

NASCAR Media Conference

Press Conference

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An Interview with:

Joe Gibbs

THE MODERATOR: We welcome our race-winning team owner and proud grandfather today, Joe Gibbs.

We'll go right into questions.

Q. You've won a lot of Cup races with a lot of different drivers, championships. How different is the feeling when your grandson finally wins a Cup Series race?

JOE GIBBS: Well, I think it's kind of hard to explain, to be quite truthful. I remember a lot of our drivers, their first wins, how important that was. I think Bobby Labonte was at Charlotte, everyone was crying. You have those kind of experiences in the past.

I think this is for us and the family just a huge deal. I start with there's so many people to thank. I start first with the Lord. The Lord has blessed our family. Just really appreciate this.

I want to also just say that Coy, he guided Ty all the way from go-karts to Cup. Coy, I know he's got a great view of what just happened.

Then his uncle is there, too, J.D.

I think about those two guys, everything they did for the race team, for us as a family.

We love this. We love NASCAR. We always want to be in it. It's a huge deal for us. To have Ty to be able to go through everything that he went through, and he went through a lot, because this is tough, this is tough when you get up here. It's the best of the best in the world.

I just really think about everything, think about Toyota, what they mean to us, the way they support us. I think about our team there around Ty. Tyler, the crew chief, has just done a fantastic job. Grayson and Evan our two engineers. We have Cheddar to come over and take the floor. He has been just awesome. Cole Pearn has meant so much to us. Tony, our spotter.

The great thing about that group which I really appreciate is they really do like Ty and they believe in him. I think we



got people around him that really, really care. They've been so supportive. Everybody in here knows what it takes to win a race like this. For somebody that's 23, I mean, it's just a huge deal for all of us.

You go through so much. There were a lot of nights than and a lot of days that were... Yeah, you go through a lot. To get up here, be able to perform.

When you have somebody like Ty, this is all he wants to do, so you're so focused on that. I'm just thanking in my mind all the people that I need to thank at some point. I think with my phone, it blew up. I'll spend all day tomorrow thanking people.

But that's what I feel. I feel that it's just a big thanks to everyone. Appreciate everybody in here 'cause it just means so much to our sport. That's just some of the things I think about.

Q. Denny said yesterday he can see for you how it occupies your minds, how you ride the highs and lows for Ty. Can you describe how different it is watching the 54 versus how you ride the highs and lows of your other cars?

JOE GIBBS: Well, I think both boys going home, I think then we have eight grandkids. I find myself with the eight grandkids, like most of the people that in here that are parent, grandkids or maybe even greats. I told my grandkids the first kid that gives me a great, gives me any ski boat, any car, any trip they want, so let's get going.

I will say this, Jackson got engaged a month ago. So that was good.

I think for all my grandkids, like Jackson being on the front of the car, the fact that he's our front tire changer on the 54, seeing that and him.

We got Miller now in the sport. He's working hard to be a jack man. Works in the front office with our ministry. We just got Jason that came over. So we got four now in our race team, which I'm so excited about.

This is our future. This is what we want to do as a family. We love it.



I guess what I'm saying, for all your grandkids and your kids, everybody in here knows the feeling. It's just different. It just means so much.

We got some people at our company, Todd Berrier, Wally Brown. Those two guys, when things were really hard, they came in and really were a part of kind of building everything. I appreciate people like that that have stepped up.

I know I'm kind of rambling. It's hard to think about all the people that really made this possible.

Q. Do you see this as validation for Ty or do you feel like he didn't need a validation moment?

JOE GIBBS: No, I don't. I think our team there that we have put together now is really, really a huge deal. It's real hard up here, as you guys know, to get a crew chief, to get the pit crew. The pit crew today, those guys were on it.

They as a group, too, I think believe in Ty and believe that he can do it. You go to the racetrack a lot and you haven't won, it's tough to go through that.

Ty is 23. I've checked a lot of some of the really, really good ones somewhere around there. 23 is about when. We'll see about the future. You have to earn it every week here. There's nothing given to you, so...

Q. Over the last six months or so with everything else going on, obviously Ty has been dragged into this, what has been the message to him and the team about that situation and the distractions that may present?

JOE GIBBS: I think with Ty, if you kind of notice, I think he's been happy when we got this year started. I know there was a lot out there. I think he did a good job of kind of putting things aside and just concentrating on racing. I think it's kind of showed that.

I think his team means a lot to him. I think he's been able to focus on all those things. He knows when you're in the situation he's in, there's going to be a lot going on. That's part of handling it, and handling it the right way.

I think he's compartmentalized. I think he's put it up to one side, has been able to focus and has a drive on racing. That's what he wants to do.

Q. Ty can be so reserved publicly. We don't get a glimpse into him very often. Sometimes as a result there's a lot of narratives about Ty that don't necessarily come from Ty. What could you tell us about who Ty is behind the scenes that maybe people

don't know?

JOE GIBBS: Yeah, I've been there for 23 years. I was outside the waiting room, saw the little guy. I think there is a side to him. I think there was a podcast that was done, and I forgot who did it, it was like an hour long, I think he'll come alive on a lot of those things. I think he's got a funny bone. He's really, really got a good sense of humor. We laugh all the time.

I think the farther we go in this sport, I know that the people in this room will have a chance to talk to him. Hopefully his personality and everything comes out, the kind of kid he is, so yeah.

He's fun. When I'm around him, he's fun.

Q. As for Tyler, the situation he found himself in last year, when you collectively made those decisions, were there certain things you wanted him to learn from that to get out of it? How do you think he's responded?

JOE GIBBS: Tyler?

Q. Yes.

JOE GIBBS: Our crew chief.

I got so much respect for him. When we kind of did the interviews and everything, he had not been in Cup as a crew chief, but he wanted it really bad. So I appreciated that a lot.

We've gone through a lot, you know, with everything that's taken place with the team. He has been just steady. I think he's really, really important to what happened today.

I really think he's had a chance, for as young as he is as a crew chief, to experience a lot of things. I told him, I said, I worked under four different head coaches before I ever had a chance to be a head coach. I learned a lot from each one of 'em, things like you can be yourself. They were all different. But highly motivated, very successful.

I think he's, for a young guy, already got a lot of experience there because he's went through a lot. But hopefully he really enjoys this, too, so...

Q. Tyler was talking about Ty is loose, when he's loose and having fun, he's fast. Both men are young and both have matured. How has Ty matured, in what ways, from last year to this year that's now resulting in him being able to give more feedback to the team?

JOE GIBBS: I think one of the things you kind of see in our meetings and everything is Denny, the experience he has, just the way he looks at things. I think it's so good for our young guys to be in there and listen to him.

Of course, the 23XI guys are in there, too.

It's an example, part of this in a pro sport like this, and in particular in NASCAR, you can't really teach it and talk about it, you got to experience it. I think that's part of what Ty has been going through.

So I think the first thing, you got to have everything around you. If you got any weaknesses up here, you're not going to win. I think now with Tyler being his crew chief, Grayson and Evan, the engineers, Cole Pearn has been invaluable, Cheddar on the floor, Tony his spotter, all those guys care about him. It was getting that all put together, too.

I think all of that has kind of been a process. I think we've kind of worked through it. It's just a thrill to see this happen today because... I don't know how to explain it. It's just a special feeling for all of us. I called my wife, and she's crying. We got the whole family is crying. We love this. We really appreciate what today meant to us and the family.

Like I said, Lord has blessed us with just so many experiences that I'm one of the most blessed people in the world.

THE MODERATOR: Coach, congratulations on the victory. Good luck next week in Kansas.

JOE GIBBS: Thank you. Appreciate it.

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