

AL Championship Series: Mariners vs Blue Jays

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Seattle, Washington, USA

T-Mobile Park

Toronto Blue Jays

John Schneider

Workout Day Press Conference

Q. Your team has had success in this ballpark in the past. Fans travel well here. What are your expectations for these next two, potentially three games?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: It's tough to look back awhile ago, right? Kind of two different teams at two different times. I've said it all along, man. I like our chances really any day, anywhere, against anyone. I think off day was good for us today to kind of reset. I think the guys are going to come out knowing exactly what they have to do. Not that we didn't the first two games, but it's a seven-game series, and I think they're excited to play here tomorrow.

Q. Jeff talked earlier a lot about this group and about them as people. From your perspective, how are they right now, and what has it been like both getting here last night and then coming in today?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Late night, but they're good. It's really, really impressive how they kind of just turn the page to the next day, not thinking about Game 1 or Game 2, not thinking about the flight. Thinking about what they needed to do today. They will be ready to do it tomorrow. I know it sounds like a broken record and it sounds really cliché, but I think that they do a really good job of living in the present moment. We talk about it a lot. They have had to do it a lot. I think where they are right now is exactly where they have been after a couple tough losses and a long travel day.

Q. Is that living in the moment, staying present something that they have developed over the course of the year or do you guys just have a lot of guys on your roster that naturally have that kind of personality?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: I think a little bit of both, just going back to earlier in the year, just myself, staff, and players talking about what's important right now. What is important



now to win. When you live that out, it becomes part of your day, it becomes part of your process.

It helps that we have guys that can say, let's turn the page. But we talk about it pretty regularly. When the guys talk about it pretty regularly, it's kind of who you become.

Q. You faced Kirby twice last year, no times this year. What kind of challenge does he present?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Similar to all their pitchers, you know, he's got good stuff, good fastball, can locate it up and down. It's a staff that kind of runs into each other in terms of their profile, in terms of their stuff. So he's going to come after you. Looking at these first two series, I think they have done a good job of being in the zone, but kind of in safe areas.

When you look at ball-in-play quality, it hasn't been exactly where we wanted to, so I think we just have to be really deliberate and aware with him tomorrow and the rest of the series.

Q. Tony has the most career A-Bs against him. What's his status with his back?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Feeling better today. He was available to hit yesterday, so anticipating him being good to go tomorrow. We'll check in with him later tonight and tomorrow morning. But I think it was one of those things where his back kind of locked up in the morning. Unfortunate, but I think he should be all right.

Q. Would this be one of those days that you mentioned earlier that George Springer might be playing the outfield? Would Tony be a DH for you, possibly?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: I think just see how he feels, really, in the morning and do what we think is best for both of them. We'll make that call tomorrow morning.

Q. I was talking to DeMarlo, and he said he was looking -- when he's looking at the players and when's looking around in the clubhouse, he's looking for



normalcy, and for the most part, he's seeing it. Is there anything in particular that you're looking for and hoping to see?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Basically the same thing. We talk about that a lot as a staff. You're always taking the pulse of your team whether it's good times or bad times, and you look for them to just do the same thing. When you're playing every day, you want to do the same thing every day. Are there ways to adjust? Yeah, I think so. But that's exactly what I'm looking for. Even getting on the bird last night, you're looking for a certain vibe with the guys, and it was there. You're looking for a certain look on their faces, conversations, and it's there. So I think we're all kind of looking for the same thing, and it's been the same all year.

Q. Do you have a plan for Game 4 starting pitching-wise?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, Max is going to start.

Q. You mentioned about the closeness of the group and the bond and how they enjoy spending time together. When the team finds itself in a situation where you have to claw out of a hole, how might that help this group?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: I think that when you have relationships that are strong and that are genuine and real, it makes it a little bit easier to go out and execute, perform, play for one another. I think that we have done that all year. We don't really care who gets the recognition -- or the guys don't, I should say. It seems to be a different guy almost every night.

I think when you're kind of all playing for the same thing, you're playing for the team, you're not playing for yourself, you're playing for guys you genuinely like and you like to be around, I think it just gives it a little bit more oomph, if you will, to go out there and do it.

I couldn't think of a better word than oomph right there. But they want to do it for one another, and that's a genuine thing. It doesn't happen very often.

Q. What lessons have you drawn from how you can help replicate this environment and those bonds from being recreated in subsequent years? As you mentioned, you don't see it often. It's unique. How can you put that together?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: It kind of happens organically. Not that we're all -- we're baseball people as coaches and managers, but I think as baseball people, we're pretty good people people. You know what I mean? And you kind of

get what is right in this environment.

So there's ways to kind of nudge or set up groups to kind of come together, but they got to just do it. I think it just comes down to the cast of characters that are in there right now at this specific time and where they are in their careers. It's pretty cool.

Q. When you guys were up 2-0 against the Yankees, you said you wanted to view it like it was 0-0. Does that same logic apply here for you guys now that you're down 0-2?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, absolutely. We get it, right? We get the numbers and all the historical things that have happened when we're in this position. It's a game tomorrow. It's all we can worry about, that's all we're worrying about. You get to Game 4 when you get to Game 4, and you keep on doing that.

Harder to do, say yeah, we're treating this as Game 1, right? We've obviously lost the first two. But there's really no other way to go about it.

Q. Back to Santander, when it comes to his back tightness, is that more when he's swinging or throwing or both?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: No, it was more, like, running, you know, running around, changing direction, things like that. Throughout the course of this year, he's obviously gotten really good and deliberate with what he does to take care of his body, so I feel like he's in a good spot, a better spot, today, and hopefully kind of back to normal tomorrow.

Q. Today's the 10th anniversary of the José Bautista bat flip homer. Might have happened like right about now. In that home run, while it's huge in the memory of a lot of Blue Jays fans and the biggest Jays homer in the 21st century, it's also a home run that won a series that the Jays lost the first two games of at home. I know you talk about the only thing that's important is Game 3, but do you draw anything from that, I mean, dropping the first two at home and then coming back to win that series?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, I mean, it's not impossible. It's baseball. You never know when there's going to be turns in momentum. You never know when momentum or a series can just shift or hold. You never really know. I think that it's a seven-game series for a reason. If it's a one-game play-in, you know, we're on vacation right now. But it's not.

So there's certain things that you have to just keep front



and center, and you hope for those moments, those moment that's come that kind of click.

But I think there's been enough examples, just talking to Hoff, a team that was up two a couple years ago with Philly and losing a series. It's very, very possible to do when you have a really, really good team. I hadn't thought about the bat flip per se, but have definitely thought about the instances to where this is not a hole you cannot climb out of.

Q. Besides the obvious of Max as a future Hall of Famer, multiple times Cy Young, what went into you being able to confirm now that he will start Game 4? Was it not using him or how his bullpen felt or what was it?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: A little bit of everything. I think, didn't use him, kind of where he is physically, you know, in talking to him compared to where he was a month ago, kind of how their lineup will roll out, how we've used our bullpen, how guys in the bullpen are feeling and things like that.

I think you get the best version out of Max when you're, you know -- he prepares. I've talked about him preparing all year. So I think keeping things normal for him. Going back to, you know, you want to see normalcy.

So you trust that he's going to be prepared and go out and give everything he has and hopefully rise to the occasion of a big moment. He's a Hall of Famer for a reason. So you feel good about handing him the ball and watching him go to work.

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