

AL Championship Series: Mariners vs Blue Jays

Monday, October 20, 2025

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Rogers Centre

Seattle Mariners

Julio Rodriguez

Pregame 7 Press Conference

Q. You've done some pretty cool things in your baseball career already, but never been part of a Game 7. Just what was the feeling waking up and getting to the ballpark today?

JULIO RODRIGUEZ: Definitely really exciting. As you said, like, this is my first time being part of a Game 7, and they say in sports that there's no better two words than that, so I'm very excited for today.

Q. You've talked all October about embracing the pressure, embracing the expectations. Why has that been such an important mentality for you and this team to have?

JULIO RODRIGUEZ: I would say when you embrace something, you kind of see it for what it is. You don't try to add more to it. I feel like when you do that, you're able to be more present and kind of taking the situation for what it is and be yourself in it.

Q. I know a lot's been talked about the All-Star break and the time that you had to get away from things to mentally reset and get ready for the second half. What did you do during that time that was so effective for you to be able to have a great second half?

JULIO RODRIGUEZ: I would say, kind of like I was telling him, just kind of like embracing everything that I have going on. I feel like the first half on the personal level and also on the field, it was a little rough for me. I feel like I'm embracing all that and kind of understanding who I was better. I feel like that's what helped me out is kind of to come into my own and just play the way I'm used to playing without trying to really fill anybody's shoes or trying to be something different than that.

Q. During the off-season, I think it was 2021 you played for Escogido. I believe Vlad was playing for



them at the same time. How much did you overlap during that season? What was that experience like playing with Vlad on that team in winter ball?

JULIO RODRIGUEZ: It was in 2020. And we became really good friends back then. I feel like he was a big prospect when he was coming out of the Dominican Republic. And since then, I remember, like, following him and, like, we got to meet in person and all that in the Escogido, and he was always really welcoming with me, and we always talk a lot, and he was really nice to me. So it was really cool to have him on the other side and kind of go battling on the field.

Q. The way you guys have won two, you lose two, you win one, you lose one, have you ever experienced such an emotional swing playing baseball before?

JULIO RODRIGUEZ: Obviously not. This is the first time that I play a Game 7, but I just feel like that's how the series evolved. I feel like in the emotional side of things, I feel I try to be pretty even-keeled through this, and every time that we're playing the game, it's nine innings and kind of playing hard, kind of letting everything else happen. With baseball, you can't really, like, hold on too much to how you feel about a win or a loss. So it's definitely been really fun, the swing of things in this series.

Q. We have seen you wearing a lot of anime shirts during the postseason. Can you talk about that interest and how that has inspired you throughout your career and how it maybe helps you even on the field?

JULIO RODRIGUEZ: Well, I love anime. I don't know if that's a secret for anybody in this room, but now you know. I love anime. I've been watching it since I was a kid. If you get to see so many of the characters that -- at least I say Gogo and Dragonball Z of like moving in one piece or now it's all in the show.

I feel like they are really motivational, at least for me personally. They have -- their mentality and the way they approach certain things, I feel like really resonates with what I do and what I do in baseball because baseball can



get really tough because -- everybody knows it's a really difficult sport, but at the same time, you can't shy away from the challenge and you always got to continue to push forward in those situations. I feel like that's something that you get to see in and may a lot and the story line, the character development, them over coming challenges, and I feel like that's why I really love anime. I know there's a lot of people say, Oh, but it's a drawing and all that, but once you sit and watch it and you get to kind of resonate with what they're saying in the show, I feel like it's really cool.

Q. What makes this clubhouse so special and what has being a part of this team meant to you this year?

JULIO RODRIGUEZ: I would say the brotherhood that we have with each other. I feel like we really get along with each other. We really like to play for each other. I feel like that's something that separates us. A few of us have been playing together for a while, and I feel like we definitely see each other as brothers, and I feel like that's how we're able to do it, to take the field and compete for each other.

Q. With a Game 7 do you need to fight the urge to try to do that little bit extra a little bit more, or do you lean into the moment of what's in front of you tonight, and how do you kind of approach it?

JULIO RODRIGUEZ: I feel like that's the right way to do it. We've got here by being who we are, by playing our baseball. I feel like that is something that you have to double down. There is no need to do more. I feel like everybody have been doing it the whole year, we've been playing baseball the whole year, preparing the whole year. And it came down to one game you just do one more of the same thing. I feel like that's the mentality we should take in this Game 7.

Q. Way back before you signed with the Mariners, what did you know about the franchise, what did the franchise symbolize or signify to you before you signed there?

JULIO RODRIGUEZ: Before I signed the biggest name I knew was definitely Ichiro Suzuki's name. He was really popular in the Dominican Republic for his way of playing. And right around the time that I signed that my favorite player was really Nelson Cruz. And that's something that kind of like pulled me up to the team too. Just kind of like the way that I thought that they were going to develop players, that was the biggest thing we knew. Because I feel like for us in the Dominican Republic, even though we follow the MLB, I feel our biggest baseball is the Dominican winter league.

Q. The last time you guys faced Bieber, your home run

was the only thing that the Mariners got off of him. Can you take us back, what he's it like facing him, what are your cues and keys when you face Shane Bieber?

JULIO RODRIGUEZ: He's a really good pitcher. He's been in this league doing what he's been doing for a while. He's a really good pitcher that you got to go out there and compete against him and try and get your pitch, because he obviously got like his plan, and you kind of got to bring it into your own zone.

Q. Has Dan talked to you about where he wants you in the lineup tonight, and do you have a preference?

JULIO RODRIGUEZ: No, I'm really ready to compete. For me, I feel like the only thing I can really control and really do is my intent, my preparation and just be ready to compete.

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