

MLB World Series: Dodgers vs Blue Jays

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Dodger Stadium

Toronto Blue Jays

Chris Bassitt

Pregame 5 Press Conference

Q. It seems as though since the beginning of the playoffs, you're walking onto the mound, and it could be a night in June against the Cubs or whatever, how much pride do you bring in bringing that calmness onto the field? It seems like it transmits also to your teammates who maybe are in a situation where there's a little bit of nerves or jitters.

CHRIS BASSITT: Yeah, I would say you live and learn. I mean, I would have to say the 2022 year with the Mets taught me a lot. I didn't think I handled that moment that well, regretted a lot of things that I did in that game, how I approached that game, so then it turns into just a learning experience. And then you add George Springer who's been there, done that, Max Scherzer's been there, done that, Myles Straw, and just a lot of veteran guys, and then you go into the confidence of our group, and it's just like, hey, just play our game and that's it.

So I'm not too concerned about trying to do too much and things like that, so I would say it's just that.

Q. As the ask for you has changed to pitcher in the bullpen as opposed to being a starting pitcher, how has that impacted your routine? Is your routine different?

CHRIS BASSITT: Yeah, I can't mess around with the starters and have a rally beard and things like that anymore, so that stinks. But I love it. I love being around the guys. It's very, very different, obviously, not really understanding the bullpen guys and what makes them go and having conversations with them and seeing them do their preparation and their work. It's just we don't ever overlap, so now getting to see what they go through and what they do and how many times the phone rings and things like that, it's cool, it's cool to see both sides.

Q. John has said many times that you do weird well.



Are you having fun with this? Seemingly it would be a lot of pressure. But are you enjoying it as well?

CHRIS BASSITT: Yeah, I mean, again, I just look back to 2022, and I just prayed many, many, many times to get back in this moment. Obviously, the World Series was the biggest goal, but at the end of the day, it was just, like, give me one more chance. Like, whatever that means, give me one more chance, and sure as heck we got it.

So I'm just trying to have fun in the moment. I'm not trying to go crazy. I'm not trying to be World Series MVP. That's Vladdy and George and all those guys' job to win, but overall, I'm just trying to be me. Whatever they need out of that, I'm willing to do.

Q. As you've watched Vladdy over the course of this month take his at-bats, just from a pitcher's perspective the way you think of things from your vantage point, how have you seen him control at-bats, and how does that impact pitchers who are trying to attack him?

CHRIS BASSITT: Yeah, I mean, I think I talked about this yesterday, I believe. It all blends together. I'm sorry. But there's so many games throughout the year, and the reality is Vladdy is going to probably play every single day unless he really needs a day off. So we have an understanding that Vladdy is going to go 75 percent or Daulton Varsho in center field who has ran 4 miles that game, that sort of thing, is going to go 75 percent.

So we might give up a double or Vladdy might not be able to go first to third, and then his at-bats might be, hey, I'm going for singles and doubles, but then all of a sudden Vladdy's able to turn it into a hundred percent, I'm going full go, and this is kind of what we expect. He doesn't try to do too much, but when he's going full go, man, I don't know there's many players in the world that I would rather have than him.

So I would say it's just the time of year. You have everyone seeing the light at the end of the tunnel, so to speak, of we have three games left. Obviously, when the playoffs start, we don't know when we're going home or how we're going home or whatever it may be, so it's just

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you get everyone's best effort. So, yeah, very happy to have Vladdy on our team.

Q. Opposite question about preparation. What about recovery in this role? How fresh is your arm after pitching two innings?

CHRIS BASSITT: Yeah, I feel good. The good Lord blessed me with not getting too sore. I'm hypermobile when it comes to everything, so it's not so much soreness, it's more so fatigue. But it's the World Series. I don't think fatigue's going to be much of an issue. So I feel good. What that means for our team, we'll see. But overall, the next three games, I'll be ready to throw.

Q. In the recovery, are you doing anything differently with ice and the electric stimulation and the red-light machine?

CHRIS BASSITT: Luckily for us, we basically have every option, and I'm probably using every option, along with a lot of other old guys on our team. So, yeah, I mean, you name it, we're using it.

Q. Is it different pitching every day?

CHRIS BASSITT: No, you have to use it every day. Like, for the most part, like, recovery-wise, like, for me, personally it's cardio and recovery the day after I start, and then overall, I feel pretty good. Now it turns into an every day thing. So it's just more that I have to do, but at the end of the day, it's okay.

Q. You mentioned rally beard. What was the genesis of that?

CHRIS BASSITT: Baseball. Everyone does that, I think.

Q. This season was it specific or --

CHRIS BASSITT: No, that's been going on way before I was born, I'm sure. So, yeah, it's just whenever the offense needs a run, we're going to have one. Unfortunately, I can't now.

Q. When you say you regretted everything about that 2022 start with the Mets, I mean, what specifically should you have done differently or how could you have approached it differently?

CHRIS BASSITT: Yeah, I just felt like I tried to do way too much. I mean, coming from Oakland, yeah, I know I made postseason starts and I've pitched in the postseason, but then you look back and it was like, no, it was COVID, and then it was -- it was just different. And then you threw me

into New York, and I thought I was ready, and then looking back, I was like, dang, I wasn't ready for it. Like, mentally I didn't really know how to prepare for it, physically I did not like where I was at in that moment.

So a lot of the times -- I mean, anything in life, your biggest failures, or whatever you think your failure is, is probably your biggest teaching lesson if you just look at it the right way. So I mean, I know Max has made a ton of adjustments to his stuff. Gausy, me and him talk all the time about what he's doing. Shane going through TJ. George going through his stuff.

Like, you can go up and down our whole entire roster of just us talking to each other about how we need to approach the game and how we need to get our bodies ready and don't make these type of mistakes and things like that. So just being there, understanding it, and failing will teach you a lot, and you just have to listen.

Q. Max said a few days ago that you were a big part of recruiting him to come here. Because you're a little bit of an older player now, do you see yourself when you're part of an organization to be that kind of guy, I mean, at least if you're asked about it, or do you feel like have you more to give like that off the field to just kind of help what a good team should look like or the kind of players you know to bring in to do that?

CHRIS BASSITT: Yeah, I mean, I'm not going to -- I'm not that type of person to ever go to, like, Ross, Mark, or anybody else and say, Hey, we need to go get this guy. But they called me about Max, and then, obviously, I realized they were going after him, and then I went after him really hard (laughing). Yeah, I was calling him a lot, probably a little too much for his liking.

But at the end of the day, I knew what Max brings to a team, and I think there's a lot of teams that don't like Max Scherzers just because he questions everything. Like, he wants to know every little detail from outfield positioning to why you're throwing this pitch to who is playing here to how we controls off-days, and so many organizations, I feel like, don't like to answer questions. They like you to be a robot and say, Yes, sir, and go about your business.

But that's not how Max is. So in knowing that, I thought this is kind of exactly what this organization needs. Like, we need a veteran player that questions everything because I think the more and more you talk through things from a player standpoint to a front office, the better the team is because then the team buys in, the team understands what's going on or why these moves were being made or things like that.



So yeah, I told Ross, This was going to be a headache for you having Max Scherzer, and then I told the pitching staff about him, and I told the coaching staff, like, This is a guy that's going to stir a lot of pots. But everyone was on board for it. Like, I give full credit to Ross and Mark and our entire front office, just saying, this is what we need, this is what we want.

So everyone looked at Max, the 41-year-old that might end up on the IL a couple times, and they don't understand the true value of having that veteran guy that knows what it takes to win, and then he might teach you a thing or two along the way too.

Q. Bullpen units are generally pretty tight-knit groups. What is the process -- especially after a full year, curious what the process has been, like, meshing with that group and sort of how you're spending your time during games.

CHRIS BASSITT: Yeah, I would say for the most part your answer would be -- I mean, your question would be correct in the aspect of bullpens are tight-knit. But we just have something a little bit different here where I kind of walked into a bunch of friends that I've already had, so I am already kind of like constantly messing around with them, talking crap to them, things like that, hanging out with them off the field.

So it wasn't so much of me coming into, like, a new team or kind of thing, so to speak. I knew all these guys, I knew what they do, I understand who they are as people, so it was more so like, hey, like, I'm here to help y'all, whatever that means. Same with Lauer. Let's just go win. It doesn't really matter who does what. Like, I don't care about your stats. Let's go win.

Q. With Max, whether you think you're annoying him or not, he gives you a lot of credit for being one of the reasons why he's here. You guys weren't teammates very long. How did you form that level of bond that you could influence him so much?

CHRIS BASSITT: Yeah, Lou Trevino -- I'm really good friends with Lou Trevino and obviously played with him in Oakland. Lou and Max live really close to each other in the off-season, so they know each other. And Lou called me after he signed him, and he said, Hey, like, I'm sorry -- when I went to New York, and he was like, Hey, like, you two are either going to love each other or hate each other. There's not going to be any in between. Like, you guys are way too similar.

So luckily for me he's one of my best friends. I'll be best friends with him for a long time. So when I realized that

they were going after one of my best friends, I was like, man, like, I need one more crack at this with you. We didn't get the job done in 2022, but, damn, like, if there's any guy -- like, obviously, Gausy is now on that list and Berrios and things like that, but if there's anybody that I want to win a World Series with, I want to win one with Max.

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