



GREG ZIPADELLI: Vice President of Competition

Birthdate: April 21, 1967
Birthplace: Berlin, Connecticut
Residence: Mooresville, North Carolina
Spouse: Nan
Children: Zachary, Elwina and Gianni

When Stewart-Haas Racing (SHR) began its initial expansion from two to three teams in 2012, co-owner Tony Stewart knew exactly who he wanted to guide that process.

Greg Zipadelli, who as Stewart's crew chief from 1999 through 2008 led him to two NASCAR Cup Series championships (2002 and 2005), 33 victories and 10 poles, was hand-picked by Stewart to be the director of competition for SHR.

Today, SHR fields four cars in the NASCAR Cup Series, along with a full-time NASCAR Xfinity Series team and a part-time Xfinity Series effort. As SHR has grown, so has Zipadelli's role, with oversight of all racing endeavors as vice president of competition.

"Tony and I have always had a unique relationship where we've just really, truly respected each other," Zipadelli said. "We can be very honest with each other and not worry about hurting each other's feelings. I trust and believe in him as much as I do anybody else on Earth, and I think he has similar feelings. I can't speak for him, but I assume through our conversations and things, that's part of the reason why he worked so hard to try to get us back together, even though it's in a different role. I think he knows I'll always have his back."

When Zipadelli joined SHR in December 2011, his job was to oversee the organization's two existing teams while also building the No. 10 team for Danica Patrick, which ran a partial, 10-race Cup Series schedule in 2012 in preparation for a full season of Cup racing in 2013. The No. 10 team's part-time effort also afforded Zipadelli the opportunity to continue in a familiar position, as he handled the dual role of being Patrick's crew chief. The duo worked together for seven races before SHR secured a dedicated crew chief for Patrick.

"The dual role that season was fun for me," Zipadelli said. "The guys had the majority of the cars built, so for me to do that job, it was pretty easy. But that changed as her schedule got busier toward the end of the season. For me, any time you can stay in the game as close as you can to what the guys are going through on a day-to-day basis, it can't hurt you.

"It would be hard to do long-term and be effective at both of them, but it worked and it got us through until we were able to find the right people to help the whole company grow into the team it is today."

That ability to multitask as both competition director and crew chief seems quaint today.

SHR's growth since Zipadelli joined in late 2011 has been massive. The company expanded from two to three full-time teams in 2013. It added a fourth team in 2014 and promptly won its second NASCAR Cup Series championship, bookending the first title Stewart earned in 2011 as driver and team co-owner. It announced a manufacturer switch to Ford in early 2016 and later that year, an expansion into the Xfinity Series. The 2017 season saw SHR's debut as a Ford team, along with its entry into the Xfinity Series.

"We've grown a lot, and we've brought a lot of new people on. Probably the biggest part of it is getting everyone to work together, along with an Xfinity Series team where we're trying to develop personnel for the Cup program," Zipadelli said. "There's always a lot going on, and we certainly want to make sure we don't fall behind in any of our processes. Overall, it's been good. I'm proud of what this team has done, and it continues to mature."

Becoming vice president of competition at SHR was a logical step in Zipadelli's illustrious racing career.

-more-

The Berlin, Connecticut, native first began working on a NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour car owned by his uncle at age 7 and, by age 14, he was preparing racecars for his family-owned Sherwood Racing Team.

By the time he was 20, Zipadelli was a championship-winning crew chief, leading Modified Tour driver Mike McLaughlin to the series title on the heels of five wins and 15 top-five finishes. When McLaughlin moved up to the NASCAR K&N Pro Series East with prominent New England car owner Mike Greci, Zipadelli followed and the tandem recorded five wins between 1990 and 1993.

McLaughlin departed Greci's operation at the end of the 1993 season, but Zipadelli stayed with the team and worked with a handful of drivers in 1994 and 1995. Zipadelli's perseverance paid off in 1996 when driver Mike Stefanik joined the team. While no wins were recorded that year, eight top-five and nine top-10 finishes made way for a championship season in 1997. Stefanik marched to the series title that year riding a wave of consistency with two wins, 14 top-fives and 16 top-10s, giving Zipadelli his second NASCAR touring series championship in less than a decade.

With two championship rings before age 30, Zipadelli headed south in January 1998 to join Roush Fenway Racing's NASCAR Cup Series operation as the chassis specialist for the No. 99 team of then driver Jeff Burton. Burton won two races, earned 18 top-fives and 23 top-10s and finished fifth in points that season, and Zipadelli's talent was noticed.

In late 1998 when team owner Joe Gibbs began laying the groundwork for a second team with Stewart behind the wheel, he tabbed Zipadelli to be the No. 20 team's crew chief.

When Stewart left the Gibbs organization following the 2008 season, Zipadelli remained and spent three years as the crew chief for Stewart's replacement, Joey Logano. Zipadelli helped deliver Logano's first career Cup Series victory on June 28, 2009 at New Hampshire Motor Speedway in Loudon.

After 13 successful years at Joe Gibbs Racing, Zipadelli took the opportunity to build another successful NASCAR team in SHR.

"Stewart-Haas Racing has a lot of strengths," Zipadelli said. "The team has won championships and is a very solid organization. Tony is one of the best who has ever come through the sport. SHR has a great partnership with Ford. We have all the tools in place to continue winning races and contending for championships. No one is ever satisfied here, and that's a good thing."

Zipadelli resides in Mooresville, North Carolina, with his wife Nan and three children – sons Zachary Charles and Gianni Gregory, and daughter Elwina Sophia.

-SHR-