

AL Championship Series: Mariners vs Blue Jays

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Rogers Centre

Toronto Blue Jays

Addison Barger

Pregame 1 Press Conference

Q. I know you were born in Washington state. Can you share a bit about your family roots there and how many Mariner games you might have gone to as a young kid?

ADDISON BARGER: Yeah, so originally from the Seattle area. Most of my family is from Everett, so about 45 minutes north. I was a die-hard Mariners fan growing up, went to a few games. I don't think I went to a ton, but when we moved to Florida, I was watching the Mariners every single night, like, my whole childhood.

Q. You've had obviously a wild year starting in Triple-A and getting super hot here and learning what it's like cooling off here and having three hits against the Yankees. How have you kept your focus and kept going, grinding day after day through all the ups and downs you've had personally in the season?

ADDISON BARGER: Yeah, it's a grind. A full season in the Big Leagues, like you said, there's a lot of ups and downs, like a roller coaster ride. I think just trying to stay focused on the work I have and kind of preparing the right way with my hitting coaches, with all the coaches, and just staying competitive and going out and competing. If I don't feel good, some days you're not. You've just got to go out and compete to the best of your ability. That's pretty much how I've done it.

Q. You had a ton of success this year against the Mariners, 7 for 20, slugging .700. What is it about facing these guys that you've been able to harness and have success against?

ADDISON BARGER: I think I just match up probably well against some of their arms. That's probably what my success has come from. That's pretty much it. And just getting hot at the right time, feeling good some days. But that's probably the biggest thing. I just match up -- they



have a lot of right-handed starting pitching. So that's probably mainly what it is.

Q. You weren't here in 2022 when this team went through a pretty tough collapse against the Mariners in the playoffs. A lot of your current teammates were. Have they talked to you at all about that or what they're feeling, if they're looking for redemption, so to speak, coming into this series?

ADDISON BARGER: No, I haven't heard anything about it. I know what happened, but no, I don't think anybody is really talking about it. I think we're just focused on going out and competing and winning the series.

Q. Can you just talk about the atmosphere? John talked about playoff atmosphere and how it's different, how it's changed. You've been here at various points of the season. What's it like for people at home who can't be inside the stadium?

ADDISON BARGER: It's insane here. Obviously, we have a lot of passionate fans and a ton of fans, and they're loud. We can feel them every pitch. Regular season it's more like up and down, like, the crowd gets loud, big play, whatever, but it's pretty consistently energetic. I would say that's the biggest difference. It's just, like, nonstop all nine innings, every pitch, lots of energy.

Q. In Seattle back in May, it felt like that was a turning point for the team in the season. I know you had only been up for a little bit, but it felt like you really got your opportunity there and sort of came into your own. What do you remember about those three games?

ADDISON BARGER: Yeah, that was about the time I started to play a little bit more. I'd just been not really playing a lot. I'd been up maybe a week and a half or two weeks and not really playing, so I had a lot of time to dial in my swing and focus on some things I needed to work on with Pop, our hitting coach. We'd been grinding, and I felt like I was in a good spot to go out and compete, and that's pretty much the biggest thing I remember.

Q. Do you feel like that kind of launched your season



that weekend?

ADDISON BARGER: Yeah, I would say so. Yeah, in a way, for sure.

Q. Can you describe the impact that George Springer has had on you as a teammate, maybe the best advice that he's given you to this point?

A. Yeah, he's given me a lot of advice. I think the biggest thing he tells the young guys and me is kind of take care of your body for the full season, because I kind of go all day every day pretty hard, take a lot of swings, a lot of throws, very intentful.

He'll step in and give me some advice like, hey, don't hit BP today, or you've got to be ready for October, those kinds of things. That's his biggest thing is managing your workload throughout the season because it's obviously a long year and it's not easy to just take a break every now and then. You just want to go, go, go. That's kind of the biggest piece of advice he has.

Q. One more thing on the Mariner connection: Have you ever had a chance to meet Ichiro before?

ADDISON BARGER: I have vaguely, just a little bit, but nothing -- not really. But he was my favorite player growing up, obviously. I've said it lots of times.

Q. Part of the Jays' success this year is being able to reduce the number of strikeouts at the plate. With the success that Vlad had in the Divisional Series, there might be some pitching around. Can you talk about your approach if they pitch around Vlad and go to you?

ADDISON BARGER: Yeah, obviously depending on the situation, I'm going to be aggressive on the pitch I want to hit and take your chances. Hitting is hard, so you just kind of got to hunt a pitch and take a chance. That's the biggest thing.

Q. Is there something that Pop and the hitting staff clicked with you this season? Everybody seems to have a little something when I ask them. What was it for you?

ADDISON BARGER: Yeah, I think it was I'd been work on some very specific things the last couple years that were kind of -- I don't want to say, like, against my natural movements, but that they were harder for me to do, and his big thing was just kind of going back to being myself and kind of swinging how I used to swing in a way.

It was just really simple in that way. He allowed more space to be yourself in your swing and in your movement. That was really helpful for me.

Q. John just told us that Trey is going to start Game 2. Obviously you've seen what he's done so far in this brief time, particularly in the DS. How excited are you to see the next start from Trey?

ADDISON BARGER: Yeah, I'm super excited. I think we all are. He's pretty special. Like to be able to do what he did in the regular season and in the Division Series, it's not something -- it's kind of unrealistic, but he's been able to do it, and it's been amazing to watch, and we're super excited to have him.

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