

AL Championship Series: Mariners vs Blue Jays

Thursday, October 16, 2025

Seattle, Washington, USA

T-Mobile Park

Toronto Blue Jays

John Schneider

Postgame 4 Press Conference

Toronto - 8, Seattle - 2

Q. How would you describe what we saw from Max tonight?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Really good. Dude's 41. I said it before. It's easy to say before the game. He lives for this. You have to respect that and you have to appreciate that. So I thought he actually got better as the game went on, to be honest with you. And the changeup to Naylor, he had really good stuff, and I think it was just almost too hard of a changeup.

But after that, man, breaking ball, curveball, slider, good. Changeup, good. Held his velo. That's why he's going to the Hall of Fame.

Q. Can you walk us through that very brave first walk you made to the mound and what was said?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Sure. I've been waiting for that all year, for Max to yell at me on the mound. I think at that point there's numbers, there's projections, there's strategy, and there's people. So I was trusting people. I think in that moment, you kind of relive every conversation I've had with him over the course of the year, and I trusted him to make pitches. I was joking with him. I've been waiting for that moment since our Zoom call in the off-season before we signed him. Loved it.

There's a little more of that in between to send him back out for the sixth too. Talking about how we don't talk to him when he's starting, I definitely talk to him and that was another fun conversation in the tunnel.

So he was awesome, man. When a guy is in it, when a guy is in the arena performing and doing well, I'm going to trust him to continue to do it.



Q. Given that it was your first experience with the Mad Max that we've been hearing about for so long, was it what you expected?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, it was awesome. I thought he was going to kill me. It was great. (Smiling.) He locked eyes with me, both colors as I walked out. It's not fake. That's the thing. It's not fake. He has this Mad Max persona, but he backed it up tonight. The infielders had a good laugh too out there. And he got the job done.

Q. It looked like he said to you, Yeah, I'm sure before he said, Let's go, and you walked back to the dugout. What did you ask him there?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: I just said -- well, he started the conversation with, I'm good. And I said, Are you sure? And I can't really -- you can probably read lips, but I told him to execute. I'm leaving you in, I'm leaving you in to execute, and he did.

Q. All season you guys have had offensive contributions from really up and down the lineup and some so-called unexpected sources. Tonight to get that from Andrés, from IKF, just what does that mean for your group and your win today?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Just us. It's really cool that it's been two nights in a row with Gimi. Today's game, it was just, like, people. You know what I mean? It's just trusting Izzy to be ready and play, and he responded. I'm really happy for him, and I'm really happy for Gimi who has grinded all year. All of a sudden you get a lot of recognition when you're in the postseason, and he's having phenomenal at-bats.

So really it was another -- it was kind of like yesterday where it was up and down. Guys taking walks, a couple homers, and then Gimi, again, off Hancock there with second and third. Barg had good at-bats. It was kind of just kind of what we do.

Q. Can you talk about the pick-off from Scherzer? It's not something we have seen from him very recently. Was that a play that he put on or Kirky or how did that



go?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: That's DeMarlo. I think I heard from Ken Rosenthal it was his first one in nine years. The thing about Max is he really understands the game. I think when the disengagement rules kind of came in, he was always a guy that kind of just lobbed the ball over to first, didn't really care about the running game, did a good job holding, varying his times, but it's something that he's worked on it. He's 41 and he's still working on his craft. So that was a huge momentum point. I think it was 3-1 at the time with Cal at the plate. It was by design. Big play right there.

Q. Going back to that Mad Max moment, what does that do for your team when they see that warrior kind of say, I want to be in the game? How does that pick up the rest of your team in that moment?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, I think it's the real thing. Even going back to Shane coming in an off the mound in the first inning yesterday and saying, Hey, pick me up. I've got this. These guys have earned the moment a little bit. I think when you sign a guy like Max, when you acquire a guy like Shane, these are the moments you do it for.

So it definitely -- I think everyone in the dugout was kind of waiting for that moment. When you sign Max Scherzer, you're kind of waiting for that moment. So it definitely gave us a little bit of a jolt when he came in. And all that aside, I'm just really -- I'm proud of the way Max has handled everything, from getting himself right physically, being left off the roster last series against the Yankees and handling it like a pro, and then coming out and performing like this. So that was big for everyone going forward.

Q. I don't know if it's anything, but looked after the third inning when Max came off the mound, went down in the dugout, and it looked like Pete Walker tried to talk to him, and Max didn't really want anything to do with it. Was that just nothing?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: No, that's nothing at all. You never really know when he's coming off the mound if he's going to be in a good mood or a bad mood. But, no, that was absolutely nothing.

Q. Talk about Addison in right field, first time in weeks, and what he did today.

JOHN SCHNEIDER: I mean, the diving catch -- we expected him to handle the routine play, but the catch to his left, the catch going back, we've asked a lot of this dude for a young guy, and he does his work, he knows that we can move him around. It's not easy to do. So it's two huge plays. He had good at-bats too. The last couple games

have been good for him, and I think that it's a luxury that -- he makes those plays, and you take him out for defense and you kind of upgrade on paper.

So I think it's roster construction, but it's also him doing the work to be ready for it.

Q. You had been down in series before a couple times and not gotten back to even like have you in this one. I know you've talked a lot about, like, the players learning from those experiences, kind of learning to flip the page. What did you learn from those experiences that might have helped you guys get back to this moment in the series?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: I mean, if you treat this like a regular season, which is hard to do, you can kind of move on and turn the page and say, what's important now? I've said it a million times to you guys this year. They're living it and they're doing it. So I think we've been through some stuff over the past three, four years as a group as the guys that have been here pretty consistently. I think we kind of just got to the point where we just said, okay, we got to change the way we approach it.

But I give all the credit to the guys, veteran guys, young guys, really believing in it. Again, it's one game. The game's over. We got another game tomorrow. And that's how they approach it. That's what they were talking about before I came in here. So as nice as it is right now, and you even the series, it's we got a game tomorrow, and you got to get back after it.

Q. Vlady didn't see his typical results in Games 1 and 2 and, obviously, the last two games he has. You know his swing so well and him so well. How have you seen him process a couple tough games in a different way now maybe than he has in the past to have the kind of night that he had tonight?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, it's kind of like the evolution of Vlad this year. Let's be honest, with the contract comes a lot of extracurriculars. And he's met them head-on. I said it before the game. I think the pitches he's swung at in Games 1 and 2 were the right pitches to swing at, but he was a little bit overanxious and it ended up leading to some ground balls. I think Vlady a couple years ago might have been a little stubborn. Vlady right now in this moment in 2025 has the ability to kind of take a step back, process what he's doing, what the results are, and leans into his teammates and leans into his coaches, and he's made some adjustments.

So that was a big swing to get the run back there after they -- after Geno hit the RBI single. That was a big swing just

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

from momentum and who they have coming in. But Vlad has come such a long way in -- I don't want to say a short period of time. It's kind of been building up to this moment, I think, for Vlad and he's in a good spot right now.

Q. Forgive me if I saw this incorrectly, but when you pulled Max, it looked like you took the game ball and slid it into your back pocket there. Curious what the thought process was there with the game ball?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Don't know. Maybe someone told me to keep it from the dugout, authenticators, you know. I don't know if it's a fossil, if you will, going into a museum. I don't know if there's any significance to it, so I just put it in my pocket and brought it in the dugout.

Pretty cool for Max to have. He's got a lot of stuff on his mantle, but I don't know if he wanted it.

Q. Before the game, can you walk us through the decision with Tony, and how tough was that?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Really tough because when you're making the decision, you're ending his season. He felt worse today coming in after playing last night. So you're weighing out the risk-reward of do you play a man or two short for a day or two, which is not what we want to do. It's not how we're built.

So it was hard. But he's been really transparent with how he's been feeling too. So tough decision. It was one of those years for him, really, season's in general. But his job right now is to support everyone. He's going to continue to do that.

Q. Can you talk about the lack of home field advantage so far in this series.

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Baseball. Weird. Who knows? We played well here this year. I don't know if the guys think about that. I think they just kind of turn the page to the next game. I can't really explain it. We love playing at home. The first two games didn't work out that way. But I love the way we have come back here the last two games and we got to keep it going tomorrow.

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