

MLB World Series: Dodgers vs Blue Jays

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Rogers Centre

Toronto Blue Jays

Joe Carter

Pregame 2 Press Conference

Q. I was wondering, watching this team, if you've see any similarities between this team here and your '92 or '93 teams?

JOE CARTER: Very much. A lot of similarities. One thing that we had in '92 and '93 it was the cohesiveness of the team playing together. And even though we had great players, everybody pulled for one another. So we had the great chemistry in the clubhouse, on the field, and every day it was somebody different. It wasn't just one guy you could focus on.

And what this 2025 Blue Jays team has -- I mean, you got from 1 through 9 everybody coming through. When you have nine guys -- and not just nine guys, but you got the bench players too, for them it's a lot of fun to come to the ballpark, it's a lot of fun for them to cheer for one another, and those are things that's going to propel you to a championship.

Q. The current team talks about how close they are and how tight-knit they are. I'm wondering what the enduring bonds are like with the '92 and '93 clubs, and if you guys see each other, if you talk to each other, what that's like.

JOE CARTER: Well, we don't call each other all the time. But, you know, I've seen Devon White a lot of times. Dave Winfield, I'll speak to him a lot. Dave Stewart, I'm probably the closest to because when he hired me in Arizona. So I talk to him quite a bit.

But whenever we get back together, like, we've had a couple of golf tournaments, and it's amazing when you have 25 guys get on the bus 30 years later and they take their same seats. It's like the same mannerisms that we had back then we still have and it's like we haven't left each other.



So, no, we're not going to be ones that call everybody on the phone and talk all the time. No, not in this day and time. You kind of text and hit a little shout out, but when we see each other, it's like we never left.

Q. You guys obviously repeated there '92, '93 and only the Yankees have done it since. It's been 25 years. What did you find to be the challenges of repeating, and how were you guys able to pull it off?

JOE CARTER: I think one of the things that was very tough -- the reason why it's tough to repeat is because sometimes you become complacent when you reach the pinnacle and you reach the top, and then the next year there's kind of a letdown because all of a sudden you've achieved what you wanted to achieve to win a World Series. And what we did that was different from '92 to '93 is that we had, I think, 12 or 13 new players, and so it was a different team. And Paul Molitor was on that team. So it was us saying, okay, Molitor has not won a ring, future Hall of Famer, and so that was our drive, to bring Paul Molitor, because opening day -- when they're handing out the rings opening day '93, it's tough when you're all happy and you got 12, 13 new guys and they're just drooling out the mouth and we're like, Hey, this will be different for you guys next year, and the fact that you were defending champions, everybody knows that and every team comes and they have their A game, and it's very hard to be up for 162 ball games because every team is coming at you.

So you got to be on your Ps and Qs and you got to go out there because everybody is wanting to beat the defending champions and that's why it's so tough.

Q. When you won -- they were also the Montreal Expos, but it was still Canada's first two championships, what did you learn in the years after about how much those teams meant to Canada and for Canada to win the World Series twice?

JOE CARTER: Well, it meant that if you close your eyes and swing hard and hit a home run, they will love you for the rest of your life. (Laughing.) I mean, not just here in Toronto. What has really made my life complete was you can go from as far east as Nova Scotia and as far west as Vancouver and it's all -- it was all about the Blue Jays, and

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it was all about Canada, and that has a warm place in my heart.

So you're not just playing for a city. You got the Dodgers. They're playing for L.A. You know, they're not playing for the whole U.S. They're playing for Los Angeles. Toronto, totally different. You're playing for all of Canada. Let me tell you, it's a lot of fun.

Q. Speaking of home runs, I'm just curious where you were the other night for Game 7 for George Springer's home run, what kind of feelings, emotions, did you have for that moment specifically and just the whole night with the team finally clinching that World Series berth?

JOE CARTER: You know, I finally felt how my wife felt and how the fans felt watching a game because I couldn't do anything about it. So I was at home in my theater all by myself watching the game, and I was sitting in the same seat, and after the first two guys get on the 7th inning, I'm like, man, this is tough. My heart's racing about -- it's beating about 10,000 beats a second, and George comes up, and I'm like -- and at the time I had been texting John Smoltz, and so I said -- at the bottom of the 7th, I said -- when the two guys got on, I said, Looking for a hero, because as players, we always say we're looking for that front page story, for a star to come out, a red-light player. And Smoltz texted back and goes, Well?

And then Springer hits the home run and it's just me. My wife is upstairs because she can't take it. I'm in the theater, and I'm jumping up and down, I'm hitting the wall. It was as if I had relived the whole thing because it was just that big because it's been 32 years and now it's like, they can stop talking about the '92 and '93 Jays getting to the World Series and now they have something to put their hats on now because this is their time and their moment.

Q. You touched on it briefly, but the home run you hit, I mean, as much as you've done in your -- as much as you did in your career, and 700, hundred-RBI seasons, or whatever it was, you're going to be remembered forever for that one home run. How did that swing change your life?

JOE CARTER: One of the things it did on the negative side, it took away from what I had done the other years because when people first think of Joe Carter, they think of the home run, and that's it. And you said seven. I think it was nine or ten.

Q. I said 700.

JOE CARTER: Oh, 700, yeah. So the 10 years of a

hundred RBIs, those things, I think it diminished because they will think about just the home run, and I like to think that I was more than just a guy that hit one home run in the World Series.

But on a positive standpoint, I mean, it's what every kid dreams of. It's what everyone sits there and thinks about. It's only happened two times in the history of the game, and the first time it happened was the year I was born, 1960. And then it happens 33 years later. I say a lot of things about destiny. The bat that I hit the home run with, the model number was J93. So I look at it as Joe 1993.

So those things kind of -- as you get out of the game, you look for things like that. But it was a moment that will live with me the rest of my life and it's a moment I'm very proud of.

Q. How do you think that might affect George Springer, Addison Barger with their big swings in the last week and how their lives might change?

JOE CARTER: Well, they won't be able to go too many places (laughing), that's for sure. But I think it's going to really affect them in a positive way because as a player, when you have success like that, you can build off of that. I'm a firm believer that when you're approached in those situation, that you're able to come through in later situations.

A point I know that I can take is I think I had hit -- before that home run to win the World Series, I think I had had one game-winning home run my career. The next year, I believe I had three or four game-winning home runs, because you can be in those situations and you can think back and it's all about tunnel vision and focus and you say, I've done this before.

So really it takes the pressure off you because you know that you have the ability to succeed and you go out there and it's like I've done this before on the biggest stage, this is nothing. It just makes the other things a little bit more easier.

Q. John Schneider told us that after the game, you had the opportunity to spend some time with him and some of the coaches. What was that like for you in sort of the immediate afterglow of the win? And further to that, what do you think of the job John is doing with this current group?

JOE CARTER: Are you kidding me? No, it was fun because, you know, as alumni of the Blue Jays, I mean, I'm ecstatic for them. I mean, this is awesome. And to go in there and see the faces that they had and the smiles on

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their face, I mean, this is what baseball is about. This is the time to have fun. And I let some of the guys know. I said, Look, there's 28 teams at home watching you play. You don't have to worry about what the next series is. You don't have to worry about being tired because you got the whole off-season to rest. I said, You've reached this point in the World Series, you're here, and now the only thing is you want to enjoy it, you want to embrace it, and you want to have the most fun you can possibly have and lay everything on the line out there. You do whatever it takes to help your team to win the ball game, and if that means hitting behind the runner, if that means giving yourself up, all those things are conducive to winning.

And the Dodgers, great team. Blue Jays, great team. They're all playing great and it's going to be one heck of a series.

Q. When you get to the World Series, players do whatever it takes. There's been things written about Bo Bichette having to play second base, a position he hasn't played in years. You can kind of relate to that with maybe having to play first. And Paul Molitor, you mentioned as well too. What's it like for the players? And do you remember those positional switches that you had to do?

JOE CARTER: You know what? My father always told me growing up -- and I can thank him for that because he told me, If you can play more than one position, then it's going to be hard for them to get rid of you. So I remember, God rest his soul, Pat Corrales was the first manager that put me at first base, where I was playing in Cleveland, and he asked me -- you know, because I was platooning with a left-handed hitter and he said, Have you ever played first base before? And I thought about what my father was saying, and I said, Yes.

I had never played first base in my life, but I knew it would get me a chance to get some more playing time. So the next day I had a glove, a Mike Ivie first base glove, and next thing you know I'm playing first base in the big leagues. And now here it is 1992 and the first game, you know, Dave Winfield, we're playing in Atlanta, so I'm playing first base. And the next day, Game 1, I'm playing first base. Game 2, I'm playing left field. And in Game 3, we come back to Toronto and now I'm back in my position, right field.

So it gives the manager a lot of fluctuation where he can plug in here, plug in there. So Bo playing second base, at this time, you do -- if they had told me to catch, I would have caught because it's to the point of where do you need me the most? I'll do whatever you need because it's not about me. It's about the team and it's about your legacy.

Q. To your point about the type of quality players on that team, you had four Hall of Famers on that team. The Yankees in the '90s have two. The guy that put together all of this, Pat Gillick, Hall of Fame, and your guy who made the great call on you, Touch 'em all, Joe, Tom Cheek, he's a Frick winner. That's a pretty amazing legacy. And we're not even talking about, like you mentioned, Stew and the type of people -- Fernandez who was on the second team, I mean the type of talent that was on those teams what Pat put together was really pretty incredible.

JOE CARTER: Well, you have to tip your hat, Pat Gillick and Paul Beeston, to this day, I mean, this franchise was bar none one of the best ones, the way they carried themselves. I can remember the class in which they had and when I was a free agent after the '92 World Series we had along conversation, myself and Pat Gillick and Paul Beeston. And when they made me a contract offer, I said I wanted a no-trade clause. And Beeston says, he says, No, we don't do that. And I said, Okay, why not? He said, Because all those years everybody would have a no-trade clause it would include the Toronto Blue Jays. And he said, I don't want to do something to somebody else that I don't like being done to myself. And I respected that. I respected the way they did that. Some of the players that got released, they just didn't send them an e-mail or a text or give 'em a call. They flew down there and talked to those players. So you have a lot of respect for those guys and what they put together. So we owe a lot to Pat Gillick and Paul Beeston. Like you say, Gillick in the Hall of Fame, to make that trade back in 1990, December 6, 1990. I mean, his wife almost kicked him out of the house. She said, You need to get back home before you just ruin the team. But unbeknownst to her it was one of the best moves he made.

Q. What do you think about the way the game was evolved since then? It's a completely different playoff system, a lot of different rule changes, analytics has kind of taken over the sport. What's your take on all that?

JOE CARTER: What I like about the game is the fun and the way these young kids celebrate. In a special moment, like in the World Series, back when we played, we didn't celebrate like that. If you showed the pitcher up, you hit a home run, and you're pointing to the dugout, beating your chest, taking your time around the bases, next at-bat you were going to be eating some dust. That's the way it was back then.

But this is a different day and different time, and what these guys do now, they love to celebrate, and I see them



as having fun. And that's the game. That's what these kids know, they're being imitated, and I say, hey, you go out there, you have some fun, play the game the right way.

With analytics -- analytics is tough. I did a game last year with the Blue Jays and the Tigers as the analyst, and they gave me a stack of notes that were like the L.A. phonebook, and I'm like, What is this? And these are all the statistics, you know, leverage, the hard hit balls, the spin rate, the drop rate.

I'm like, Wait a minute, I want runners in scoring position, scoring runs, and getting the guys in. I said, I don't care about all that other stuff. It's like what are you doing to win the ball game? And that's the scoring runs and keep the runs from scoring.

So I think it's turned into a numbers game, and that's what this game has evolved to, so you have to go with the way it's being played now. I look at the scoreboard, I can't read the scoreboard now. I mean, I'm looking for stuff and there's 19,000 things on the scoreboard and as a hitter, I'm like, make it simple, see the ball, hit the ball, run, catch the ball, throw, let's go home.

Q. Obviously you're throwing out the opening pitch tonight, I'm sure you're going to get a very warm reception from Blue Jays fans, but what kind of feelings, emotions do you think that's going to bring up for you?

JOE CARTER: Oh, I mean, I've had the emotions for 32 years. I come back here so often. I have my own golf tournament here I've had for the last 16 years. I go to a lot of Raptors games. So you get that. I get that wherever I go here in Toronto, which is great. They just appreciate what I did. And like I tell them, I didn't do it myself. I just happened to come up in that situation because I was the next guy in line. And I told the guys that, you don't do it, then, hey, I love being in that position. I want to be in the spotlight.

So for me to go out there and do that, and what the fans have meant here, what they have done here, tonight is not going to be any different. It's going to be a ruckus crowd. It's going to be loud. I wish I could go back and be Ozzie Smith right now because I said I would kind of run out there and do a back flip with the round-off, you know, a tuck. But at 65, no, it's going to be a walk out there (laughing). But it's going to be fun.

Q. Wondering if you can share your thoughts on Vladdy and his progression to become the leader of this franchise and his performances during this postseason.

JOE CARTER: You know what? To have success, I think you have to go through adversity because adversity, you see what you're made of. And if you go back to the postseasons they have had before, I think they didn't score any runs, they didn't get any hits. I remember the series against the Twins, I think, what, they scored one run. So that failure and that adversity makes you better.

And I know Vladdy coming in with the big contract and everything and sometimes you tend to do too much because you try to live up to that contract. You can't live up to that contract. To me, no one's worth \$700 million, \$500 million. But you learn to put those things aside, and you learn from what got you -- you learn from your mistakes, and you learn from those bad times you had. And what you have to realize is that one man can't do it. So, once you rely on your teammates -- and that's what I love about Vladdy. You never saw him with his head down. He's the first one out of the dugout, he's jumping over the fence and everything. He's the big cheerleader, even when he was going bad. And that's what you want to see from your team leaders. Anybody can be a great person when they're going good, but how are they when they're going bad. And that's the part I tell little kids, I said, Don't worry about being the best player, worry about being the best teammate. If you can be the best teammate, then everybody around you will follow. So that's what you need to do, because you get everybody collectively. And I think Vladdy realized that, you know, he was struggling going down the stretch. But you know what, he never gave up. He never stopped smiling. And his teammates picked him up. Well that's what baseball is all about, picking up somebody. Pitcher makes a mistake, the hitters go, Hey, we got you. Defense makes a mistake, pitcher says, Hey, don't worry about that error, I got you. And that's what they're doing. They have basically 26 guys, and every day it's somebody different. I mean, Ernie Clement is like, he's, he looks like Paul Molitor. The shortstop, I mean, guys -- Varsho. I mean, Barger, he's coming off people's couches and hitting grand slams because, you know what, his lease is up. So those things that you don't really know about, but that's the part of baseball. But it's like, I love it, because it's the team coming together and, like I say, World Series, this is all about having fun.

Q. You just touched on this, but we were talking earlier today about this year's team being the Glue Jays. You were on some incredible teams, great talents. How important are those guys who do the dirty work, don't get the headlines, when you're trying to make it to the top of the mountain?

JOE CARTER: Oh, you've got to have those guys. One thing I've learned over the years, you know, at times I really



didn't appreciate the job that Pat Borders did. Because Pat was '92 MVP, but he kind of got lost in the shuffle. But I'm like, he blocked balls. I mean, he threw runners out. He got in there, he would get nicked up every single game. So you need guys like that. Because you're going to have your superstars, you're going to have those three and four players -- like you say, we had four Hall of Famers. But the other guys, they have to make up the team, too. And when you get those guys on board -- because they see how the clubhouse leaders are, the guys who play every day, they watch them perform, then they're going to bring their game up. And when you, my father always told me that, You're no better than anybody else, but nobody's better than you. So you treat everybody the same. Whether they're a rookie, a veteran, this is about us, this is about our legacy. And the more we play together, the better we play together, the more we succeed. Because when you win a World Series, there's enough of the pie to go around for everybody. And 32 years later, I'm still enjoying a piece of that pie here in Toronto.

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