

NASCAR Media Conference

Press Conference

Saturday, November 1, 2025

An Interview with:

Cliff Daniels

THE MODERATOR: We'll get started here. Joined by the crew chief of the No. 5 Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet, Cliff Daniels. Appreciate the media coming early to join Cliff. Cliff, thank you for taking some time before the garage opens. Take us through your day to kick us off.

CLIFF DANIELS: First of all, I appreciate everybody accommodating. After practice was extended for a little while with the tire issues, Kyle and I were completely locked into what we had going on. I was looking at the car. Before I knew it, I missed the time. My apologies for that.

Overall for the weekend, I think our team is in a really good spot. Kyle feels pretty comfortable in the car. We were looking for a few different things through our practice progression yesterday, trying to find the right look at short run speed, then capture a run or two really focused on the medium to long run pace.

We certainly presented that to ourselves, a couple things we need to work on. Scuffed the wall a little bit, so a little bit of repairs on the car, but that's okay.

Overall we're in a reasonable spot. Got to make a few adjustments this morning. Met with the team this morning at the hotel. Everybody was fresh and ready. We're locked in.

THE MODERATOR: If you have a question for Cliff...

Q. You talk about scuffing the wall. How much damage was there? Was it cosmetic?

CLIFF DANIELS: No, it was all really small. A little bit of scuff on the body. We checked out all the suspension stuff. That checked out okay.

Here's a fun sound byte for you:

In the Next Gen era, we scuffed the wall at many tracks, Darlington, Homestead. Finally I started to realize there's a trend. If we're fast enough in practice, we'll move around and scuff the wall.

I tell the guys every week, I hope we're fast enough in



practice to scuff the wall. Check that box.

Q. In the truck race yesterday, Corey Heim had problems getting out of the first pit stall. Rubber built up. If you were the fastest of the four finalists, are you still picking that stall?

CLIFF DANIELS: Most likely would pick that stall. What you just described is certainly a consideration for the grip level in the stall. That's always a big thing out here.

We have a couple other stalls in mind. Hopefully we're in that position where I have to make that decision. Pit stall one offers a lot of good things, so it's hard to overlook that.

Q. Rudy was saying maybe based on the wheel force test you guys thought there could be right side issues, but the left sides were a little bit of a surprise. After the garage looked at that, was that chalked up to air pressure, people being aggressive, or is it something we could see in the race?

CLIFF DANIELS: Yeah, all good points. I think we could see it a little bit in the race, just people getting more aggressive now that the field is kind of reset from practice. I really do think the practice issues were more from being aggressive based on the wheel force test, knowing it was more of a right side thing than a left side thing.

Surprised how many cars, five or six, that had issues yesterday. That was a bit of a surprise just for the number. Certainly we've looked at all the information we can to try to find the right balance of getting the grip that you want out of the tire and still making it live.

Q. Do you feel you got long enough runs?

CLIFF DANIELS: Yeah, certainly we're happy with the run lengths that we got to put together, especially with as broken up as practice was. I'm not naïve enough to not count out James and Briscoe. Those guys do a really good job.

From what I saw, shorter runs, they were close to being on pace with Denny, which I would expect. I'm not counting those guys out at all because they didn't get a longer run. Certainly happy we were able to get the look that we did.



Q. What's the same and what's different this time around?

CLIFF DANIELS: I would say what is the same is still trying to overcome the hurdle that we, Hendrick Motorsports, have had of putting really good packages on track. That was kind of leading into the weekend.

Now that we're here, I do think we're closer than what we've been in the past. So the flow of the weekend of just having less let's just call it identity question marks of are we this package, that package. We're kind of zeroed in on where we want to be.

Also just the execution side of the weekend from the team perspective, we've been building on our notes every year of just how to be smarter, a little cleaner, a little more efficient when we come here.

So it's actually nice to see that play out where the team and how we execute is a lot more streamlined I would say and a lot more buttoned up than what we've been.

Q. With the pit stall, does pit stall one have any more issues than other stalls or this is the same issue throughout?

CLIFF DANIELS: One is still pretty much going to hold the overall advantage. What you guys are asking about with the grip level of the stall is a real thing. Especially when you look at the progression of some of the stalls over the weekend, teams in the Truck or Xfinity race, they do or don't apply product. You can see it build up different throughout the weekend.

Ultimately the stalls are always slick here, which is what creates that question mark for everybody of how to approach the product application or getting 'em clean.

We've actually talked a lot with our team this week about getting a look tonight after the Xfinity race. We will have picked our pit stall by that point. After the Xfinity race, getting a good look just at the condition of the stall, how much do we need to clean it, whatever respective team that was in it, did they apply a lot of product, is it built up, slick, dirty.

We're going to look at whatever stall we pick and hopefully we get it treated the right way.

Q. How do you do that?

CLIFF DANIELS: Our pit crew after the Xfinity race, because a lot of them pit, scattered over different Xfinity teams, they're going to look at the stall we picked tonight,

get a read on it. If there's any buildup, they can sweep off with the broom, clean up a little bit, they probably will. At least that will give us an idea of the plan coming in tomorrow morning of what to do to get it in a good spot for the day.

Q. We have the activation sponsors' logos right outside the box. Is that a concern in terms of grip, traction for the pit crew members?

CLIFF DANIELS: Mild concern with just the, yeah, unknown of the grip. I didn't get a chance to study Truck Series pit stops a lot last night. I was going to do that this morning, seeing if any of the jack men had an issue running around the car. Of course going to watch the Xfinity race later this afternoon, get a feel for that, and get feedback from a lot of the development guys from Hendrick that pit trucks, from our primary guys that do pit Xfinity. Yeah, just get a feel for it, make a good call for what we would need to do to address it.

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