

NASCAR Media Conference

Press Conference

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An Interview with:

Richard Childress

Danny Stockman

Dr. Eric Warren

THE MODERATOR: We are now joined by the 2025 champion owner Richard Childress, the 2025 champion crew chief Danny Stockman, and the 2025 manufacturer champion for the NASCAR Xfinity Series, Dr. Eric Warren. His title is the vice president, Global Motorsports Competition, for GM Motorsports.

Congratulations, gentlemen. We'll go right to questions for them.

Q. Danny, I saw your parents on pit road, whatnot. Very excited. What have they meant to your career? Talk about having them here.

DANNY STOCKMAN: Yeah, so, like, my family, I'm third-generation racing. This is all we know is this stuff. My dad did this for a living for a long time. Not at this level, but late model racing and so forth, Wes cars, all that. Crossed paths with Richard back in the day when he was getting started.

They live their life through my success. It's special when they're able - they're in their late 60s now - they literally live for my success. When they can be here and enjoy this, they come to Phoenix every year, I get this a spot in the driver/owner lot. When they're here, it's super special. Brings tears to my eyes just thinking about it.

My dad is super hard on me. I'm 43 years old. He's super hard on me, points out my mistakes. But at the end of the day, he also praises me when we do good, so...

He's my biggest critic. It's super special to have them here with me. I don't have any kids. Just been chasing this for so long. They're my biggest supporter, for sure.

Q. Talk about what you've seen with Jesse Love, winning a championship with him.

RICHARD CHILDRESS: I watched Jesse in the ARCA racing. I watched him race other stuff. This was a big



night for Jesse, but I think the biggest night coming into this is we didn't have the cars at Martinsville that we needed to, and he didn't lose it, Stockman didn't lose it, and they were on it.

They set themselves up to come here and be in the Final 4 and win the championship.

But Jesse has tons of talent. He's going to go a long way in this sport.

DR. ERIC WARREN: Jesse has been one of our development drivers. It's awesome to see his performance, what it will certainly mean for his career, how hard he's worked.

Again, we get to see these young drivers from a young age, how hard they work, what it means to them. Seeing him being emotional. Super special for Chevy. Obviously the history for RCR. Couldn't have been a better moment for Jesse.

RICHARD CHILDRESS: I asked Danny, this is your third championship with RCR. He's won three championships with RCR: Truck with Austin Dillon, Xfinity, and now Jesse Love. He's got a bright future in front of him, 43 years old (smiling).

Q. Richard, you said that Jesse still has a long way to go in this sport, bright future ahead. What do you see ahead of him?

RICHARD CHILDRESS: I think right in our plans is run him for another championship next year in Xfinity, running some Cup races, see where it goes in '27.

Q. Danny, from your perspective, what is your relationship with Jesse like? How have you seen him grow since you've been working together?

DANNY STOCKMAN: The people that are around me closely know that he's like my kid. We have a really, really, really strong relationship. What I love about that kid, it was the same with Austin Dillon, is that he's hard on me and I'm hard on him, but it's all for a common goal.

When you have that relationship, it's super special because there's no ego involved. When you get to that point,

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success comes.

Like R.C. said, last week we didn't rise to the occasion at Martinsville. We haven't been very good there as a company in a while. But we came here, we prepped for the last month and a half to come here and execute. In practice we unloaded with a car that was super, super good. We were the best on every sheet, period.

We start the race, and we qualified sixth, back up to 12th. It's like, What happened here? We keep our head down, digging. Jesse didn't get flustered. My team did an amazing job on pit stops. You guys seen that. Like incredible the pit stops that we had today. We just kept our heads down, digging.

Jesse believes in me, and I believe in him. These are the outcomes.

Q. Danny, it seemed like there was some frustration on the radio early on. The car was loose early on. Seemed like Jesse was getting a little frustrated on the radio. You calmed him down. How hard is that to keep him calm, let him know that we'll get it fixed?

DANNY STOCKMAN: It kind of caught us off guard. Typically every week after we practice, the first run of the race is always the loosest. I didn't necessarily anticipate it being that loose. Then I looked at the wears after the first run, it was like, Wow.

We didn't overadjust. We tightened up a little bit. These kids, you have to keep them motivated. If you don't, can you lose them really quick.

I just made sure I kept him motivated, kept him giving me the right info. We made a decent adjustment, but it wasn't huge. The next run of the race, it was like light switch. We had a good pit stop. The rest of the race was going our way.

Jesse, he needs that type of info. He wants more info than any other driver I've had to work with. R.C. at the beginning of our relationship with me and Jesse, he was like -- R.C. was stressed out: You're telling him too much, giving him too much info, you need to calm down.

This is what Jesse wants. He wants all this. It's been good. At the end of the day we rose when it mattered. Tonight it mattered, and we made it happen. We're sitting here now.

Q. Richard, once the car did improve, I heard you were on the radio scouting out where Jesse was maybe overcharging the corners a little bit, making the car

tight. He adjusted to that.

RICHARD CHILDRESS: I just feed the information I see from where I was at. I'm not always right. But it helped.

First off, I got to congratulate Chevy for -- how many Manufacturer Championships is this?

DR. ERIC WARREN: That's a good question. We won 26 races this year. It's been an incredible year for Chevy. Strength of RCR and JR and great teams, it's a culmination of an awesome year for us.

RICHARD CHILDRESS: Yeah, we've been fortunate to be involved in several with them. This one was special tonight, to win this with Danny and Jesse, win it for Chevy.

Q. Richard, I'm very impressed at you finding very talented drivers who sooner or later become future Cup champions. For the future, are you expanding your search over the Atlantic Ocean and maybe employ one day European, especially German drivers in your team?

RICHARD CHILDRESS: Strange you ask that. We were just at Chevy's tech center, meeting with Josh Wise, who develops a lot of young drivers. There's a couple of kart racers over in Europe that we're taking a real hard look at. We're looking at some lady drivers, some Hispanic drivers. You're talking about 12 years old to 18 years old. These drivers, unbelievable what we're looking at today. The talent that these kids have got over in Europe driving those carts is amazing.

Q. But there's a possibility?

DR. ERIC WARREN: Yeah, definitely. Particularly with Chevy and GM, as we expand our global reach in motorsports, we're definitely developing drivers of the future, eight, nine years old now and on. Our reach is really getting strong across Europe, Asia, Australia.

We find different talent that we look at and say, Okay, part of our development is to run in different types of racing. We look seeing some NASCAR racers that may go into Supercars, sports cars, open-wheel.

Definitely there will be opportunity to bring more international talent into our program.

Q. (No microphone.)

DR. ERIC WARREN: We talk to them quite a bit, trying to work on that. Not a lot of direct involvement with those series at the moment. Certainly as we expand, we're

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always looking for talent.

Q. Back when you announced you'd signed Jesse, I talked to Andy Petree. He said he had a humble confidence about him, which is what you really appreciated. After a couple of years, it seems that Jesse has not lost any of that. What is the driving force between keeping him humble and confident in his abilities?

RICHARD CHILDRESS: I couldn't understand a thing you said. I apologize. My hearing isn't very good.

DR. ERIC WARREN: He was saying how Jesse has remained humble. What has caused him to stay humble even after he had success?

RICHARD CHILDRESS: I think it's his family. His family, his dad. He's got a gorgeous girlfriend that they all kind of keep him humble and keep him going. I've seen a lot of drivers come and go.

Jesse, he's the real deal, for sure.

DANNY STOCKMAN: I'll add to that. This is all he knows. Like literally, the kid eats, sleeps race cars. I've worked with a lot of young kids. This kid literally puts in his own work at his own, like, all day long every day. He works with Josh Wise and Scott Speed.

I don't have to teach him, like, how to study anything. He does it himself. He wants it as bad as I ever seen, for sure.

Q. Jesse is good friends with Connor. Has he ever said, Why am I not winning as much as him? Do you encourage comparison to Connor, or you're like you have to focus on yourself and get better, and not be like, well, you have to be as good as Connor right now?

DANNY STOCKMAN: There's been a lot of conversation on that for sure. At the end of the day, we have to focus on our own program. Like, if you just look at Jesse's season, second-year season, he's done good. But when you look at Connor's, it's been way above anything you've ever seen before. Him and Corey Heim, okay?

I think that that puts a lot of strain on teams, right? It does. But at the end of the day you have to work on your on program, you have to work on your own stuff.

I'm on him about worrying about what we got going on. To be quite honest, at the end of the day he won, I don't know how many, 11 races, 12, something like that. A lot. But when it mattered tonight, it did not happen. He won a lot of

races, but he's not an Xfinity Series champion.

That's pretty special for Jesse.

DR. ERIC WARREN: I think they help each other, honestly. They train together. I think it helped Jesse. It's also helped Connor. I think that relationship is special for both of 'em really.

Q. (No microphone.)

DANNY STOCKMAN: For me, I don't look at that. I just worry about my own stuff. Connor is super special. Connor and Jesse are literally -- you guys see it on social media. They are best friends, as close as anybody can ever get.

Connor is in my trailer hanging out in my lounge probably more than he's in his own trailer. I'm actually pretty close with Connor. I've been watching him since he was seven or eight years old racing go-karts because I'm into karting.

At the end of the day, guess what happened tonight? That's what's important tonight. We beat 'em straight up. Not a pit strategy. We beat them tonight. It's that simple.

RICHARD CHILDRESS: Connor has been through the GM program, the young program. That's a perfect example of what they're doing, is looking at these young drivers and helping develop 'em.

Am I correct?

DR. ERIC WARREN: It's been great. Connor has been great. The whole program has been great.

Q. I can't take credit for this, they said it on the telecast. Danny, has it sunk in that you were Rookie of the Year chief with Austin, then champion the next year, same with Jesse, Rookie of the Year and champion the next year? That's pretty phenomenal.

DANNY STOCKMAN: Yeah, I think it's special. I think my whole year I've never really had a veteran driver. I work with these young kids my whole career. Richard hired me in 2010 to work with Austin. We built him up. Then I worked with Ty, we built him up. They moved me over to the Cup side for a little bit.

I've really, really enjoyed working with the kids. It is hard, for sure. I'll have Jesse for another year, then whoever the next one is, we'll have to groom him. It's another stepping stone.

I think over the years I've learned how to groom 'em.



Hearing that now out of your voice, that's pretty awesome, for sure. It's been a while since I won a championship. There's been a humongous effort put into this. It's pretty damn special.

Q. Essentially you're the Kid Whisperer?

DANNY STOCKMAN: I don't know. I've become that over the last 10 years or so just working with all the kids.

Q. There's been no question that Jesse Love is an incredibly talented driver. Throughout the past two seasons, the only knock against him was that he hadn't been able to win on an oval. From your perspective now, to be able to get that first oval victory, under this situation, what does that say about Jesse?

DANNY STOCKMAN: Who you asking?

Q. This is for anyone.

DANNY STOCKMAN: So like if you look back at the last half of the season, there's been several instances where we should have won. I mean, Vegas a couple weeks ago we were capable of winning. Definitely been weighing on our shoulders, right?

We've been there. We've been close. We killed 'em at Rockingham, we got throwed out. At the end of the day the only thing that matters right now is what happened tonight, so...

We won the race. I'm super, super proud of winning the race and the championship. That's all I'm going to say on that.

DR. ERIC WARREN: Just his preparation, being ready for the opportunity. There's many stars that stepped up at the right moment, the right time, and it wasn't just an opportunity, it was his preparation and his continual effort to get better.

He shined in the moment tonight on the biggest stage that he's had. Look in sports history, those are key moments. He's a champion. It's not because he hasn't put in the work. He has. He stepped into it tonight when he had the chance.

Q. Danny, the comparison between Connor and Jesse, what made the difference tonight? 10 races you lost to him. What do you think, what made the difference tonight?

DANNY STOCKMAN: Tonight, it was like Eric said, the

prep work, for sure. There is certain racetracks where certain drivers are really good at. Jesse is really good here. Had a good car.

DR. ERIC WARREN: Not giving himself enough credit. Made some good changes there before the last run, big changes. If you look at how the car went from the first run to the end, it was a combination, that combination we just talked about, the chemistry between those two. He made some really big changes that made a really big difference.

DANNY STOCKMAN: We were pretty good. We've been good here. This is our fourth race together here at Phoenix. We've been a top-five car several times. We went to Gateway with something kind of new. We applied it here. It was really good, so...

THE MODERATOR: Gentlemen, congratulations on this championship. Enjoy the off-season.

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