

NASCAR Media Conference

Press Conference

Sunday, October 5, 2025

An Interview with:

Stephen Doran

Justin Marks

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by the winning crew chief of the No. 88 team, Stephen Doran. Stephen, this is fifth win of the year for y'all's team, amounting to six total for Trackhouse. Can you speak a bit about what the late-race strategy was like and how you ultimately came out with another win on the season?

STEPHEN DORAN: Yeah, pretty cool to get five. Somebody just asked if I thought we would get that. I really didn't. I knew we had the potential to do it, but these things are so damn hard to win. To get five in a row is crazy, but a testament to this team, how we built it, and the execution.

Stage three we knew we were going to split it into three. It was a pretty clear call. Some of those guys split it into four really just as a Hail Mary move to try to catch a caution. We just stuck to the plan, and it played out right.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. I know on that last run that Shane had some concerns about the right rear tire. Was that a legitimate concern for you guys? How much was that going through your mind as he was building up that 17-second lead?

STEPHEN DORAN: Yeah, I wasn't super concerned about it. I knew how it was playing out. We just needed to manage what we had. I knew those guys were going to pit and have a huge gap behind. He did a good job just taking care of it, getting it to the end and still had a pretty big cushion.

Q. From your crew chief perspective, what's going through your mind when you are seeing, you know, SVG and Kyle Larson beating doors, going through the corners like that?

STEPHEN DORAN: Yeah, that's a little bit stressful. There was enough time left in the race. I just wanted him to get through there clean. I knew we had a better car in the long run. Just wanted to get clear of him and lock back



in and set sail.

THE MODERATOR: We are now joined by the owner of today's winning team, Justin Marks, Trackhouse Racing. Justin, I'll ask a similar question that I asked of Stephen just now. Five wins for Shane, six total for the organization on the year. Just what can you speak to that testament as just overall success that you've had in 2025?

JUSTIN MARKS: Yeah, I mean, it's kind of interesting to look at our year, because in many ways, there's a lot of things that we felt like we really need to do a lot better with this race team, and I was just talking about just getting more week-in and week-out speed, unloading with more speed on sort of every seven days.

That's been a theme inside the building is that we just have to get better. We have to understand these cars better. We have to unload better on Saturdays and qualify better and all of that.

You kind of take the fact that we feel like we're missing something and we have to learn and grow and get better with the fact that this is the winningest season in the history of the company. A lot of that has to do with this incredible 88 team and just how they -- Shane is a world-class race car driver, but it's not just Shane. It takes everybody.

From the guys that are building suspension and brakes and putting these cars together in the shop to Stephen's group that comes out here and executes on the race weekend, it's a very, very high level of professional execution.

That's really what we try to do is make the most of every opportunity that we've got, and we did that a number of times this year, which is something that everybody in the company is just incredibly proud of.

THE MODERATOR: We'll open it back up to questions.

Q. Justin, just what was going through your head on that final lap? Are you, like, how could -- Denny said he didn't know that he was knocking Ross out and putting Joey in. What's your reaction when you hear something like that?

JUSTIN MARKS: Well, I mean, I think for all of us



watching, it's really easy to be looking at the scoring pylon and looking at the points and us making decisions in our mind that we think that race car drivers are making decisions inside their car.

I think ultimately everybody is out here to try to get the best finish and the best result for their team, and I don't think anybody really owes it to anybody else to try to help anybody else.

I think it's nice to hear Denny say those things, but Denny is doing what he has to do for the 11 team and try to get the best finish that he can for the 11 team. Ultimately, at the end of the day, you know, it was a bit self-inflicted on the 1 team. We shouldn't have been in the position that we were in having to fight for one point on the last lap and having to throw Hail Marys and all that kind of stuff.

We need to be better on pit road. We need to eliminate the mistakes that were made today so we weren't in that position.

I think all this stuff, when we look at these cutoff races and it comes down to one point, two point, and one position and one position, you have to remember that everybody out here, they're employed by somebody and they're trying to do the best job for their race team and their boss. I guess that's what I think about.

Q. For Stephen, when you saw Shane and Larson kind of trading paint, are you thinking, Gosh, you can pass him without this? Did you think that Larson would continue to rough him up, or did you feel like it was over after they traded the lead?

STEPHEN DORAN: I was never nervous about Kyle roughing him up more than he did. Shane got into him a little bit into seven. Obviously Kyle crowded him down, exit.

Those two are both true professionals. I knew they're not going to wreck each other, but also, knew we needed to get clear and not mess up our day.

Q. Justin, I know this has been something we've talked about all year long, just Shane's progression on the ovals. After a strong run derailed late in New Hampshire and then last week, what's kind of the next benchmark you're looking for as he continues progressing on these different styles of tracks that he didn't get used to early on?

JUSTIN MARKS: That's a good question. I think that we don't think of benchmarking. I think, you know, at this stage of Shane's development in specific results on the

racetrack, top 10s, top 15s, things like this, it's more just him understanding air, understanding the different racetracks, understanding how to unload and be maximally effective the first couple of laps of practice.

Just all of the things that come together and end up in results in a running order on the racetrack, it's still so new to him. He still is not even two years into racing ovals in his life, and I think the fact that he went to Kansas and had a top-10 finish and ran the way he did at Richmond and ran the way he did at New Hampshire I think is incredible.

You look at just how difficult this thing is, that people spend years and years and years of their career trying to figure out these difficult racetracks out, and we're just throwing him to the wolves and standing back and saying, Go figure it out, you have 20 minutes of practice.

When I think about his benchmarking or I think about his progression, it's just to keep doing what he's doing, which is just immerse himself in the data, immerse himself in video, talking to people, learning, spending time with Stephen, spending time with his engineers, and just investing in the process and just knowing that the more that he learns and the more that he is patient, that those results will come.

That's why we signed him to a multi-year deal like we did, because we know that they will come. The fact that he's so quickly already starting to find his way into the top 10 on the ovals, I think that there's a very, very high ceiling there that can make him remarkably dangerous.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you for your time. Congrats on the organizational win.

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