

# AL Championship Series: Mariners vs Blue Jays

Thursday, October 16, 2025

Seattle, Washington, USA

T-Mobile Park

## Seattle Mariners

## Julio Rodríguez

### Pregame 4 Press Conference

**Q. We just talked to Dan a little bit about Leo being in the lineup and how much he can -- how much energy his approach just brings to that bottom of the order, being able to turn it around for you guys. Just from your experience, how has it helped having him in the bottom of the order, just that constant on-base threat for you guys at the top of the lineup?**

**JULIO RODRÍGUEZ:** I mean, for us, I think Leo, what he brings to the lineup is huge. He always has great at-bats, he plays great defense too. So he's somebody that when you put him in the lineup, you know he's going to have those really good at-bats and he can definitely get everybody in trouble just creating things on the base path.

**Q. What have you seen from this clubhouse and its ability to just flush away tough losses and move on to the next day, and how have you seen that evolve as the season's gone along?**

**JULIO RODRÍGUEZ:** I feel like it has become really a part of our identity. We take it one day at a time. I feel like we all do a pretty good job just staying present in the moment and kind of just take games as they go. Sometimes you're going to experience tough losses, and you cannot avoid that.

But I feel like something that you can really control is how you respond and how you show up the next day, you know, ready to compete again.

**Q. On that note of the mentality of flushing way tough losses, was there a moment in this season that you guys kind of adopted that or fully committed to that or was that just kind of a combination of experiences from the past couple years that this core group of players went through?**

**JULIO RODRÍGUEZ:** I just feel like as this season kind of



kept going forward, I feel like that kind of kept growing and growing because even though we knew we had a really good team, like, we experienced some tough patches and I feel like those were the times where we were really able to solidify that.

**Q. I know you're going to hit a home run in the bottom of the first inning again, but what do you learn from the dugout to the on-deck circle, what do you watch when Randy is up there and Cal's up there to do what you've done the last few days?**

**JULIO RODRÍGUEZ:** Honestly, I like seeing the way that they're pitching, but at the same time I have my own approach. I always try to get something -- when it's my turn to hit, like, just to see something up the middle of the plate and try to put a good swing to it.

**Q. You had such a great second half. The decision to take a few days at the All-Star break rather than go to the game, kind of reset, how did that help you in the second half when you look back at where you were in July?**

**JULIO RODRÍGUEZ:** I would say just taking the time for myself, to actually dive deep in myself and just to address the things that I thought I could have done better, to just kind of organize my head a little bit better, put myself in a better spot to compete and kind of bring the best self out of me.

**Q. We just heard from Dan about the leadership in the clubhouse. Harry Ford said that Josh Naylor had some words last night. Being a part of that group, it sounded like Dan thought that you guys all come together. It could be a different person every day. What does that mean to you and do you find a time when you are that person to be the leader?**

**JULIO RODRÍGUEZ:** I'll say yeah. I'll say yeah. I feel like I find myself in those situations too. I just feel like -- it's not just me. I feel like it can come from anybody, honestly. I feel like everybody knows the goal, like, why we are here, why we're doing what we're doing, why we're playing hard every single day, why we need to flush out games. I feel



like everybody knows that.

So I feel like it's, like, a collective effort. I feel like everybody can pull the line a little.

**Q. Fun question. Has Josh Naylor given you any stolen base tips?**

JULIO RODRÍGUEZ: (Laughing.) By watching him, yeah, there's a lot of tips by watching him. He's always looking for opportunities out there on the field, and that's something that he definitely brings to the game. I just feel like by watching him, I definitely like copy a little bit of him.

**Q. What's been your experience working not just with Edgar Martinez, but Kevin Seitzer and Bobby Magallanes and how have you seen the teamwork with them throughout the course of the season?**

JULIO RODRÍGUEZ: I feel like working with all of them, just they're all like really good at something different. I feel like Bobby is really good at, like, the swing side of things. Seitz and Edgar are really good on the approach and the experience. And that dynamic that they have really works for us because we -- I feel like we all learn to trust them and what they do.

I feel like that's something really good when you have, like, that connection with your hitting coaches like that because they put a lot of effort to help us out, to watch our swings, to kind of dive into our mentality as hitters. It's something that is -- I think it's really good for the team that whole dynamic that they got.

**Q. Building off that with Edgar in particular, just what is your -- how has your relationship with him grown over the last year in particular?**

JULIO RODRÍGUEZ: I feel like so much. Like, he's so much more around now and, like, we have been able to establish a really good relationship, just talking about life, baseball, like, his experience with this team, and through all his career. And I think he just has so much to offer to young players like me and to everybody in the clubhouse, just for, like, how much experience and how much he have done in this game.

**Q. You committed to this franchise for a bunch of years very early in your career. What was it about the direction and the vision of the organization that you found appealing?**

JULIO RODRÍGUEZ: I would say because I saw that we have the possibility of being in moments like this, playing for the things that we're playing for right now, trying to go to

get to the World Series, like, playing really meaningful games in the postseason. I just feel like I saw it back then.

I saw it back then, and that was something that -- I could tell the fans were really into it, that they loved the game. I could tell, like, where everything was going.

I just feel like for situations like this was the reason why I decided to commit pretty much my career of playing for the Seattle Mariners.

**Q. I'm going to ask this both in English and Spanish, if you could answer in both. It's kind of similar to Tyler's question. This team has had a lot of legends over the years, but they have never been to a World Series. You committed long-term to the team and you're two wins away from taking the team where it's never been. What would it mean to you personally to do that? What would it mean to you to take the team to where they have never been?**

JULIO RODRÍGUEZ: It would mean the world. Like, I told Tyler, that was the reason why, you know, like, I signed here, because I know -- I got to know the fan base and the hunger that this city had for a championship. I feel like that really motivated me. I feel like that's been a big challenge, and I don't shy away from challenges. I feel like that's something that really motivated me to be here. And just kind of seeing how everybody was really into it and motivated to bring a championship and World Series appearance and things like that. Once you're in it, you know you got to go for everything, and I feel like we're in a really good position to get to that spot right now.

**Q. Your back in the playoffs for the first time since your rookie year. You were just 21 years old then. You're still a really young man. You're still hitting home runs, still playing great defense, still stealing bases. You're still doing the things the same way in a lot of ways, but how do you feel you have changed the most? Whether it be emotionally, whether it be physically, how you approach the game, how have you changed the most since the last time were you in October?**

JULIO RODRÍGUEZ: I feel like everything is different now. I feel like just being more mature, kind of knowing what to expect a little bit more, knowing myself a little bit more in these situations. I feel like in everything. I feel like I'm a little stronger now too.

But, yeah, I just feel like experience, experience as a whole, playing more games. I feel like that -- my rookie year, that was the first time I played, like, over a hundred games in my whole professional career. There was a lot of different things going on back then. I feel like just the

experience, experience, and more games under my belt.

**Q. You played more right field than center field early in your professional career. At what point did you take the possibility of being an every day center fielder seriously, and who do you really credit to help you make that possible?**

JULIO RODRÍGUEZ: I feel like that's always a fun question for me because I was labeled as being a corner outfielder because I was a little slower, I was going to get a little bit of trouble, I think -- he knows that whole story. That was the whole narrative that people had with me. But I always felt like I had the possibility to play center field. I feel like I always thought I was a little faster than what people thought, that I was a little better than what the people thought of me. I just feel like I always kind of took that as, I want to put myself in the best position I can to play defense, and I want to let the team make the decision of put me in right or center or whatever. But I wanted to be capable, always be capable of playing center field.

I remember when I went to the Olympics in 2021, our center fielder got hurt, and I was the second best option on it. I remember feeling really comfortable being out there. And when I got back to Double-A, Collin Cowgill was my manager, and I told him, Look, I want to make it to the big leagues, and I want to create as many possibilities for me to be on a big league roster, and I want to you test me in center field too. I remember when he saw me out there he's like, Man, why we never thought about this sooner.

And I remember going to the off-season too I started training really hard with my trainer to kind of get better at my first steps, my routes, and things like that. And when I got to spring training in 2022 I think there was a lot of people surprised, and that's kind of how I got to be able to play center field.

**Q. Building off what you were telling David, how much have you appreciated the expectations of what you guys can potentially accomplish and maybe some of the pressure that comes with it for what this organization hasn't really seen before?**

JULIO RODRÍGUEZ: I just feel like all that is just fuel. It's something that we're walking through very rare territory, but that's just exciting, I feel like. There is always pressure when you're doing great things. I just feel like it is just things that come with it. You got to learn how to manage it, how to acknowledge it too. Because you cannot say like there is not pressure right now. Like there is not, you know, the expectations in the big moments to be able to deliver a win. You cannot just say that, you know, playing where we are and knowing the history of the team.

So I just feel like I acknowledge that and understanding that and just kind of keep moving forward. Playing one game at a time and just do the best that you can with what you can control.

**Q. What is something that Ichiro has told you about that and this time of the year?**

JULIO RODRÍGUEZ: Do the best you can. I feel like that's something that Ichiro will always say, just do the best you can, control what you can control, and there is always room to get better. There is always room to get better. But, you know, to be in the moment and control what you can control.

**Q. You also said that Ichiro said -- the lesson of Ichiro was kind of, just because it hasn't been done before doesn't mean it can't be done, and you've taken that. You have studied for this moment, too, though right. You've not just looked within baseball, but you've looked at LeBron and you've looked at Michael Jordan, you've looked at KD, you have been studying for this. How has that helped prepare you for this moment?**

JULIO RODRÍGUEZ: I would say a lot. Because all of those players that you mentioned, and I feel like in baseball too, everybody has been in this spot. At least that guys that have been playing these meaningful games and playing for championships and all that. I just feel like we all just kind of experience the same thing, even though if it's basketball, you can say hockey, you can say track and field, whatever, like I feel like we all experience these things, and the way that we approach it at the end of the day is the same.

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