

# NASCAR Media Conference

## Press Conference

Sunday, August 10, 2025

*An Interview with:*

## Justin Marks

**THE MODERATOR:** We're going to begin with our post-race media availabilities. We're now joined by our race-winning owner Justin Marks.

**Q. Looking back at this weekend, of course you haven't had that much time to look back yet, but from Shane and Connor's battle yesterday to Connor's injury and now Shane with the win, how do you think you're going to look back on this weekend with how much everybody has learned and grown together in many different ways?**

**JUSTIN MARKS:** Well, yeah, very, very eventful weekend, that's for sure. Some pretty high moments and then obviously a tough one last night.

I think when you look back on weekends like this, it's just like why we're doing it. This is why we're focused and working so hard in the race shop because we feel like we have a tremendous opportunity with Shane. We have a tremendous opportunity with Daniel and with Ross and then obviously with Connor coming up.

You look back and you go, we recognized incredible talent with Connor, made a commitment to him and helped him get an opportunity to showcase his talent. He did that yesterday. Then today Shane just continues to go showcase why we've made a long-term commitment to him, why we brought him over here from New Zealand and built this team around him because in a sport like this where winning is so important and it's so hard to do, if you can catch some lightning in a bottle like we've got with SVG, you've got to really lean into it.

That's what we've done. You look at the weekend, and it's like seeing a plan come together.

**Q. Was it important for Connor to come to the track today?**

**JUSTIN MARKS:** I think it was important for him. I think that he doesn't want to be away. He wants to be at the racetrack. His whole life is about being a race car driver. For a guy like Connor, even if he's not in the race car today and he's not feeling that well, he feels like there's always



an opportunity to learn something, so he sat in the bus with me today and we were watching timing and scoring together.

I think he just wanted to show the fans and show the sport that he was upright and he was okay and he's committed and he really wants to get back as fast as he can. I'm glad that he came today and showed that he's a part of this company.

**Q. With how many playoff points SVG has built up, how does that change the outlook for him going into the Playoffs now?**

**JUSTIN MARKS:** Well, I don't know if it changes as much as it sort of develops the thought around if we can actually win as many of these road course races as we think we can win, which we've done, the hope is that accumulates enough playoff points that as his oval learning development continues to get better, we go into the Playoffs in that first round where we've got a lot of points in the bank, he's in a really good position and he can get through those three fairly difficult oval races in a competitive fashion and get ourselves to the Round of 12, where there's another road course, another opportunity to punch his ticket to the Round of 8.

Being able to go to the road courses and win like this is a really great sort of support mechanism for his development on the ovals as we chase the points championship.

I'm very encouraged by his rate of learning on the ovals. I think he has only just begun to start to put it together. I think the ceiling is really high for him, and he's here for a while.

There's not going to be a ton of pressure on him this year. It's going to be like go into the Playoffs and learn about how things start to change in the Playoffs, how teams race each other, how drivers race each other, how important points are, how you're always looking at the cut line in the next round, and that's going to be another great experience for him.

I think we have a real opportunity to get to the Round of 8, and either way it'll be a great learning experience for him and get him prepared for making a deeper run year after year.



**Q. Justin, outside of Connor's misfortune, it was a strong day for Team Trackhouse with three cars in the top 10. How important is that for the organization knowing everything that's been going on this season?**

**JUSTIN MARKS:** Yeah, I think it's important because we're doing a lot inside the company right now. As I talked about yesterday morning, we're doing a lot inside the company right now to start building what the next iteration of this business looks like and get ourselves into championship-contending form.

I think as we go through the audit process of the company and we identify where there's opportunities for growth and how we get organized for the future and for development, as people start to get excited about what the future might look like, and then you go to the racetrack and you win and you put three inside the top 10, it fuels that fire and it gets people more and more excited about digging in, sharing their thoughts inside the race shop about how things could be better, more efficient, more competitive, and it keeps the mood great, keeps the mood high, everybody excited to come into work, and that's what we need as we start to determine what the next age of the company looks like, which is one in which our goal is to win a NASCAR Cup Series championship.

**Q. Justin, with Shane being the first rookie to ever achieve four wins in his first season, have you had any time to absorb that and take that in with the greatness that he's been, in this tear on the road courses lately?**

**JUSTIN MARKS:** It's hard to because it's like, what he's doing right now is sort of why he's in the car, because we feel like we had an opportunity to do this, but when these wins just keep coming in the way that they are and the fact that the rest of the series, the rest of the drivers are watching him and getting better but he's getting better too and it seems like they can't do anything with him right now is just an amazing thing to watch.

I forgot your question.

**Q. How do you absorb --**

**JUSTIN MARKS:** Yeah, it's hard to absorb because like I said, seeing it actually happen and seeing how the industry responds and as we kind of prepare through the week and we look at the race and you're like, you never want to take anything for granted, you never want to go into a race weekend thinking that it's easy or that you're going to win or something like that because it's so difficult to do it, but to watch him continue to execute at such a high level is why we've made a big commitment to him and why he's in this

race car.

I'm probably -- I'm excited for the sponsors and for Chevrolet because we had to sell it to them. It wasn't just us; we had to get a lot of people to come and support it, and we got in front of them and said this is what we think is possible. So seeing it come together, it's a great story for our business and great for our partners and it's going to be hard to really understand the gravity of it until we are removed from it for some time, but right now we're just enjoying it.

**Q. With the mistake he made last year at Watkins Glen, what was his mindset and approach coming into this week? Was it any different knowing that he had made that mistake last year and wanting to avenge that?**

**JUSTIN MARKS:** I think as an athlete it's hard to ignore those thoughts. I think that one, he kicked himself pretty hard last year for that one, felt like he gave that one away and I think it sat with him for a long time.

I don't necessarily think it changes his approach. It was one corner, one moment, one tiny little mistake. It wasn't anything bigger than that. We didn't need to approach the weekend any different.

I think he'll sit here and tell you the same thing, that it's not really on his mind. He gets in the race car, and no matter what has happened at that racetrack or against that driver in the past, it's all about winning in this moment, doing the best in this moment.

There's been some talk about it, obviously, because he's done media around it this weekend and everything, and that one stings. Maybe there was some extra motivation, but at the end of the day, the bigger picture is just winning a Cup race anywhere and against anybody.

**Q. In regards to Connor, I know ultimately it's going to be what doctors say, but is there any reason that he would need to run the next three races in the Xfinity Series and just heal up and get ready for the Playoffs because you're talking about your major asset, a 19-year-old superstar in the making, and nothing against anybody competing in the series, but those three races from his point of view could be viewed as meaningless. I'm curious about how you decide other than the doctors in allowing him to run before the Playoffs?**

**JUSTIN MARKS:** Yeah, I think it's a discussion that we all have to have. We haven't really talked about much obviously since yesterday, but in the little bit that we've



discussed in some of the quiet moments over the last 24 hours, it's going to have to be a group decision. It's going to have to be sponsors, Chevrolet, the team, taking care of his development, taking care of him as a human and as an athlete, and then keeping his motivations high and making sure he knows he's got a group of people behind him that are supportive of him.

I think it'll be a group decision. He's a competitor, so he's already looking at the regular-season championship and going, if I can maybe -- somebody could get in the car, I could take the green flag at the next race and get out of the car, how do we do that. It's just so fresh right now, but I think it's an important question because he's a huge asset and he's a huge part of the future of the business.

We have to approach that as such and make sure that we're not hurting any long-term opportunities by taking advantage of a short-term opportunity. That's kind of a long-winded way of saying we have to sit down as a group and decide what's best.

**Q. How did you come to the conclusion of withdrawing the car today? You already had the crew and everybody here. I didn't know if it was a sponsor thing as opposed to more you because it would be another opportunity for all those people to get reps in that situation.**

**JUSTIN MARKS:** You know, that -- sort of yes, kind of all of the above. That program and what we've built around that 87 car this year is really about Connor, and it's about getting Connor seat time in the Cup Series and starting to prepare for his future.

I think we talked about some different scenarios, but I think at the end of the day, Red Bull speaks loudly. They're the one that's paying the bill. We all kind of powwowed late last night to talk about it, and ultimately just because of the relationships, the partners, because that program is about Connor, I think the best thing was to not dilute that program and that sponsorship and Connor as an athlete by putting somebody else in the car. And I had left my helmet at home.

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