

AL Championship Series: Mariners vs Blue Jays

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Seattle, Washington, USA

T-Mobile Park

Toronto Blue Jays

John Schneider

Pregame 3 Press Conference



Q. You had five people nominated for Gold Gloves today. I know Ty France hasn't played a ton of first for you, but obviously, the work he did, to have these -- and six Gold Gloves, right? Ernie nominated for two. We know this team's been built on defense for the last three years, but how does that feel?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: It's a lot of hard work from a lot of different people. It's pretty cool. I think, yeah, we do a good job of trying to pride ourselves on playing sound defense, and guys have gotten better since they have been here too, which is nice for us to say. But it's also a whole lot of work from them, from the coaching staff, and I think it's really nice they get recognized for it.

Q. You've had Shane for a few months now. What have you learned about him over that span of time that you didn't already know?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Just kind of how steady he is, kind of how much he's just kind of one of the boys. He really fits into the clubhouse really well. You never really know when you're acquiring somebody what that kind of dynamic is going to look like. I think we've done a really good job with the acquisitions this year as a whole. But I think just kind of watching him prepare and watching him evolve. He's got a really high sense of awareness about what he's doing, trying to do, what he has done, and adjustments he needs to make. I think that's the biggest thing.

Q. One more about Shane. What are you going to be looking for from him early in the game today?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Just executing. Any one of his pitches, really, just executing. When he's doing that, he's really good, especially breaking balls, I think, to this team. Looking to kind of see where those are in the zone, what kind of swings they're taking off of those. He's at his best when he's got all of his pitches where he wants to put 'em.

So that's kind of it, not the moment or anything like that. We trust him out there in this situation, but kind of just what his stuff is doing.

Q. In the past, we have seen a lot of Canadians come down to this ballpark to watch you guys play. Not sure how many are going to be here today, but there's lots of Blue Jay jerseys out there. What difference does that make when you're on road and you have that kind of support?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: It makes you a little more comfortable. I think playoffs are a little different than regular season with ticket availability. But we travel well. We feel the support at a lot of places we go to. Here is probably the spot that everyone circles because of the proximity to BC and the fans that do come here. So it helps, for sure. I think that when you get into some pretty loud, hostile environments -- regular season or postseason here, we're expecting it to be loud.

So I think to have a good little chunk of Blue Jay fans would be good for the guys.

Q. Further to that, you said a few days ago that you hope the BC fans are more Jays than the Mariners, but do you go back to when you managed in Vancouver? And what was that like there as far as Mariners presence up there in Vancouver and the people coming down here for these games?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: At that time, for me, it was more so feeling the connection between minor league club and parent club, if that makes sense, and how much I think the people in Vancouver could resonate with that, you know, being the only Canadian minor league team and big league team.

So honestly didn't think about if there were many Mariners fans there at the time, but I think just kind of feeling the connection between the big league club and that club is what I'll always remember about that place. It just seemed like everyone was a Blue Jays fan there that was affiliated with that stadium and that environment.



Q. We're talking to Max here in a little bit. He's obviously had a little bit of a break since the end of the regular season to work on some things. How do you think that has benefited him in trying to get him back to where you guys need him to be?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: I think it was good for him. He kept himself ready to throw, obviously, with a number of pitches, but I think probably more so than even he was leading on to you or anyone, he needed a little bit of a break to feel good physically.

So in talking to him over the past couple weeks, I think you feel comfortable and confident about where he is, and hopefully how he can finish some pitches a little bit better than he was a couple weeks ago. So it's easy to trust a guy who has been through what he's been through and done what he's done. One of the many great things about Max is he does not pull any punches. He'll tell you exactly how he's feeling. So it may not be always what I say to you guys for certain reasons, but I think that the rest kind of was a good thing for him.

Q. What have you seen from Addison Barger recently, and kind of what do you assess of his season having that really hot few months in the middle and kind of tailing off but still having some big hits recently? What have you seen from him?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Normal first full year in the big leagues, and we've asked a lot of him. He's been a huge part of what we've done and why we are here. I know he's played well in this ballpark early in the year, and I think he'll have some friends and family here too.

But I've seen the guy evolve. I've seen the guy grow into a big leaguer, and not just rely on his physical skills. It's October 15th. Everyone's grinding. He's probably grinding too. But, man, I just can't speak highly enough of what he did when we needed him to do it. When we were kind of short and guys were hurt, he kind of stepped in and filled that void of power, athleticism, everything.

So you never know when it's going to click, you know, and Addy, like a lot of our guys, I think, is kind of one swing away because he's that physically talented.

Q. Further to the flip with Tony and Addy in the lineup, how much are you considering, one, trying to get a different presence behind Vlad and also perhaps trying to take some heat off Barger by dropping him down in the lineup?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Definitely both. When you're thinking

through it and thinking through who has seen Kirby and what they have done and things like that, it depends and it changes. I like Tony's at-bats. You're trying to gauge what he's like timing-wise and things like that. And you kind of pair that up with what you're seeing with everyone else.

So they're both, obviously, huge parts of our lineup. So I think just switching it up a little bit and -- definitely giving Addy a little bit of a blow, but not trying to change what he does and what he does for our lineup.

Q. Where the series is at right now, can you talk a little bit about maybe a new approach or different approach or fresh approach that you take going into Game 3 against the Mariners offense?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, to me, it's pretty cut and dry, both for our offense and their offense. We've got to limit damage, for one, and they have scored a lot of their runs this postseason via the home run. So we got to make pitches and be pretty stubborn in certain situations with where you're throwing the ball, whether starter or reliever, really.

I look at it kind of as a mirror image of it. I think they've done a good job of pitching to weak contact, knowing that we don't strikeout a lot, and I think we just have to be real deliberate with the guys that can leave the yard. That's kind of what's come back and hurt us.

Q. Have you had any conversations as a group, as a team, from the final out of Game 2 until maybe today, and is there a need to ever have these kind of group conversations during the postseason?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: We'll see. We have conversations all the time. Not sit-down-everybody-listen-to-me type thing. But we have had some handful of guys at a time discussions. And this is the time where you lean on your veterans too. So we did that yesterday a little bit.

I'm always talking to guys. We'll see where the game goes. We'll see what kind of journey we go on today in Game 3. You never really know where it's going to go. So this group is so good at just going out and playing. It hasn't been a, sit down, hey, you guys need to do this. They're all pretty well aware of it.

Q. So was it just the veterans you spoke with or did the veterans speak?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Oh, no, no they haven't. I know they talk amongst one another quite a bit. This is just more casual conversations with everyone, really, sitting here on the off day and just kind of taking the pulse of everyone like

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

we normally do.

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