

AL Division Series: Yankees vs Blue Jays

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Rogers Centre

Toronto Blue Jays Manager John Schneider Pregame 1 Press Conference

Q. John, can you run through some of the final decisions and how it ties into your rotation for the upcoming games?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Trey will start tomorrow. Shane will start Game 3. From there, trying to just maximize as many bullpen arms as we can, try to keep guys pitching where we want them to be pitching. I think it's nice to have Trey pitch at home and have a veteran guy on the road. Then kind of see where Game 4 leads us.

This lineup is obviously tough, plenty of left-handers, plenty of power. I think we try to line up accordingly and as best we could.

Q. The conversations with Chris Bassitt and Max Scherzer must have been difficult. Can you sort of run through what that must have been like and how crusty they may have been?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Obviously tough decisions, right? For guys that -- for Max especially, who's been on the biggest stage the game has to offer, Chris who is a veteran guy himself and about as well-respected as you can get, tough decisions. We spent the entire time off kind of going back and forth.

With Chris in particular, I think if he was a little bit more stretched out, it may be a different scenario. With Max, we were communicating the whole week, kind of who we were playing, weren't sure if it was going to be New York or Boston. Probably would have been a different outcome if it was Boston, to be honest with you, for Max and expressed that to him.

Yeah, they're tough conversations, but you're trying to find the best lanes for guys and kind of what's happening right now. Would we have used Chris ahead of some guys in the bullpen and have him available every day? I don't



know if that would have been a possibility.

Then for Max, it's how do you line up against this lineup?

They're tough decisions obviously. These are guys you trust, and these are guys that have done a lot in the game. In terms of them being crusty, they were disappointed, but they're kind of leading the charge in understanding that whatever we have to do to win, they're on board for. They're going to keep themselves ready to be options hopefully if we move on.

Q. I guess you sort of answered it about Bassitt, but it sounded like from what you just said that he wouldn't be capable of being a starting pitcher for you, like a traditional starter as far as stretch-outedness. Was it more that and less the matchups and the utilization of the bullpen?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, I think it would have been tough to say, hey, Chris, go throw five or six innings. You've got to look at how this team -- how the Yankees, how they function. When you're looking at starting pitching in the postseason, it's a little bit different, especially a team like this that hits a lot of home runs. I think the more looks you can give them, the better. They're a team that can really make adjustments with starting pitchers.

Again, not to say that every start is going to be short by any means. You've got to watch what Kev's doing, what Trey's doing, what Shane's doing, and make decisions as you go. Just didn't really see an optimal spot for either one of them really, to kind of go for length.

Could they do it? Yeah, sure, absolutely. Anything can happen any given day, right? But I think just with what we have in the bullpen and kind of how we're looking to neutralize as best we can a really dangerous lineup, that's kind of how we landed.

Q. Does that follow that you had to take 13 because you only have three traditional starters?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, kind of. The question is what's your best way to win 3 out of 5, right? Is it 14 and 12? Is it



13 and 13? You look at their starters. You look at what they have available in the bullpen, and you try to make the best decision.

I think that having the extra arm probably against this team in the bullpen and being left-handed was attractive to us and to me. Guys are going to be asked to get some big outs, and guys are going to be asked to be in spots that maybe they wouldn't be in in the regular season. Those decisions, yeah, kind of went hand-in-hand in trying to crack the best way to beat these guys.

Q. Will you manage a Game 4 situation with the start similar to what you did in the final game of the Boston series?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: It will be something similar to that if we get there and based on availability and things like that. I know a lot of attention goes to starting pitching. We've got guys in the bullpen that have started that will play a significant role in this series, and we have guys in the bullpen that have been in the bullpen and been really good too. We'll cross that bridge when we get there.

Q. Just on Bo, obviously you didn't see what you were looking for yesterday?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, just didn't have basically enough time to get him ready. He's continuing to make progress. He's going to continue to do everything he can to get ready if we do advance. He's got to get running a little bit, hit some velo, hopefully see some live pitching. But the timing just wasn't right for him right now.

Q. Can you go a little deeper into your explanation for Trey in the second game? He's been in the majors for a minute and a half, so where do you get that faith from?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: From what he's done, I think from talking with him and -- watching how he's responded to being here for one. Talking to him and getting a pretty good feel of his pulse. I think having him pitch here as opposed to what will be a hostile environment in New York plays into it a little bit.

Then the fact that with the off days and what he can do and what he's done, start, bullpen, he'll play a factor in more than just Game 2. So I think that kind of book-ended all of our decisions when it came down to the pitching.

Q. Has Bo started running, and has he faced velocity?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: No.

Q. Ty France, physically, was he eligible or ready for this series, or was that a roster decision?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Kind of more of a roster decision. You guys saw him playing and swinging and all that kind of stuff. I think, if he had a few more days to kind of get caught up timing-wise, maybe a little bit different. You're probably facing a couple left-handed starters, and then what does that do to the rest of your team, that kind of stuff? Or if he's on the bench, how do you use him? They have one lefty in the bullpen.

So tough decision for sure, for a guy that's been in the postseason as well, but that was more so kind of strategic for this round.

Q. Just lineup-wise today, how did you weigh George DH versus Tony in the field or vice versa?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Just kind of been comfortable with what we're doing, keeping George there. I think Tony is capable in left. You guys have seen how we've managed the games the last week with Tony being here. Don't expect it to be any different this series today going forward. But his left-handed bat spot for sure.

Q. Do you have any message for your team before a series like or just kind of let them do their thing? What's your approach?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Kind of let them do their thing. We've been doing enough talking the last couple days just not playing. This group gets it. The tough conversations have been had, and this is the fun part. They're ready to go. They're going to prepare like we have all year.

I think one of the best traits of this team is doing what they're good at and sticking to their norm and sticking to their process. There was no rah-rah speech. We played 162 to get into this position, and the guys are ready to go out and play in front of this crowd.

Q. I know there's so much work that you guys have poured down on over the week to decide who's taking who, but with Justin Bruihl, that inning, that eighth inning he had against the Yankees in July, that big spot in that big game, is that something that sort of hangs in the memory when you're making a call on who to take?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, everything matters. I think what guys are doing right now matters and trusting that they know what we're asking, what I'm asking of them in any situation. I think it's pretty ironic -- not ironic -- it's pretty fitting for our team that you look at some of the guys



that are going to be contributing, they didn't start the year with us, and they've all kind of done their part up until this point.

The person, the skill set, you take it all into consideration. So the fact that he's faced these guys, yeah, a little bit. You take a little bit of that. He knows exactly what we're asking of him, you know what I mean? It goes down to every single guy on the roster. When I said day 1 of Spring Training, just be you, do what you do well, and when you're in that spot, go execute it.

Yeah, I think that he's a funky look and different from other lefties too.

Q. There's a fine line in playoffs between planning what you want to do and the game doing what it does. How much do you have to sort of see everything, maybe compared to what we've seen in the past?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, man, when you go through it, you either learn from it or you don't, right? Again, there's a ton of planning that goes into every single game, every single situation. You got to let the game kind of talk to you a little bit. I think that where we've gotten a lot better, where I've gotten a lot better is doing that.

I said it earlier in my office. You try to be as prepared as you can, and then you make a decision and you move on from it whether it works out or whether it doesn't. So you can't try to make every little single thing work. These guys are baseball players. They're really good at what they do. Sometimes you go into it with a plan and it gets flipped on its head in the first inning. Sometimes it gets flipped on its head in the fifth or sixth.

So I think learning from past experiences has been key for myself, for the staff, for this whole organization. So you watch what's happening in real time, and you don't feel pressure to do one thing or another. You feel pretty convicted in the work that you have done when that situation does come up.

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