

# AL Division Series: Yankees vs Blue Jays

Friday, October 3, 2025

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Rogers Centre

**Toronto Blue Jays**

**Kevin Gausman**

Workout Day Press Conference

**Q. John Schneider said a little while ago that your presence, it was clear to him that you really wanted to be the guy. Being the starter of Game 1, is this exactly where you want to be?**

KEVIN GAUSMAN: Yeah, as a pitcher, it means a lot for sure. Any time you get to toe the rubber for the biggest game of the year up to that point, it kind of shows that they have faith in you and that they believe in you. Yeah, I'm ready to go. I'm fired up.

**Q. You've thrown a lot of innings this year and for five years in a row, but you appear to be as physically strong at the end of the season as you've been all the way through. Is that the case, and if so, why?**

KEVIN GAUSMAN: Honestly the off days the last month definitely helped. Yeah, with the way that our schedule was the last six weeks, it really kind of allowed for us to kind of give some of our guys a break, and that included me.

I feel really good. Honestly getting those last couple days to kind of get some treatment, everybody's going to be feeling as good as they have.

**Q. You talked at the beginning of the year about coming in at a heavier weight. You're a guy who has trouble keeping weight on. Does that have anything to do with it this year as well?**

KEVIN GAUSMAN: Yeah, I'm getting older, so it's a little easier to keep weight on. Yeah, it's just one of those things that probably everybody in this room can relate to that a little bit. It's just something that -- yeah, a lot of guys gain weight, I kind of lose weight. That's just kind of been the big question mark trying to figure out how to stay strong at this point in the year.



**Q. Now that you've been here four years and you seem to have really embraced this organization and this city, does this moment mean more to you now than it might have when you first arrived in Toronto?**

KEVIN GAUSMAN: Yeah, for sure. I was thinking about '22 the other day, and pitching here in '22, that postseason compared to now, completely different. Kind of fresh into the organization, still didn't really know what it meant to be a Blue Jay to be honest.

I think now I understand we have one team for an entire country. With that, a lot of things come with that. There's extra pressure that comes with that, but there's a lot of love that comes with that from the fans, from people who might never even see you play in person. But that's just kind of the advantage that we have being one team for a whole country.

**Q. When you go into preparing for a lineup like this, especially being built around Aaron Judge in the middle there, how does preparing for him compare to preparing for an average hitter? What do you spend more time on, less time on? How does that work for you?**

KEVIN GAUSMAN: He's a lot bigger than most guys, first off. He can hit pitches that most guys can't hit. He can mis-hit a ball and still hit a home run. He's just that strong.

With that, you've just got to know that you've got to be a little bit more fine when he comes up. When guys are on base, you really have to be fine because he's the guy that with one swing of that bat, he can blow a game wide open.

**Q. You touched on it a moment ago about playing for a country. What is the significance for you of that, playing for a country, representing all of Canada basically in the biggest game in years?**

KEVIN GAUSMAN: Yeah, you've seen it over the last month. Every home game we've had over the last month has been sold out, or if it hasn't been sold out, it definitely feels that way.



The last game of the season was incredible. The amount of love that you could feel in the building -- and I felt that as a visiting player when I was with the Orioles here in '16, and unfortunately, I felt the love when Edwin hit the home run that sent them on to the postseason and we went home.

Yeah, it's a unique situation we have being here in Toronto. I think we as a team, being here now I understand that we have to be even closer of a group than most teams because most cities you have somebody that you probably know or someone that lived there that, if you really wanted to, you could kind of get away from the guys. Whereas here we don't really know too many people in Toronto, to be honest. So if we're not hanging out with each other, then we're just not hanging out.

It's kind of one thing we emphasized over the last couple years is making sure we're as close knit of a group as we can be.

**Q. I'm not sure how much you're into fashion, but I'm sure you believe in the look good, feel good theory. With that in mind, why have the white panel hats made such a difference to you guys this last week or so?**

KEVIN GAUSMAN: I believe we wore them for the Hall of Fame game, and those ones were a little different. Those ones were actually like the old school '92/'93 teams that wore them. One of the best logos ever, I think.

We just kind of needed to change things up, and when we did, I think we won four in a row. A lot of these guys think these look really good. I'm a big fan of pinwheel hats I think they're as baseball as it gets. So I'm all for it.

**Q. The last three days, did you watch the Yankees-Red Sox series? If you did, was it a family affair, or do you close yourself into a room?**

KEVIN GAUSMAN: Yeah, I watched the games. I didn't watch all of them. I would just kind of check in. Certain spots I would watch if it was a big spot. Yeah, it was a fun series. I mean, Red Sox-Yankees, if you're a baseball fan, you've got to love watching those two teams go at it. Two really good teams that are playing really well.

To be honest, I don't really think about it too much. You're just kind of waiting to see who's going to come here. That was about it.

**Q. You mentioned 2022. Obviously a lot of water under the bridge since then. What makes you believe that this team is better equipped to make a meaningful postseason run than the previous times you've been?**

KEVIN GAUSMAN: I think when I look at this team, it's really just a different guy every day. And when you look at the teams in the postseason, there's kind of one guy that's really been the it guy for whatever team. You can kind of figure that out pretty easily. If you look at our team, I think it would be pretty hard to figure out who's the guy. George has been the guy at times. Vlady's been the guy at times, Bo, Ernie -- there's been so many different guys -- Barger.

I think it's just kind of a pass the baton type mentality that whatever has been asked, these guys are going to give it 110 percent. It's really been fun to watch.

**Q. Sticking with the fashion theme, are you going hockey style playoff beard?**

KEVIN GAUSMAN: I guess. I didn't know that was a thing. Now that I'm here, everybody keeps telling me you've got to let it go. I didn't know that was a thing, but yeah.

**Q. This will be the fifth start you make against the Yankees this season. Obviously there's a lot of familiarity there. Just from -- you've often talked about you're mostly a two-pitch guy, mix in a slider. From a game plan approach, can you do something different? Can you feature a different look, different sequencing, or are you just I'm either executing or I don't?**

KEVIN GAUSMAN: More so the latter. I didn't come up with a knuckleball the last couple days.

Yeah, the book is out on me. These guys kind of know what they're going to get. There's different ways where I can kind of throw a wrinkle into their mind, but I'm going to throw my best two pitches, and I'm going to throw them a lot.

If I can throw my fastball to where I want to and locate my split when I need to, I feel pretty confident that I can get any righty or lefty out in the game.

**Q. I think there's almost a dozen guys in the clubhouse that have never been to the postseason before. For the veteran guys, what have the conversations been like? What kind of advice, what kind of things are you telling the guys who have never played October baseball?**

KEVIN GAUSMAN: The biggest thing is we've been pumping in crowd noise the last couple days. The biggest thing is it's going to be way louder than that. So the guys are kind of complaining that they can't hear. It's going to be ten times louder than that.



The nice thing is I have pitched here in the postseason. So I can kind of go back on how crazy and electric it was in '22, but I also think it's going to be completely different. Yeah, I just think it's going to be an awesome atmosphere that the guys are fired up to see how crazy these Canadians are going to be.

**Q. John Schneider has walked Aaron Judge quite a bit this year intentionally. How does that impact a starter when you're throwing the ball well and everything else and then you see the sign that you want to pitch around him? Does that affect you at all, or do you just go with what your manager wishes?**

KEVIN GAUSMAN: Yeah, that's his decision, to be honest. It's a conversation we'll probably have tomorrow. We'll talk about it a little bit. There's usually times, if there's an open base and it's late in the game, we're probably going to do that. That's the nature of the beast.

He's a guy that, like I said, can beat you with one swing. He's one of the best players in the game. At the same time, you always want to go after guys, so it's kind of that double-edged sword.

**Q. Can you talk a little bit about how your relationship with Alejandro Kirk has evolved and where the trust is heading into tomorrow?**

KEVIN GAUSMAN: Kirky is a guy that I think everybody roots for when they watch him play. He's a guy that, to see his maturation through the last couple years, not only as a baseball player but as a person -- he has a daughter now -- it's really cool to see. He's the guy that, when he's up, everybody wants him to get a hit. When he's catching, he's a wizard back there.

To be honest, it's kind of hard sometimes because he's so good at it that you don't actually know where the pitch was. As a pitcher, if you're trying to make an adjustment, it's kind of hard sometimes because he can move the ball two feet. Whereas you might think of it as a good pitch, you actually missed by two feet.

But he's just so good and so quick back there, just stealing strikes, trying to do whatever he can. And Heineman's the same way. Those two guys have been incredible for us. I think that's why we're number two in the Big Leagues with value in that position.

**Q. You mentioned your previous playoff experience a couple times here. When you look back at your last two for the Jays, what have you learned from those, and what do you lean on going into tomorrow from**

**those experiences?**

KEVIN GAUSMAN: Honestly every year is so different. You go into every postseason start with a completely different entire season under your belt. Whether you're dealing with things physically or mentally or whatever, it's kind of hard to compare them.

You can just kind of know that you can bank on the fact that you know how crazy everything is going to be, and especially Game 1. There's going to be a huge flag that's going to take up the whole stadium.

It is a little bit different. Being that I've done that before, that's kind of what you lean back on is knowing that even though there are lots more reporters, lots more lights, it's still the same game.

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