

PAUL MENARD – No. 98 Menards Ford Fusion – Quotes from Media Day at Daytona International Speedway.

HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE WEARING RICHARD PETTY'S COLORS?

"It's cool. They've got cool clothes. The shop is looking good, so it's coming along."

WHAT DO YOU THINK ON THE CHANGEOVER?

"It's gone a lot smoother than I expected. It's been a quick off-season with the way they had to change shops, go up to Statesville, and now they're in the process of going back to Concord with the new shop being re-modeled. That's all getting finished up, but at the same time things are getting done efficiently, so that's all you can ask for. I think we've built some pretty good Fords to bring down to Daytona."

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT SLUGGER LABBE AS YOUR NEW CREW CHIEF?

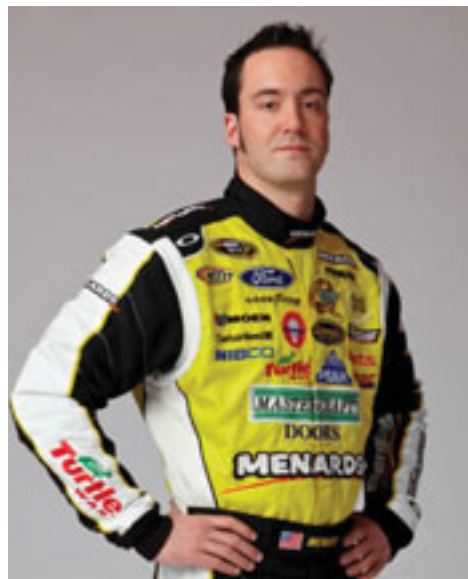
"Slugger is a go-getter. He's on the chip and he works hard. He's a lot of fun to be around and we got to spend a lot of time together this off-season, but I'm looking forward to getting to know him even better."

DOES RUNNING THE ROLEX HELP KNOCK OFF THE COB-WEBS?

"Anytime you're in a race car it's a good thing. I got to log some laps around Daytona. The track is as rough as ever, so it should be a lot of fun to race in the 150s and the 500, but anytime you're in the car you're physically getting prepared for the next race. You can do all you can during the off-season in the gym, but when you get in the race car, that's when your mind sharpens and you get ready to go."

DO YOU RACE GO-KARTS?

"I do, but it's hard to do with snow on the ground in North Carolina. I have a few karts and I'm in the process of getting them fixed. I've got minor problems with both of them."



DOES RUNNING A GO-KART HELP YOU PHYSICALLY? AJ ALLMENDINGER SAID IT DOES.

"I think anybody that runs a kart or anything in the off-season is gonna have an advantage over the people that didn't. If he (AJ Allmendinger) has been running his kart, then he'll have that little edge on all of us until we get to probably the second or third race of the year, but, luckily, Daytona is not that physical of a track, so we'll all get up to speed quickly."

HOW HAVE YOU HANDLED ALL THE ADJUSTMENTS THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS WITH YOUR RACE TEAM AND MOVING AROUND FROM YEAR TO YEAR?

"The off-season changes, of course, but there are a lot of the same people coming over. It's all part of the ballgame, so it's all in the name of making progress."

WILL RUNNING NATIONWIDE FULL-TIME HELP YOUR CUP EFFORT?

"I think just logging laps around the tracks that we're gonna race on Sunday. It's been a couple years since I've run full-time in the series, but running part-time last year opened my eyes to how racing Saturday helps you on Sunday. It's a long schedule for sure. There are a handful of races where we're traveling back and forth, where it might be more of a hindrance than an advantage, but, at the end of the year, if we're up there in points it'll be a good year."

WITH THE CUP CAR GOING BACK TO A SPOILER LATER THIS YEAR WILL RUNNING NATIONWIDE GIVE YOU AN EDGE?

"Probably not, just because the cars mechanically are so different, but when the Nationwide car runs the COT full-time in 2011, I think you'll see a lot more guys jumping back and forth because the cars are very similar. They'll run the same chassis. The bodies are a little bit different, but you can learn things from that."

WHAT'S THE FORCE BEHIND RUNNING NATIONWIDE FULL-TIME THIS YEAR?

"Seeing how that helped on Sunday. Friday is kind of a pain the butt because you're jumping back and forth and you don't have the time to concentrate on both cars, but when Saturday rolls around and you

strap into the race in the Nationwide car, you can just focus on what you need to do to get around the track – different grooves, how the track is racing, and then you can apply that on Sunday.”

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT GOING TO ROAD AMERICA THIS YEAR?

“Road America, I’ve said this before and I’ll say it again, is my favorite race track. I’m looking forward to it because it’s a cool part of the country. It’s a shame we can’t be in Milwaukee with the history that track has, but Road America is turning a new page and I’m looking forward to it.”

DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF A TITLE CONTENDER IN NATIONWIDE?

“I don’t even know who is racing full-time. I know Carl is, but I’m not sure who else. Roush Fenway is a strong team. Carl has won a lot of races with them, and they won with David (Ragan) last year. Every team there won last year, so we’ve got to keep that streak alive.”

DAYTONA SPRINGS OPTIMISM. WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS AS SPEEDWEEKS BEGINS?

“We’ll know a lot when we unload on Friday, but Slugger assures me that we have a fast car, and with the way the Fords ran on plate tracks last year, I know we will. Daytona is still a restrictor plate track, but you still have to handle. At the end of the day, you know you’re gonna be in a big pack all day long and you’ve got to dodge the spinning cars. California and Vegas will be a truer test of how the year is gonna go, but, like I said before, we’re just really happy with the way things have progressed between Richard Petty Motorsports and the merger with Yates, and with the alliance of all the Ford teams working under one umbrella. It’s a cool thing.”

DOES THE 500 HAVE ANY SPECIAL MEMORY?

It’s always the kickoff to a new year. I grew up in Wisconsin, so there was always about three feet of snow on the ground. We couldn’t do a whole lot of racing, unless it was on ice, but every Daytona 500 Sunday my dad, me and all the guys in our family would sit down and watch the race.”

- PCGCampbell for Ford Racing, Press Release