

AL Wild Card Series:

Tigers vs Astros

Wednesday, October 2, 2024

Houston, Texas, USA

Minute Maid Park

Detroit Tigers

Beau Brieske

Pregame Press Conference

Q. Beau, I think somebody asked you this in the clubhouse after the game yesterday. But to hit 100 miles per hour, did you realize it at the time, and whenever you did, what does it mean to get there?

BEAU BRIESKE: I knew it was coming out good, and I also knew that I was giving it my best effort. I was letting it go. And I think it was just the heat-of-the-moment battle. Because he's putting good swings on everything. The bats they were having against all of us yesterday, they were making us battle. They were making us fight. We had to execute our best pitches to get them out. So that's, I think, in a situation like that, just brings the best out of both guys.

I wasn't really thinking too much about it. I just was trying to execute a pitch, but I knew I had my good stuff, yeah.

Q. Think back to the guy from minor league mini camp a few years ago. Would you have imagined, back then, that now you would be a reliever throwing 100 miles an hour in the postseason?

BEAU BRIESKE: Yeah, because that was always a goal of mine, to try to always improve my mechanics and improve my body to try to reach whatever my potential is as far as the output goes and trying to build the best stuff as possible.

I think pitching is half stuff and then half execution. And you can get away with a little bit more when you also are trying to make progress with your stuff as the years go on. And then you hope that that also kind of aligns with your ability to execute it.

So that's always been a goal of mine, is just to approach it as a -- as many ways as I can to try to get better, try to become a better pitcher.

I always believed that I had that in me, and now it's just



kind of being able to be consistent and utilize it.

Q. Beau, I think the season you were in year-to-year fastball average 93 miles an hour. What has allowed you to gain as much velocity as you have?

BEAU BRIESKE: I would say the big step for me was after my rookie year, I realized that I really wasn't as physically developed as a lot of guys that you would just look around and see across the league that were able to do it for 162, able to stay healthy, able to just produce at a consistent level. I think your body has to be in a certain -- like has to be at a certain level, to be quite honest.

I think that I needed to make that next step physically, and that was just -- that comes with maturing too, getting older, getting another year of training, another year, a full off-season of working out, eating enough, learning what I needed to do to just make that progress. I think that was -- I gained 20 pounds after my rookie year, and that helped a lot.

And then also just getting a better feel for my mechanics and, like I said, trying to make consistent adjustments as time goes on.

Q. Beau, I think a long time ago, probably a couple years ago now, you told me that when you were growing up, I believe it was you that said sacrifice what -- sacrifice for what you want now so what you want doesn't become your sacrifice.

BEAU BRIESKE: Yeah.

Q. How much does that resonate in a series like this?

BEAU BRIESKE: I mean, that's what -- that would be my mantra as I was up and coming and trying to chase a dream. That's always been the way that I've approached things. So when you get into this situation, it's like you can't -- we joked about it. It was like you don't change everything now that you're here. You've got to keep doing what you're doing and trust your ability and just go out there and be yourself and execute.



So, I mean, that's always what I'm -- that's the way I'm approaching things. You've got to make your sacrifices. You've got to prepare. You've got to give your best effort. Then you just leave it all out on the table and see what happens.

Q. I think postgame, you mentioned still -- you seem pretty jacked up at the moment. How long did that last, and what was it like waking up today, and how do you reset?

BEAU BRIESKE: Yeah, it was just a different level of me being wired. I couldn't really get my thoughts in order. I was just still kind of beamed up. That lasted until I got to the hotel, and then the adrenaline kind of quickly dumped, and I was ready to go lay in bed and pass out. I got a good night's sleep, that's for sure, definitely.

And now we're back, and we're ready. Ready to go again.

Q. The late-inning situations and jams that A.J. trusted you with down the stretch, I think in Oakland and Baltimore, a couple other places, how did that prepare you for a moment like yesterday, and how did it -- if it did -- affect the way you warm up sometimes on short notice for a specific part of it?

BEAU BRIESKE: In the specific situation I came in yesterday, as I was warming up, I was pretty much just putting myself back into the mindset I was in when I went in in Baltimore because it felt very similar. And I didn't know exactly what situation I was going to come into, but it ended up being very, very similar.

So I just tried to get myself back in the mode of go out there and try to execute to the best of my ability and embrace it. Don't shy away from it. Don't try to do too much. Just embrace the situation that I'm coming into and trust my stuff.

But I'll say definitely, I got hot earlier in the game, and I think that that really helped kind of get rid of all of the anxiousness and nerves once I got the first phone call and I started warming up and then they sat me down. That really helped me be able to kind of relax and just kind of ease myself until the next phone call came, and then I was ready right away for sure.

But, yeah, that definitely helped me get into this situation with the calm and, like, clean level of focus.

Q. Beau, do you remember the meeting in August where A.J. asked what sort of team do you guys want to be? And was there anything impactful about that?

BEAU BRIESKE: Yeah, it was -- I can't remember if it was in August or if it was July. One of those two. But it was a team meeting, and, you know, when team meetings happen, usually things aren't going well, and you're like, well, what is this going to be? What is it going to be like?

And it wasn't us getting blasted. It wasn't anything bad. It was more so just asking us and kind of having everyone look in the mirror and ask themselves, what am I doing to be a part of a winning team? Because right now, at that time, we were not a winning team. There was a lot of things that we could be doing individually and then as a group to help build towards wins.

What I remember is just to try to put everything else to the side and realize that the goal, as a group, is to try to win. And all of the numbers and all of the contract stuff, that's also what he said. He said, All of that stuff will take care of itself if you go out there and you play for one another and you go out there and win.

I mean, I can't remember the exact date, but I would imagine that it probably aligned with a turning point in the season. So, yeah, it was impactful for sure.

Q. From closing some games to opening others, how much have you embraced what A.J. called the other day pitching chaos?

BEAU BRIESKE: You try to embrace it as much as possible because it is probably as a viewer, but also as a guy that's not knowing when he's going to get called, it is chaos at times. So you try to just be ready. You try to be ready. You try to trust -- the thing that I always tell myself is you've got to trust that if your name's getting called, there's a reason for it, and you're the guy for the situation. You've got to go out there, do your job, and that's it.

You don't try to make it more than what it is, and you just trust that the next guy's going to pick you up, and there's a plan. It's not just randomness. But I would say it's been working and you definitely trust the guy that's making the decisions because, in my eyes, I think he's the best at it.

So we've just got to be ready as a group of guys that are down there in the pen and kind of stay ready and trust that when our name gets called, it's the right situation for us.

Q. When A.J. really started taking this bullpen strategy a few weeks ago, he said it's not hard to get guys to buy in because everybody wants to be here. You want to be playing in the show. But when this really took shape, was it weird at first? Was it uncomfortable? How did you break through that wall to just trust the guy making the decision?

BEAU BRIESKE: I would say, yeah, there was an adjustment period for sure because it's somewhat difficult to be able to have a consistent approach out of the pen when you don't really know what your role is. You don't know what inning you're going to throw. We don't know how -- like we would have a bolt guy, we didn't know how long the bolt guy was going to go. We didn't know how long the guy that was going to open was going to go.

So the adjustment was just trying to learn his tendencies as a manager and prepare ourselves throughout the process and try to guess and then also take educated guesses as to when we might go in. And just we don't want to be out there super focused and stressing the whole time thinking that our name is going to get called the entire game because it's going to be -- it's going to be draining if you're doing that.

So you've got to kind of just be able to stay calm but also stay prepared at the same time. I think that was the adjustment for sure. Because it's different. It's not the same as having a starter go six and then you know, okay, well, depending on the game, it's probably going to be one of these guys, depending on this pocket, it's probably going to be one of these guys. It was an adjustment period for sure.

Q. Do you think part of that a little comes down to emotionally removing yourself from what type of appearance you're getting? Because if you have a vision for a role of yourself and that's changed, there could be an emotional buffer to that.

BEAU BRIESKE: Yeah, that's always the way that I've approached coming out into the game. No matter what inning you throw, I believe that you can help the team because of the fact that even if it's a down -- you're down five, you're down ten, and you need to go cover three innings, I think that that is a huge role for the -- in the grand scheme of things for the team to be able to save arms the next day, to keep other guys fresh in case we need to use more guys the next day.

And then, obviously, when you're in close, tight games, every pitch matters for sure. So I think no matter what role you're coming out in or what type of game you're pitching in, it's always important. There's no innings that aren't important in the grand scheme of things.

Q. Just a tiny, quick detail-type question. Do you ever remember A.J. calling a team meeting before? Like how rare is that?

BEAU BRIESKE: I don't. I don't. I remember players only

meetings. Other than Spring Training, we have a team meeting every day, but I do not remember -- because in-season team meetings, they're rare. They don't happen very often. So, yeah, I can't really remember, honestly, yeah.

Thank you.

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