

NASCAR Media Conference

Press Conference

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An Interview with:

Denny Hamlin

THE MODERATOR: We are now joined by the race winning owner, owner of 23XI racing, for the third consecutive week, Denny Hamlin. Congratulations on this victory and the history made by Tyler.

Maybe just open it up with some thoughts on this record-setting performance by the 45 team.

DENNY HAMLIN: Yeah, it's unbelievable. I'm not going to see it again in my lifetime, someone to go out there and win three races in a row to start the season. Yeah, what a dream start for those guys. All kinds of -- got Atlanta and Daytona and here. It's just different tracks. It's not necessarily one type.

Atlanta is quite a bit different than Daytona in how you drive there, so it's just getting it done in all kinds of different ways.

The big test is going to be next week when it goes to a track that he hasn't had a ton of success at in Phoenix, and that's where we're going to know whether this team has got -- how big that momentum is is when they go out there to Phoenix and see what they've got.

But they're locked in right now; Tyler is locked in. Just so poised from qualifying day. You can't get poles at this type of racetrack unless you just are really disciplined.

When I'm looking from where I restarted there and he's under attack those first few laps the restart, he just stayed absolutely disciplined and didn't make any mistakes. That's what champions are made of, and he's well on his way.

Q. Is this streak all the more remarkable because the diversity of wins were on speedways where random pretty much anything can happen?

DENNY HAMLIN: Yeah, that's why I'm confident in it not happening again of my lifetime, because of the randomness factor of those races. Defying odds, that's for sure. I don't know if you parlayed all your winnings from the first week, second week, third week what you'd have. I'm sure someone has figured that out, but it would be a big



number.

Q. I'm sure you've probably seen the rise of Reddick from when he was in the Truck Series, and there's a reason why you wanted him from the start for this team. Is this just the making of a true superstar? Daytona, Atlanta, but then to hold off the best of the best there is at this type of track and pull away, this is what you probably saw coming from Reddick. Is this the making of a true superstar in this sport?

DENNY HAMLIN: He's complete. The one area that we continue to work on with him is on the short tracks. I think that's where he can still improve a little bit. But we're working pretty hard on improving him at those types of tracks.

But he's complete. Certainly more complete than I am at this stage, where I've got a handful of races where it's like, it would be tough for us to go out there and compete for a win. There's less of those for him.

He's got a lot of really good things going on. I think it's just -- we're steadily seeing him continue to get better. What I love to see is the work that he puts in and the things that we provide him for information. He's soaking it all in and he's using it and executing it.

What I've seen out of him over the last few years is just where he had some weaknesses, our team has helped him shore those up. It's amazing to see how well he's doing.

Q. Talking to SVG, he said that he can tell that Tyler still had something on reserve, he wasn't going all out on those closing laps. What does that say about his discipline behind the wheel?

DENNY HAMLIN: Yeah, well, when you've got the lead, especially on a road course, it's very easy to pace the field and run the pace that you feel comfortable with making sure no one is going to pass you but also keeping the competition close enough to where it actually burns their car up.

That's just really the discipline that I talked about, is knowing that he doesn't have to go 100 percent to get the job done. You just do enough to win. Sometimes the best offense is a good defense, and when you keep the



competition right there at bay, you're using a really good defense.

Q. On a separate note, you getting a top 10 finish, I was curious, how did the shoulder hold up during that?

DENNY HAMLIN: Good. I feel good. It'll definitely be sore tomorrow. But first mistake-free road course for me in six years. It's freaking amazing. It's like a win. I'm telling you, this is a win.

Q. Denny, for what you're building at 23XI, to be the first team in over 60 years to win the first three races of the year, what's that mean to you personally?

DENNY HAMLIN: Just so gratifying. Obviously when I see Michael afterwards and he's very appreciative of -- he knows the work that I'm doing there to make all this happen, again, it's very gratifying to see the joy that we're bringing him at this stage of his life.

It's just satisfying. It's the reason that in 2019 I had that resurgence in my career, went to work on some things, and then I started seeing some results from it, and then it just fed my desire to go get more, go do more. Same thing with the race team. It's just different because I don't control how much other people work. All I can do is show them the path that I think is correct, and they're taking the ball and just slam dunking it right now.

Q. After the race Michael Jordan outside said he's just the money guy and was really crediting you with putting the team together and the driver lineup. Can you speak to the partnership of the money guy and you the detail guy and how that all sorts out?

DENNY HAMLIN: It's just a perfect partnership. I don't even know how to explain it. This doesn't work unless he gives me autonomy to do it.

When I started kicking around trying to find a race team that would let me buy in, none of them were going to give me the control that I wanted. I don't know what the word is for that, but I wanted to make sure if it failed, it was because of something I did, not someone else.

When the stars aligned and we were able to start this and I was able to get him as a partner, he was -- I was just so appreciative of the fact that he says, okay, here's my percent, here's your percent, but you're going to have to build it. You're going to have to do the work. You're the boots on the ground. That was what I wanted. Where I get the gratification is from building something from scratch.

Again, this team had, like, three employees working out of Mike Wheeler's garage. There was nothing. We had zero. We didn't buy a team, didn't do anything. Just built it. This is what we're doing. It's pretty amazing.

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