to look back now. I don't know if regret is the right word, but the decision you made in 2017 not allowing Kyle to do Indianapolis. I know it was a different time and everything is different, but do you look back on that differently or do you still feel at that time that was still the right decision?

JOE GIBBS: Yeah, I think anytime you're confronted with something like that, you have to make the best decision you can. Number one for me is our NASCAR team.

When I considered anything like that, the number one thing for me was the fact that when you race cars, things can happen. So you've got to make sure that our race team is protected.

So basically what I said was if I have -- if you can get me an insurance policy that says whatever races you would miss, to protect our race team and our sponsors, that I would okay it. But that's really hard to do.

Anyway, I think we went through that with Kyle, and I understand kind of where he is, too. I respect Kyle. That guy is gifted. He did so much for us. He had a big part in putting our race team where it is. I think he's 56 wins or something. So it's a big deal for us. I really respect him, he and Sam and Brexton now, all they've got going on. I think it's awesome.

Q. Coach, now it's three All-Star Races at North Wilkesboro, the crowd is into it, the drivers are into it, now more lead changes than any All-Star Race in history. How cool of a racetrack is North Wilkesboro, and how important is it for the sport?

JOE GIBBS: I think that the fans do a good job of analyzing things. I know you guys do. So I think it's probably that, the groundswell, what everybody is going to say about it. I think there's probably going to be decisions made about the future, and I thought the crowd, to me, was really good.

So that normally has a lot to do with where we go and decisions about the future. I just appreciate the people here. Everybody has wanted to get this back. I appreciate Marcus, everything they did, and the community, it's been awesome for us to get a chance to come back here to North Wilkesboro.

It's a thrill for us, and I won't be making that decision, but I think the way this race turned out and the crowd and everything, that'll have a lot to do with it.

Thank you all. Appreciate it.

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