

NASCAR Media Conference

Press Conference

Friday, February 13, 2026

An Interview with:

Tyler Gibbs

Dr. Eric Warren

Kevin Kidd

Pat Dimarco

MATT NORDBY: Good morning, everybody. We'll continue our media availabilities this morning with our annual OEM press conference. Joining us today we have Dr. Eric Warren, vice president of global motorsports competition for GM motorsports; Tyler Gibbs, president of TRD USA; Kevin Kidd, North American motorsports competition director for Stellantis; and Pat DiMarco, Ford Racing NASCAR and analytics manager.

I want to welcome our newest partner back to NASCAR, Ram, joining this press conference as our fourth OEM, heading into the '26 season, so welcome, Kevin.

KEVIN KIDD: Thank you. Good to be here.

MATT NORDBY: As far as last season, another season of parity, just like that from a competition perspective in terms of wins, pole winners, passes for the lead, green flag passes, the list goes on and on.

I'll kick it off here and we'll open it up for questions. How do you evaluate your '25 and what were your main goals this off-season leading into '26?

ERIC WARREN: Yeah, 2025 for Chevrolet, we had a great ending to the year. Different periods through the year, certainly winning the championship in Phoenix was an exciting moment for Hendrick Motorsports and Chevrolet.

The competition last year was incredibly close, certainly through leading into the playoffs and during the playoffs and the different rounds. It came down to the very last pit stop, an exciting moment that we happened to come out on a great end of.

Certainly Xfinity with the dominance of that series, we really had a great year there, and again, the ending with Jesse Love was exciting.



A lot of great moments for us in NASCAR continuing our development, and we look forward to 2026 and we enjoy the competition, and we'll see what it brings this year.

MATT NORDBY: Tyler?

TYLER GIBBS: Yeah, similarly, we had a very good season. I think when you look across all three series, Corey's dominance on the truck side, look at 14 wins on the Cup side, winning the owner's championship in Xfinity. Was a good season for us.

A little bit to Eric's point, we had a very, very good year. We were 90 seconds from a great year. A lot of fun over the course of the season worked hard in the off-season getting ready for this year, and kind of building on what we had last year. We've only got new crew chief this year, same drivers as last year.

So building on what we had last year and coming out one spot better this year is really the goal and what we are looking for.

KEVIN KIDD: For our company, obviously coming in new this year, '25 was largely just a season of planning and preparation. Our program came together reasonably late, probably later than I would have liked, but at the end of the day, they drop the green flag here in Daytona tonight, and we're going to be ready for that one way or another.

It was about getting the structure, the employees, and really the whole machine running to be able to make it to today. We've been able to accomplish that. I'm really excited about the product that we put on the racetrack for tonight, and quite frankly, for our effort this season.

I think not only are we here and ready to go for tonight, but we also feel capable to go win the race. We've got some incredible drivers that kind of ranging all the way from the most seasoned veteran that you could possibly imagine all the way to the rookie of rookies in our trucks tonight, and we're just excited to get out there and see what we can do.

PAT DIMARCO: From the Ford perspective, I'd say '25 was a miss for us. Anytime you don't win, you reflect on that. Not having anybody in the final four at Phoenix was a miss.



There were some highlights, though. Ryan Blaney was consistent and one of the best drivers all year long, and the way the playoff format plays out, he just didn't make it.

The superspeedway program, last night I think a testament to Doug as he dug over there, and our cars are strong again. So the superspeedway stuff last year, really good. Obviously the finishes are all chance, and our road course program, we've got to work on that this year, and we've got an effort going to really improve our road course program.

But looking forward to a great '26 and more consistency across the board, which I think with the RFK cars running up front last night, Ryan Preece with the win at the Clash. I think there's some upside for '26 for the Ford Motor Company.

Q. Eric, what impressions could you draw from the Duels as far as the new body style?

ERIC WARREN: I was actually reasonably excited about it, to be honest. I felt like seeing Kyle sit on the pole was exciting for Kyle. And bringing Jim Pohlman with him, it's going to be a good combination to watch.

So just seeing the pure speed, that was the first thing to look at, single car speed, to see, okay, we have some speed there.

Watching the Duels, there's a lot of fuel mileage saving going on, getting ready for the pit stops. So the first Duel was a little different because the crash happened there, the pit stops.

So we couldn't really see when everybody started going. But watching the 3 towards the end and Kyle of course trying to protect his car wasn't quite the same picture. Excited to see how the 3 was able to move through there.

But the second Duel I was really excited about to see our cars really be able to get to the front and watching Carson and Chase run together there a little bit.

We weren't able to quite do that. We watched kind of Ryan and Logano really make that two-car bump really kind of work. We haven't been able to do that. They were certainly able to do that last year.

When you get all the cars there, the momentum is a little different with the full field versus the Duels, so I've learned over the years that whatever you take from those Duels is not necessarily what happens when everybody is there.

But certainly promising for what we intended coming into

Daytona with the new car.

Q. For Eric and Pat, how will your entry into Formula 1 maybe retract from what's going on in NASCAR because you guys both have a lot on your plates?

ERIC WARREN: It doesn't detract from the frequent flier miles, that's for sure. We joined Formula 1 for the Cadillac brand and for General Motors. Honestly we've seen as we build motorsports fans can help all of our series, helps all of our companies.

Certainly it does not detract from our effort in NASCAR. If anything it augments it because we learn from every series, we develop engineers, we develop techniques, we develop software, certainly power train with the PU commitment in Formula 1.

I think anytime you have a commitment from the company to develop those technologies and those opportunities and bring more fans into GM that we will bring more Chevrolet fans to NASCAR, because people that haven't watched NASCAR become motorsports fans because of Formula 1, and we see that the growth in our fan base is not just restricted to Formula 1.

We're bringing new fans to motorsports, and we plan on taking advantage of that to both sell our vehicles and bring them into other series.

PAT DiMARCO: Similar to what Eric said, if you scope a program correctly and you do it right, you have the resources to be successful. Partnering with Oracle Red Bull Racing, obviously the best in the business over there, and it gives us the opportunity to look at what they're doing, understanding how they operate, and, you know, our NASCAR team is our NASCAR team.

What has changed is more people in the building, more technology from the power train side that the team works on.

But detracting from NASCAR or other racing series, it only helps. It brings the brightest and best people into your organization because they want to be associated with winners.

Q. I wanted to ask all three of you guys, if this race, Sunday's race does not end with a big crash in the last five laps, it will be very unusual. Is there any conversation that you guys have with your teams about that and how these races here have ended over the last decade or so? Can you warn them about don't do this, do that, work together better, do something else? Or is that strictly at the team level?



ERIC WARREN: You know, I think the playoff format is going to change that a little bit, to be honest. Speedway racing is speedway racing. You get to the front, people that have momentum and closing speeds and different things, it's hard to judge that.

We try to have these conversations ahead of time about that, but sometimes people see their shot to win, and they're going to take it.

The penalty for crashing versus the win, it's a different ratio this year. I think there's a little bit more thought process of, hey, second in the points for second, it's a big gap if you try to get that win. Everybody is going to try to win the Daytona 500, but it's different.

I think some of that's going to maybe calm some of that down, but some of it's just the nature of it, and that's what's exciting when you've got all the cars and the skill of everyone and understanding the draft compared to 20 years ago where it was one or two or three or four. Now everyone is a student of it.

I think it brings that kind of closeness towards the end.

TYLER GIBBS: Yeah, I agree with Eric. For us it's going to be about finishing. You got to finish every race this year to make that championship at the end. I think all the teams know that. How that plays out on a team by team basis, certainly, again, we've had those conversations with our drivers, but to Eric's point, this is the Daytona 500, and you're going to go for the Daytona 500 if you have a shot at it.

For us, it's a little bit new. Obviously the Chevrolet is a new car and how that's going to run in the draft, we all try to line up with our OE partners. But when you get late in the race and there are not necessarily as many cars left, how they bump, how they lead, all of those kinds of things are a little bit unknown.

I do think there will be a little bit of caution as it goes through, but coming to the end of the race, it's going to be that balance. I think you'll see certain people take more risk than others, but overall, all the drivers really, I think, understand.

PAT DiMARCO: Yeah, for our guys, it's about winning the Daytona 500. But you have to get to the end. They're out there to win for themselves, but they're also out there to be there for their sponsors and their OEM. We like to say, if you're not there at the end, you're not going to win the Daytona 500.

Like these two said, the playoff format is going to dictate the chances and the risks and how you put yourself in certain situations because with four superspeedway races, if you wreck out of all of them, that's going to be a very tough hole to dig out of.

They're smart enough. The good ones know when to put themselves in a situation and when not to. But in the end, it's the Daytona 500.

TYLER GIBBS: Last year leaving here, someone was locked into the playoffs. Leaving here this year, no one will be locked into the playoffs. I think, again, there will be a difference there.

Q. Kevin, it's been a hot minute since Ram has been in the Truck Series. I was curious, do you have a timeline of when you guys will know how you stack up to the other OEMs? Is it a matter of making it through superspeedways, road course, and then through a traditional track like Las Vegas?

KEVIN KIDD: Yeah, you know, I wouldn't say that we've necessarily thought about it from a timeline standpoint as much as we're just looking for consistent and steady growth through the season.

Where we start should not represent where we end the season. If it does, that's an abject failure on our part.

We have a lot of catching up to do to these guys. We're essentially starting from scratch. These guys have massive organizations with all kinds of infrastructure and technology behind them. That's our job. That's what we have to go create now.

To think that we can come out of the gate and just absolutely knock it out of the park, yeah, sure, that's an optimistic goal for sure. But I think being realistic about it, if we can just take where we start and continue to make steady progress -- this is a multiyear journey for us. This is not something that's going to just happen all on day one.

Staying true to that and really working to build this program out the right way, that's what's important to us right now.

Q. For a number of years this was a three-person news conference. For anybody who wants to take this, do you guys welcome the new spirit of competition, and are you optimistic or hopeful that there could be further expansion among the OEM ranks and we come into the years ahead?

ERIC WARREN: Yeah, we talk about this every year. We've been excited for Ram to come, and certainly it's a



testament to the strength of the series. The more OEMs that we have in other series, the more competition we have, the more it validates and gives us opportunity to build our fan base when they see us compete against other brands. It's important to us.

We welcome it. We certainly support it, and we've been here years, some of us, when there were four again. It's good that there is a knowledge of that past and what it takes to do that, so there's some respect there on how to do it correctly, which we all very much appreciate, and it helps bring that partnership closer where we can help them succeed, which ultimately helps us.

TYLER GIBBS: Yeah, we agree completely. We've been in favor of more OEs for a long time. You look at it from the fan perspective, as Eric said, it brings more fans to the sport. You look at what it does from an engagement perspective, an activation perspective out in the midway just for the fans who come to the track.

You look at what it does for the broadcast partners in terms of marketing, and all those kinds of things. You look at what it does to strength of the field in whichever garage they're in. All of those things help the sport.

From our perspective we know it will become more challenging. There's only so many wins that can be spread across now four manufacturers, but it is definitely better for the sport, and we embrace that.

PAT DiMARCO: We didn't get into motorsports to only compete against ourselves. We want to compete against as many as we can, and we want to win, and we want to be a champion. Bring four, five, six more. That's what we're all here for, and that's our goal.

Q. It wasn't too long ago that the big sexy thing was electrification, and it's still around, and NASCAR has their electric car and things like that. It was really on the fast track, so to speak, pun intended. Same in the marketplace.

That's kind of died down now; it's not the big thing like it used to be. As we maybe put the brakes on electrification, with another pun intended, are there things you're looking at in the sport in terms of doing different things beyond electrification other than electrification, like hybrid power or hydrogen, a different fuel that might be more eco-friendly, something along those lines that can keep that kind of touchpoint going?

ERIC WARREN: You know, the experience of racing with hybrid power trains in other series and the benefit we get learning about electrification, NASCAR, the core racing

product is what we want to continue. That's what builds our fans and what we've been excited about, the sound, all of that.

The energy requirements in this form of racing are totally different. The weight of the car, the accelerations and how you would implement is not really suitable here as much as it is at other series, so I think that drives a lot of it. There's not really an added benefit to the sport as a whole.

Certainly us as a manufacturer, we're building great EV vehicles, great gas-powered vehicles, and our attempt is to bring the right vehicle to the customer of whatever they want.

I think NASCAR, we love the close competition racing, and we want the power train to be suitable for the event and the competition.

TYLER GIBBS: Yeah, it depends really on our fan base, and we know where our fan base is here. Again, when you look at the length of our races and some of these kinds of things, electrification is a little bit more challenging on racetrack like this where there is no regen or any of those kinds of things.

So for us it mimics what our customers want in the marketplace, and the same thing from a motorsports perspective. So we're racing hydrogen in certain racing series; we're racing hybrids in others. It really just depends on kind of what the fan base in the particular series is most engaged with, and that then goes on to our customers.

KEVIN KIDD: I think our core business is to bring the customers what they want to buy and really give a good offering of that in the marketplace. So no different than what Tyler and Eric talked about there.

What's unique for us and unique about NASCAR is this is about raw American horsepower. Let's call it what it is. This is fire breathing muscle cars, and that's part of our brand. That's a very strong part of our brand.

Coming to NASCAR, we're able to lean into that pretty heavy, and that is something that has resonated with all the Mopar loyalists across the planet.

We're happy to be here and making horsepower normally aspirated, and we will support whatever the direction of the sport is in the future. We'll help shape that. But recognizing the fact that our fans really do resonate with normally aspirated horsepower.

PAT DiMARCO: Yeah, we race in 34 countries around the world, 47 weekends a year; I think 36 different series. We



have the opportunity to race hybrids in other series. We have the opportunity to run completely ICE here.

For us, our product in the showroom matches our product on the racetrack. It's just not here in NASCAR that we feel that we need to bring hybrids or electrification at this point.

20, 30 years down the road, who knows. Who knows what technology will bring in that. But currently in NASCAR, we're happy with the formula we have.

Q. Speaking of the future of Ram, you know you're going to get asked this. For so many years it was three of them, three of them, three of them. Now we've got four. When do you think you're going to be up there answering questions about Cup Series?

KEVIN KIDD: Now. It feels like you're already asking me one. Great question.

Don't have anything ready to announce on that today, but it's certainly part of the discussion internally. It's looking at what the future brings for us.

We have not made any qualms about it: We aim to get back in the Cup Series. It's really a matter of what the right timing is and what that looks like.

Again, you're racing against the best in the world here, so we have to build an incredible amount of infrastructure to go Cup racing. It's one thing to go truck racing. It's a whole different can of worms to go Cup racing. For us there is a strategy that we're currently developing to figure out what all that looks like and what the timing looks like behind that.

Again, nothing ready to announce today, but I can tell you that we are working towards it.

Q. For all of you, NASCAR obviously is kind of playing up to its roots a little bit. There's a lot of changes. The Chase is back, the Roval is going away, there's been a lot of other changes to kind of get back to NASCAR's roots. As you look at this and it seems like this is going to continue for the foreseeable future, what would you like to see NASCAR do or something that they did maybe in the past to kind of push the sport forward?

ERIC WARREN: You know, I think we're very happy with the direction the sport is going. There were a lot of great changes made in the off-season. Certainly getting back to our core fans, as we talked about, the change with the horsepower, short tracks, and really focusing on, for us, V-8 horsepower in this series and the American sound is

part of this kind of theme to get back to what is NASCAR and what makes people love NASCAR.

I think the changes that were made, it's a positive future, and we support -- obviously we're involved in that and having those discussions, but I'm happy with the direction we're going.

TYLER GIBBS: Yeah, I think Steve O'Donnell kind of made a comment about it the other day. In fact, maybe in one of your articles, about getting back to what we do best, and I think that is putting on a great show with V-8 power across the United States on ovals, on a few road courses, short tracks.

I think we just need to continue to get that message out there. I think when you look at the growth of motorsports in some other series, when you look at our sport and you look at how close the racing is and all the rest, it's a matter of just getting that message out there to even more people.

So broadening that and spreading that out, because our sport is exciting week in and week out based on racetracks and drivers and all the rest of those things.

KEVIN KIDD: I think Tyler said it well, and I'll be candid, I'm biased. I think the NASCAR product is one of the best racing products in the world. I think week in and week out, we consistently put on great racing opportunities for the fans to engage with.

I think one of the things that NASCAR themselves are working really hard on, and we are certainly working hard on it at Ram, is to invest into the storytelling of the sport and how we can get stories told of the drivers and the team members and those interesting bylines that kind of tag along with this great racing product.

We're excited to see that NASCAR is really investing in that, and obviously we're investing in that, as well. We feel like that's a big part of what makes the sport succeed, and we're really doubling down on that.

PAT DiMARCO: I think the four of us, we get together, OEM councils, and we talk and we work with NASCAR on how to drive the sport forward, and I think a lot of alignment with what they said here.

For us, it's about the brand, obviously switching over to Ford Racing, or back to Ford Racing this year.

It's about our brand out there and how do we promote our brand, and that's what NASCAR is for us, is a great product currently, but how do we do it better.



I think we work together. We try and work with NASCAR. We went to a two-day test and tried all the short track stuff to make the short track racing better. None of us complained. Our teams went.

It's just finding what works, and if getting back to the roots helps us drive the sport forward and then engaging with a younger demographic, great. We'll continue to work together from an OEM perspective with NASCAR to drive the sport forward.

Q. Dr. Warren, why did you decide to locate your power unit facility for your F1 team in Concord, North Carolina?

ERIC WARREN: From the beginning, it's an American team. It's American owned. It's our headquarters; we wanted to be in America.

I think the team's location in Fishers, Indianapolis, was natural, and Dan Towriss and the TWG group were based there, and certainly with GM and the investment we've done in the Charlotte technical center, investment in North Carolina with our GM defense industry, it was a natural location to really tie the technology of the power unit also with the rest of the technology of motorsports and how we worked those together.

They're so simulation dominant in all these series, and that's really our center of excellence for motorsports simulation, so how that ties into developing the power unit and then the connection to the race team obviously being a part owner of the Formula 1 team and all the technical work that's going on there, it was certainly naturally a great location to put it.

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