

AL Championship Series: Mariners vs Blue Jays

Monday, October 13, 2025

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Rogers Centre

Toronto Blue Jays

Anthony Santander

Pregame 2 Press Conference



Q. During your journey recovering from your injury this season, who were the people in the organization that had the most impact on you to help you get healthy and get back to being able to enjoy this postseason?

ANTHONY SANTANDER: To tell you the truth, it's more, like, management, front office, all the way down to the club. The support was there. They were trying to do everything possible for me to -- not just to recover, to get better, physically and mentally, especially when the team was doing good through the season.

Yeah, everybody was a big support for me.

Q. Anthony, it was obviously a long road for you to get back to this point and get ready for the postseason. Your swings over the last few weeks have looked a lot better. How do you feel at the plate compared to where you want to be at this time of the year?

ANTHONY SANTANDER: I mean, my swing is not what I want it to be now, but I feel good overall. It's just more to try to go out there and help the team win somehow, just go out there and compete. It's not time to be thinking about how I feel right now physically. It's more just do whatever it takes to help the team.

Q. Anthony, obviously, it's been -- it hasn't been the easiest first season here with the Jays. How grateful do you feel having this opportunity after such a tough year?

ANTHONY SANTANDER: I mean, very thankful. Very thankful. Thanks to God. Very grateful to have the opportunity to be here in the playoffs. Like you mentioned, it was four months out. It wasn't easy.

But in that way, like I said before, I had the support from the entire organization, my family, who was a huge support. Everybody around me was. I'm very, very grateful to have the chance.

I know it was a long shot, but very grateful to be here in the playoff and try to help the team win some games.

Q. Talk to us about your relationship with Vlady. We know you had a previous relationship before you signed here. But now that you've seen Vlady pretty much every day and the way he's performing, especially in the Division Series against the Yankees, talk to us about that.

ANTHONY SANTANDER: I mean, not surprised at all about Vlady. For me, he's a superstar. He's great. For all the work that he's been doing through the year, seeing it in person this year, it's been an unbelievable experience.

But I mean, sometimes we think about Vlady's style and think about, okay, he's got a great talent. He's going to go 4 for 4 every day. But it's everything behind that, the work ethic that he has every day, the hours that he puts in work. It's been very impressive for me to see that this year.

But yeah, the guy, it's unbelievable.

Q. Anthony, I know you were talking about how you're not worried about how you feel physically, but do you feel like your swings are getting closer to where they are when you're at your best, and does stuff like having those 10-, 11-pitch at-bats show you where you are?

ANTHONY SANTANDER: Yeah, yeah, of course. Especially my bat speed. I'm seeing my bat speed a lot better. Every at-bat it gets better. Not chasing a lot. That's another thing that's helping me out. I don't really want to take -- have an at-bat of 11 or 12 pitches. I want to have two or three so I can hit it hard right away. But that's part of the game.

But yeah, I'm feeling very close to where I want to be.



Q. Just as far as fitting into this clubhouse where everybody seems so close, you were out for four months, but you were around here for a long time. Guys have talked about how people moving in and out just immediately get right into the group. How have you found this group, especially since it's a new team for you?

ANTHONY SANTANDER: It's a lot of satisfaction for me. It's a great group of guys that we've got here, especially when you're out for so long. You can see that, the chemistry here in this clubhouse. Especially you see it not just on the field, you see it off the field, too. Since Spring Training, we've been like this. That was one of the things that we talked about in Spring Training, to remain everybody close regardless of the situation.

It's been unbelievable. The guys have been great with me, and I think we really have a great, great team here.

Q. When you're facing a team whose pitchers are in the strike zone a lot, they don't walk guys, how does that change your approach at the plate compared to pitchers who might be a little bit more erratic around the zone?

ANTHONY SANTANDER: Yeah, definitely it's a team approach, I'll say. When you face a staff like the Seattle Mariners, they attack the zone, pretty much our approach is we've got to become more aggressive versus when you face a staff that's not in the zone, you've got to be more patient, not try to chase.

But Seattle Mariners, I think our approach is being more aggressive since that's what they do in attacking the zone against us.

Q. What's the balance between attacking early to not fall behind in the count versus maybe waiting it out to try to get a better pitch if they're sort of on the edges?

ANTHONY SANTANDER: Definitely you've got to -- first, you've got to control your emotions. You've got to relax and look for the pitch that you're looking for, and then until you get it, if you see something there that's in the zone, then you've got to be aggressive.

Q. You were the big free agent acquisition for this team, and it was a disappointing season. I know injury had a lot to do with it. What would you like to show your teammates and the fan base as well about yourself in this series?

ANTHONY SANTANDER: I'll say it's more determination, not trying to be a hero. It's the playoffs, right? So it's a

team effort. It's not just one individual that's going to win a game.

So yeah, in my case, I'm not trying to prove anything. I feel ready right now, and every time I get the chance to go out there and put good swings, be aggressive, find a way to put good at-bats, and help the team win some games.

Q. I wonder, as you're feeling better with your shoulder, is playing winter ball a consideration to help continue the momentum positive for you or do you think rest is the most important thing for you this winter?

ANTHONY SANTANDER: To be honest with you, I'm just thinking about today's game, focus on that, trying to win the series, and then after that, then I'll sit down and try and think about what's the next step.

Of course the front office as to winter ball leagues, they've got to be involved in that decision. But when we get there, we'll get there. As of right now, I've got to think about the game tonight.

Q. Can you talk about your relationship with Josh Schneider and the level of trust and confidence that he has shown in you?

ANTHONY SANTANDER: It's been a blessing for me having Schneid as a manager. To tell you the truth, it's an interesting relationship. The communication that he has, of course in this case with me, every day it's been a lot for me. We talk about -- he comes to me pretty much every day, how you feeling today? Anything that I can do for you? When you have a manager showing you that he really cares about you, that's very important for me, and I will say for any player.

But yeah, it's been great, the relationship that I have with him.

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