

NASCAR Media Conference

Press Conference

Sunday, November 2, 2025

An Interview with:

Jonathan Hassler
Michael Nelson

THE MODERATOR: We're here with members of the race-winning team, the Team Penske president of NASCAR, Michael Nelson, and the No. 12 crew chief Jonathan Hassler.

Questions.

Q. In light of not making the Championship 4, then winning today, does it make it even more kind of painful what happened last week?

MICHAEL NELSON: No, I mean, this is what we needed to do today, right, if we didn't make it. Obviously there's what could have been. This is our goal. Last week's in the rearview mirror. We had to come here and win. That was the goal with our teams.

Man, it was really great to get that done today.

JONATHAN HASSLER: Yeah, what Michael said. In order to survive in this business, you got to move on from what happened the previous week and go to the next task at hand. The task for us, whether we won last week or not, was to come and win at Phoenix today.

Q. Penske is really good on the short ovals. Great on the superspeedways. Organizationally maybe there's something kind of missing week to week. As we look forward and likely a different championship format next year, does that change your approach on how you do things at all?

JONATHAN HASSLER: Yeah, I think for me, I don't think it changes anything. I think most teams in the garage is you race on Sunday, then you address honestly kind of where you're at on Monday, then go to work and try to continue to improve week in and week out.

I think you hit the nail on the head with the areas we struggle, with some of the intermediate stuff the second half of the year. The Gibbs group stepped up their program. We maybe fell a little bit behind. We'll continue to go to work.



We're working week in and week out to continue to improve.

Q. Jonathan, Ryan needed a huge run off turn four to make that final pass. What did you see from him and his drive today?

JONATHAN HASSLER: He did a good job just sticking with it all day. Early on we had really good long-run car. Bled spots early in the runs. We made some adjustments to make that a little bit better. Had some good stops, had some bad stops, kind of got behind a little bit there.

But yeah, had the opportunity to take two tires. Nobody gave up. We put ourselves out there as the first guy on two. Ryan did a good job handling that situation. He said after the race he had a good idea of how Brad was going to handle three and four. He thought Brad would drive in pretty far. He did a good job backing up the entry to three, making sure he could stay low and get the run to the start/finish line.

Q. Jonathan, Ryan just won his fourth race of the season. Most ever in a season for him. He's already a champion, but to see him still growing, he's still so young?

JONATHAN HASSLER: Yeah, I think for our whole group, the 12 team, I think the sky's the limit. We wanted to come out and win a lot of races this year, wanted to be the regular-season champions. Had some DNF's along the way that really hurt the effort. We charged back strong and finished second.

Obviously wanted to go as deep as we could into the Playoffs. Things didn't quite work out our way.

We've had some strengths that we haven't had necessarily in the past. We continue to get better. I don't think we're going to stop doing that.

Q. This is the most wins that Blaney has had in a season. It's your first win at Phoenix. What do you take away from this season as a whole, considering you missed the Championship 4?

JONATHAN HASSLER: I think if you look back, the DNF



at Vegas really kind of put us behind. I think we ran well enough at Martinsville and Talladega to probably make it to this round. Really I think that's probably something we have to go back and really understand how we got ourselves kind of into that hole.

I think typically our strength as a team is consistency. We kind of lacked it when we needed it the most at Las Vegas.

Q. In 2023 when you won the championship, Ross ended up winning that race. Did that cross your mind at all?

JONATHAN HASSLER: Yeah, I mean, we wanted to win like we do each and every week, whether we were in the championship or not. I think for me, the perfect scenario would have been us driving away. Certainly out of the mix of the championship contenders, I think for the most part we didn't really disrupt their day.

THE MODERATOR: Michael, Jonathan, thank you so much for the time. Congratulations on the win.

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