

AL Championship Series: Mariners vs Blue Jays

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Rogers Centre

Seattle Mariners

Dan Wilson

Pregame 2 Press Conference

Q. Dan, Randy Arozarena has, obviously, forged a pretty good reputation in postseason from things he's done from a few years ago, the two stolen bases last night. He said last night that he really raises his energy level for the playoffs. Have you seen any of that in these six games?

DAN WILSON: Yeah, I think a lot of guys raise their energy level in the postseason, and Randy is certainly one of them.

He's had a tremendous season for us, and just the things he does, whether it's offensively or defensively, obviously, the home runs, another 2020 season for him. What he does on the bases often is a big part of our offense, especially in that leadoff spot getting a chance to get on base and advance 90 feet via the stolen base.

He does bring a lot of energy to our offense, and those two stolen bases last night were big.

Q. Just to jump off that, the stolen bases were big and Naylor's stolen base the other night was big. How much of that was by design or philosophy in terms of just something that you want to get into your run scoring?

DAN WILSON: Yeah, I think these guys, I think, are very smart base runners and have a lot of freedom when they get on base, and they read it very well. We've talked about especially Josh Naylor and his -- just the way he sees the game and the headiness that he plays the game with.

But all our base stealers do a really good job. Eric Young, Jr., over at first base really helps those guys tremendously. He's been such a great addition to the staff and some of the things that they try to cue on and work with when they're trying to steal a base.



These guys do such a great job preparing our guys, and then our guys run with it -- pardon the metaphor, but they run with it, and they do a really good job. It's, again, a big part of putting pressure on the defense and trying to get that extra 90 feet.

Q. What could you say about Jorge Polanco coming up with so many big hits in crucial clutch situations like he has, the 15th inning, the home runs off of Skubal last night, two RBI singles? How does he slow the game down?

DAN WILSON: Yeah, Polo is just -- he's just a professional hitter. I don't know how else to describe it, the way he's been able to do that all season long. He got off to a torrid start for us and put up some huge numbers, especially home runs early in the season, and then his at-bats continued to be so solid throughout the year, and then lately here has just come up in key situations and really delivered for us.

Being able to slow the game down, as you mentioned, both sides of the plate. I think there's a lot of confidence in the left side and the right side at this point, and he's just found a way to deliver in those situations, and it's been huge. He's come up -- those two runs last night to put us ahead, number one, and then to give us an insurance run, number two, you can't emphasize how important that was.

He just seems to be in the right place at the right time, and he's really doing a great job delivering in those situations.

Q. We watched Bryan's live BP. What did you see from him, and do you think we'll see him pitch when you guys return to Seattle at some point?

DAN WILSON: Yeah, I thought it went really well today. Again, looking at different things in terms of his velo and in terms of how he was throwing his secondary stuff, it looked all really pretty solid today. Then again, the next sort of check mark is how he responds to that tomorrow and how he comes back.

I think, again, as we've seen, his progression has been pretty steady, pretty on the mark, and I think if he comes



back tomorrow and feeling better, then I think we're in a good path to seeing him later in the series.

Q. On that note, obviously, your starting staff, people have thought for a while, is the best in baseball, and then this year there's kind of an avalanche of injuries and one thing happens after another. To reach this point and to have them be what they've been in the playoffs, which is what I think you've always envisioned, how important has that been and how important is it going to continue to be?

DAN WILSON: Yeah, your starters are so important. I think what we saw from Bryce last night was just phenomenal, and that's a huge outing. Each of our guys have done that at some point in the season and have really stepped up.

But when you start putting those back to back together and each outing is -- each guy is trying to kind of outdo the other guy, that's when you've got something really special, and this is that kind of a group. We've seen some really big outings here in the postseason. We've seen these guys even come out of the bullpen and give us a big outing.

This starting staff, you can't say enough about them, the uniqueness that they have in terms of how they push each other, how they encourage each other, all the things that go into the bonding of that group together. It's a special group of starters.

You really are excited to hand the ball to each and every one of them, and in the postseason, that's a really good feeling.

Q. You mentioned how important the mound visit was from Cal last night in the first inning. Bryce doesn't even remember what Cal said to him. Logan said Cal will often come out there and just stare at him and not say anything. When you were catching, what was it like going to visit Randy on the mound or Jamie on the mound or those kinds of mound visits?

DAN WILSON: Yeah, I remember having to look up to Randy, so that's an oddity.

But I think oftentimes pitchers sometimes just need a beat. They just need to kind of slow the game down for just a minute and get out of whatever rhythm they were in.

I think whatever Cal said to Bryce last night, maybe that was what it was. It was just kind of a beat, a chance to kind of disrupt the momentum that was going the other way. Whatever the case may be, I think Cal has a really

good intuition of when to go out there, and clearly, that was a great situation to go out and kind of change the momentum, and it seemed to really change the momentum permanently for Bryce, and coming out from that point on, it was pretty special.

Q. You didn't say anything bad about Randy or Jamie in those mound visits, though?

DAN WILSON: No, of course not.

Q. Who do you expect to have start for Game 3?

DAN WILSON: Right now for Game 3, it'll be George Kirby. Game 4 will be Luis Castillo.

Q. What went into those decisions?

DAN WILSON: I think, again, a lot of it was where we stacked up rest-wise, how everybody is feeling, and it kind of made the most sense in terms of the matchups and whatever with Toronto here.

I think we're in a really good spot with our starters, and it'll be interesting to see today with Logan. Again, we'll kind of monitor the same way we did with Bryce coming off of a bullpen, kind of a different routine than he's normally had than the bullpen that was in the game. So we'll just see how it all plays out.

Q. I was going to ask you if you feel like your pitching staff is in a better spot today given what you got from Bryce and the efficiency from the bullpen yesterday, too?

DAN WILSON: Yeah, I think that's kind of the -- maybe the underrated part of what Bryce did last night, was, number one, it set up our bullpen for the game last night. Giving us those six innings was tremendous.

But it did kind of give us a little bit of rest, too. Bazarro didn't have to throw last night, other guys didn't have to throw last night, so it kind of sets us up going forward here, too.

As it turned out, on so many levels, that was a big outing from Bryce and certainly with our bullpen and our other starters, it came up huge.

Q. You obviously have a lot of information and advance scouting on Trey Yesavage, but what are the challenges of never having faced this young man until Game 2 of an LCS?

DAN WILSON: Yeah, I think one of the things about



baseball is guys catalog when they see pitches and pitchers, and that information gets sort of recalled when they get to see them the next time. We don't have that with Yesavage. This is going to be a first time for all of us.

It's a unique delivery. It's a unique release. It's another split finger. All those things, I think, will be very key for our guys in their first at-bat or two to kind of be logging that information.

That's the great thing about baseball. It's a game of adjustments. You have to make your adjustments and you have to make them quickly. Offensively that's what we're going to have to do with Yesavage today.

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