

MLB World Series: Dodgers vs Blue Jays

Monday, October 27, 2025

Los Angeles, California, USA

Dodger Stadium

Toronto Blue Jays

Ernie Clement

Pregame 3 Press Conference

Q. When you reflect back on your career, a kid from Rochester, New York, Brighton High School, battled for a starting spot on the Toronto Blue Jays and all the success that you're having individually this postseason, what does it mean to you to be performing so well on baseball's biggest stage right now?

ERNIE CLEMENT: Yeah, it's nice to see a lot of hard work and sacrifice pay off. I've always kept the same approach, just play for my teammates and do whatever it takes to win the baseball game that day. So just keeping that rolling.

Q. A lot of the media has dubbed the Toronto Blue Jays the Glue Jays. Is that one of the greatest compliments too?

ERNIE CLEMENT: Yeah, that's awesome. That's a great nickname. I think it's just a great collective effort with everybody that's on our roster and that's been on our roster. It's everybody pulling in the same direction and keeping the boys rolling. It's awesome.

Q. The last many weeks when there's home games and we're at the Rogers Centre, the crowd goes nuts. There's this massive roar. When you're here for the next three days, there's not as much of a roar when you're the visiting team. Will you miss the roar? Does the roar fuel you?

ERNIE CLEMENT: Yeah, the energy that our fans bring, it's a huge piece of the puzzle for this team and we've enjoyed playing at home for the last, you know, couple months. It's just been so cool to see all the people show up and support us. But it will be a little different atmosphere out there today.

Q. You're nominated in two positions, utility and third base for the Gold Glove. What has it meant to you to



work with the guys like Andrés Giménez and Bo Bichette and how much of that work has put you in this position?

ERNIE CLEMENT: Yeah, it's been great. You mentioned Andrés. He's, I think, the best defender in the world. And Bo Bichette works his tail off and has gotten so much better over the last few weeks, few months, and then few years. I've gotten to watch him just grow as a -- turning into a really, really solid defender and it was cool to see him come back and play second base and do a great job for us.

You learn a little bit of something from everybody. Everybody's a different baseball player in their own right, so I've picked little pieces from everybody. It's been awesome.

Q. We've heard from you guys about your confidence in each other. We've heard from sort of the national media about how you guys are kind of unknown. I don't know if you heard back in the first round -- I think at some point when you were having that big day against the Yankees, somebody said Ernie Clement, nobody's ever heard of this guy. How do you react to that level of under-doggedness of people just being surprised to find out about the Blue Jays?

ERNIE CLEMENT: Yeah, I think it's great. I've been overlooked a lot over the course of my career, so that's nothing new there. So I don't mind that one bit. When you fly under the radar and you play really, really, well people start to pick up on it. But yeah, I would rather be under the radar. I think it's great and I'm used to it.

Q. What do you think about being here for the World Series in this historic place, one of the oldest stadiums in the game and there's so much Dodger history?

ERNIE CLEMENT: Yeah, I'm a big baseball history guy. I absolutely just love that part of the game. When you get to play at Boston in Fenway Park and Wrigley and all these old stadiums, it's -- there's just so much cool baseball history that's happened over the course of time. I'm honored to be a part of that, and you don't take it for granted out there on these really cool, just baseball places.

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I'm really excited to get out there.

Q. Your ability and your team's ability to make contact is certainly -- both pretty well above league average. From your perspective, is that something that you have fostered at earlier levels of baseball or is it something that can be taught, developed, and nurtured at the highest level of the game?

ERNIE CLEMENT: Yeah, that's always been a strength of mine. There's been times throughout my career where I've had people tell me, Oh, we want you to hit for more power and all this stuff, getting away from my strengths, and over the last few years, I've realized that had I just -- I need to lean into those strengths and I've kind of just gone all in on the contact thing.

So I think it works for a lot of guys, and I think it's no accident that our front office and our coaches have put together a team of guys who can make contact. It's something that we've bought into and it's turned into our team identity and our offensive identity, so I think we're going to continue to lean into that.

Q. You may have answered it in that question somewhat, but what was it about -- what has it been about Toronto these last three years that's been able to help you establish yourself, whereas Cleveland, and I know Oakland briefly, just didn't see something in you?

ERNIE CLEMENT: Yeah, I think -- well, first of all, I wish I would have played a little bit better for those two previous teams. Cleveland, I got drafted by them. I love that organization, I love the people there. I wish I had taken better -- done better with that opportunity.

Then Oakland, it just didn't really work out. It wasn't the right fit. I can't blame 'em. I didn't exactly play great. It was a chance for me to get some perspective and kind of look myself in the mirror and say, all right, what do I need to do better, how can I not let an opportunity pass if I get another one. Like I said, I looked in the mirror and made some changes, and I'm just so grateful for the opportunity I've gotten here in Toronto. It's everything I could have really ever asked for. I owe it to them to give it my all and, you know, prove 'em right for giving me an opportunity.

Q. I want to ask you a couple questions about Vlad. What's most impressive watching him at the plate, and is there a quintessential kind of Vlad anecdote that you can share that comes to mind?

ERNIE CLEMENT: Yeah, I think he's just such a great hitter. I mean, obviously, like, everybody wants the home

runs and wants him to hit 40 to 50 home runs. But I just -- I think his game is to just be a great, great hitter first and foremost. So I think he's really leaned into that this postseason. He's had five or six home runs, yeah, but, I mean, the average is ridiculous. It seems like he's just hitting the ball hard every single at-bat. It's been fun to watch and fun to be a part of, so I think we just really have to enjoy what he's doing.

Q. Your success has been aggressive by nature. Obviously, at the plate Yamamoto is very different than Glasnow tonight. Does that change for you or same old Ernie?

ERNIE CLEMENT: Yeah, it doesn't change for me. It doesn't matter who is on the mound, I'm going to do my thing. And obviously, you look at the scouting reports, and you'll see what they're good at. But I've learned to just lean into what I'm good at and just stay true to that and let everything else kind of take care of itself. Obviously, Yamamoto was amazing the other night, and Glasnow's pretty darn good too, so we've got to have some good approach and get after it.

Q. In addition to y'all's bat-to-ball skills, there's been a lot of talk about bat speed. Is that something as a team that you guys trained for collectively this year, is to get to that point, and how much do you think that is a part of success?

ERNIE CLEMENT: Yeah, I think the harder you swing, the harder you're going to hit the ball, obviously. So that's something that we monitor, and our hitting coaches are constantly looking at and seeing where we're at. There's different ways, whether it's in the off-season or during a season, where you can kind of keep those numbers up. As you kind of wear down throughout the season, it's normal to kind of have that fluctuate, but it's something that we monitor, and I think anybody can work on swinging a little bit harder.

Q. How do you increase bat speed?

ERNIE CLEMENT: Just having a conscious mind of it and trying to swing the bat harder, I guess. There's different tools you can use to work on it, but it's something that I think I will definitely work on and benefit from.

Q. If you go back to the end of 2023 when you made some of the changes with Matt Hague and you came up and started having success, the way were you hitting then compared to what are you doing now, has there been much change? How would you describe the changes from that point to where you are today?

ERNIE CLEMENT: Yeah, Matt Hague, one of best hitting coaches I've ever had. I love the guy. He kind of got me back on my feet in Buffalo in 2023 after I got DFA'd and released. He was one of the guys that wanted me to lean into my strengths, which is contact. He never was like, Hey, we want you to hit more home runs. That was never something that he told me. He was like, Just be you. Something that he always tells us is just go be athletic in the box, and what that tells me is, like, don't have a whole lot of thoughts going on. Just go in there and try to get your best swing off.

So the less I'm thinking about when I'm hitting, the better, and that's something I've definitely benefited from.

Q. Now similar to that, have there been further adjustments since? How would you describe where you are now compared to then?

ERNIE CLEMENT: Yeah, since then, it's just a lot of minor, minor adjustments. It's nothing big. It's daily adjustments, in-game adjustments, but nothing crazy. It's just little things that I've maybe tweaked along the way, but pretty much the same intent that I had back then.

Q. I was wondering how many tickets you end up leaving for tonight's game and these three games in L.A., and what was it like last night seeing old friends and family?

ERNIE CLEMENT: Yeah, it's been awesome. The support back home and with my buddies and all my family has been pretty amazing to see. I'm very appreciative of that. But the trip out to L.A. is not nearly as easy as it is from Rochester, New York, to Toronto. So I think I still have my four to six tickets or whatever I'm leaving for my immediate family, but I won't have all of the Bills Mafia showing up in L.A., I don't think.

Q. You guys have a lot of players who came over mid season and have made some big contributions, like Shane Bieber, Seranthony Dominguez, and Varland, what's the challenge like for guys like that to come into a new team, and then how do the players already established in the clubhouse kind of help them get acclimated and ready to contribute?

ERNIE CLEMENT: I think you have to give some credit to the front office there. They didn't just get really, really good baseball players, they got really, really good people who fit right in in the locker room. It felt like all those guys came over and just fit right in immediately. It's been a pleasure having everyone of 'em and they have been just awesome.

Q. Forgive me for going back to Oakland and

Cleveland again. But just getting DFA'd and obviously having tough days of your career then, how does that help you kind of appreciate or kind of play loose in this stage?

ERNIE CLEMENT: Yeah, it just goes back to all the failures and the learning that I've had to do over the last however many years. Every one of those failures has taught me a lesson, and I've really learned from all that and just found what works for me. So if none of that happened, I definitely wouldn't be the baseball player or the man I am today.

Q. You talked earlier about how much you enjoy baseball history and being part of it. You know Max is a big part of baseball history. What have you learned about him that maybe you didn't know beforehand? Everybody knows him, but knowing him as a teammate, what have you learned?

ERNIE CLEMENT: Yeah, I've learned just how funny he is to be around. When you watch him on TV and watch him compete you see this fiery edge that nobody wants to mess with. You don't want to come across a guy like that in battle. But being on his team, I've found that he is just an awesome guy. He's turned into a really good buddy of mine. And he is hysterical. I mean, his humor is amazing. I didn't have that, I really couldn't have had an opposite, you know -- he's just hysterical, man, I can't even begin to tell you. The guy is just awesome to be around.

Q. Could you tell us in as many details as you can what it was like, all the circumstances, the first time you met Don Mattingly. What was going through your mind, what you were thinking, did you feel like a little boy, all that stuff?

ERNIE CLEMENT: Yeah, I just thought about my dad immediately, because he was such a -- like we were just big Yankees fans growing up. I heard all the stories about Donnie Baseball and him being a captain of the Yankees. Guys like that are just legends in the game of baseball.

So, one, to meet him was pretty cool. And then, two, to go to work with him every day and just see all the cool experiences that he had in our game, it's been an honor to play for him and be around him. I get to throw all my throws to first base and he's catching 'em in practice and stuff. So it's just been really cool. He's a legend in our game.

Q. Do you feel like a little boy sometimes when you meet someone that you've known about, you don't feel like a mature baseball player. Can you talk about that.



ERNIE CLEMENT: Yeah, I guess. I mean, I'm pretty star struck with a lot of the old timers that you see. Not that he's that old, obviously. But it's just, any time you meet someone who has had the kind of success that he's had, it's really special and something you shouldn't take for granted, because having that kind of success in this game is not easy to do.

So for him to do what he did for as long as he did, it was really cool to meet him and continue to be around him.

Q. Given the closeness of the team and how everybody bands together and loves each other, when you hear George get booed, and not like when he was hurt in Seattle, but just regular booing, I guess, and one would think it's going to be particularly vicious here in L.A., does that motivate you guys? Does it do anything at all?

ERNIE CLEMENT: Yeah, when he gets booed I usually boo as well. Every time we hear the boos I'm up on the top step of the dugout booing him, and telling him he sucks. And then he'll hit a home run and he shuts everybody up. So it's just special to watch him, especially on this stage. He just continues to do it over and over again.

Yeah, I remember watching that Houston and Dodgers World Series and those were some of the best World Series games ever. They were just so exciting. He just continues to get it done on the biggest stage, it's cool to be a part of.

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