

MLB World Series: Dodgers vs Blue Jays

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Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Rogers Centre

Toronto Blue Jays

Max Scherzer

Pregame 2 Press Conference

Q. When you were a free agent, you chose Toronto over many teams. You saw something in this team to get to this point. What was it?

MAX SCHERZER: Just had a lot of conversations with Chris Bassitt and Hunter Mense, and really with Bass. He has a really good pulse on what this clubhouse and team needed. And we were talking kind of throughout the whole off-season and when things started moving in my direction, it just kind of seemed to all click, that getting back with him would be a great thing for me and that this was a team that could really go somewhere. They just needed to make a few adjustments. But he was really kind of the eyes and ears of what this team could be.

Q. You had some rest in between your last start and the regular season. You were outstanding in Seattle. Did that rest help? And going in Game 3 seeing the Dodgers, upfront seeing what they do in Game 1 and Game 2, does that help?

MAX SCHERZER: So two questions, there. Yeah, in terms of rest, it was really about getting fully healthy, getting over all the little ailments I had so that I could be getting through the ball again and throwing the ball as well as I can. So yeah, I used that time in the Division Series to get fully healthy and it felt like that benefited me. So ready to go out there and compete in Game 3.

In terms of -- anytime you have a chance to watch what's going on, you can always learn something. You just watch the game and you can see how everybody's playing the game, on both sides of the ball, us, them, everybody. So it's so much fun to watch. Last night was crazy, obviously, but tonight will be as well. So try to watch as well as I can and come up with a game plan obviously in the next day.

Q. Is there an element of unfinished business for you given the way your last World Series start ended?



MAX SCHERZER: I wouldn't characterize it like that. I'm here to compete. I'm here to win. I wouldn't be looking backwards at all for any motivation. I have plenty of motivation. I'm here to win and I've got a clubhouse full of guys who want to win too. So we're a great team and that's the only thing I need to think about.

Q. You've played for so long and on so many great teams, World Series teams, before. There appears to be, from what we see, like, a unique closeness to this clubhouse. I know all winning teams say they love each other, but has this one been different for you?

MAX SCHERZER: I mean, it definitely has the same type of feel as some of the great teams I've been a part of. Definitely our clubhouse is very tight-knit. It's a very well-functioning unit. Top to bottom, everybody involved. It's a very unique experience and I love that I'm here and getting to be a part of it.

Q. The Dodgers obviously will know you pretty well, still a lot of people there from when you were there. What have you learned about the line between trying to out-plan the people who are trying to out-plan you, and then also sticking to your strengths and making sure you kind of do what you do best?

MAX SCHERZER: Yeah, it's the ultimate chess game. They're making moves. I'm making moves. That's just baseball. But it's been like that for years for me now. I understand how everybody wants to attack me, how I want to attack them. At the end of the day, you got to go out there and compete and you got to throw strikes. It kind of gets back down to the basics. So you can try and make it as advanced as you want, but a lot of times it's the more simple approach that works better. You got to go out there and want to win.

Q. There are a lot of different ways to try to get four wins in seven games in a postseason series. You've been through a few different ones on the teams that you've been a part of. What sticks out to you about the way that you guys are trying to match the roster to win those four in seven?



MAX SCHERZER: I don't know. I mean, this is baseball. Every time you think you can figure out baseball and put it into an equation, baseball has a funny way of shaking that up and making you look at the game in a whole different way. You can't, you know, make baseball into an equation. You just got to come every single day ready to play. Anything can happen. The ball can bounce any which way and you got to go out there and make your own luck.

You just got to get in these moments and feel the moment and rise to it and go out there and make a play, make a pitch for your team. That works more than trying to figure out a way to navigate. It's really simple. Win four games.

Q. After Game 7 of the ALCS, you and I spoke, and you said it was an honor to get to return to the World Series. How did it feel when John Schneider confirmed that you would once again start in a World Series?

MAX SCHERZER: Awesome. I mean, this is what you play for, to be able to get to this spot, to get to this moment, to have a shot at it. You just think about all -- throughout your whole life all the different things that have unfolded, and just so fortunate to have another crack at this. I mean, there's so many great players that have never gotten to a World Series, so many great players where they only have one World Series. With Donnie on our team, you know, he's gone his whole career and now this is his first moment.

So I absolutely respect playing in a World Series, what that means, and absolutely cherish these opportunities. So, yeah, when I get a chance to get the ball, man, this means everything.

Q. With the way Louis has been throwing the ball and Jeff throwing the ball in the postseason and with Chris joining the mix down there, how do you feel about the way the bullpen complexion looks, especially in this best of seven scenario here?

MAX SCHERZER: Yeah, it's really just whoever next man up. We believe in everybody down there. It could be anybody. Everybody that's down there, you know, they can get a pocket, they can get some batters, and when they come into the game, everybody on the bench is believing that they're going to get the job done. So it's great to see those guys having success and we got to go to go out there and continue to have more.

Q. Can you describe the value of Alejandro Kirk and his development in this team?

MAX SCHERZER: What Kirky does -- obviously, he does

it on both sides. He does it with his defense. He's back there grinding, catching, calling a game, doing all that. But he's also lethal at throwing out base runners. He does it on the defensive side, but then also his bat. His bat is such an important bat in our lineup. He can have long at-bats, he can hit the ball kind of to all ball fields. He's a tough, tough out.

What he does as a catcher, I mean, he grinds so hard to be back there every single day. He means a lot to our ball club and it's awesome to see.

Q. Joe Carter is going to throw out the ceremonial first pitch tonight, and you're one of a few Major Leaguers for whom his home run is in living memory. What do you remember about that?

MAX SCHERZER: (Laughing.) I know, I'm one of the old ones. These next generation guys are so young (laughing).

Unfortunately, growing up it wasn't a memory necessarily of mine. I was a little bit too young at the time to know it. I grew up in St. Louis. I was just a Cardinals fan. So for me, I only knew Cardinals baseball at the time and Ozzie Smith.

Unfortunately, I didn't watch it live, but obviously, as a baseball fan, I've seen that home run so many times. It's such a special moment. Can't wait to see him throw out the first pitch and see how the fans, how that jumps up the fans. Man, I mean, it's the biggest homer in MLB history. It's a great way for the fans to be able to enjoy it.

Q. Given that, people can define their careers with one moment in the World Series, like Carter did there, like Addison Barger might have done last night, what do you think about these, this stage and the ability or the chance for something like that to happen for one player to do something that they're remembered for, for the rest of their lives?

MAX SCHERZER: That's what's awesome. That's what's awesome about baseball at this stage. You got the two best teams in the world going at each other, with everybody watching, with all the chips on the table. So that's what makes you excited as a ball player, that you get this type of opportunity to play in this type of environment. There's nothing like it. There's nothing like it in the world that can give you this type of adrenaline rush. We're all just excited to be part of this, grinding at this together, and we believe that it could be anybody on our team that could have that type of moment.

Q. I covered Joe Carter's homer, just to show you how



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old I am. Your relationship with Clayton, how ironic is it that you're in Donnie's first World Series, and Clayton's last, and what do you feel about that, and have you spoken to Clayton?

MAX SCHERZER: Yeah, Kershaw and I are great. We have a great relationship. But right now it's two teams, we're competing, we're both playing for a ring right now. So, you know, obviously I wish him the best. I always think highly of him and everything he's done in his career, and how, what he's meant to the Dodgers. Nothing but respect for everything that he's done.

Donnie, to be able to get an opportunity like this, so happy that I get to be on his team and have this moment with him.

Q. You talked about sort of all the things that you've been through, all the things that come with this stage. When you take the mound now, what types of things do you still have to manage, or are there some butterflies or some adrenaline rushes, or are you just, "been there, done that" so much that you can just pitch? What's it like for you?

MAX SCHERZER: Probably a little bit of a culmination of everything there. It's more I've been in these moments and I've gotten beat. I know what happens when you lose. When you lose you got to really reflect upon yourself and think about all the different things, why you lost. So those are the things that you learn the most about, so you don't make the same mistake twice.

So, going out there and competing, you got to be have kind of a wherewithal of different things of how the game can unfold, and what are different things that you can get beat on. So it's kind of, I would throw that element into the mix as well.

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