

AL Division Series: Yankees vs Blue Jays

Saturday, October 4, 2025

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Rogers Centre

Toronto Blue Jays Manager John Schneider Postgame 1 Press Conference

Blue Jays - 10, Yankees - 1

Q. First postseason win in nearly a decade here. How does it feel to be watching that unfold late in the game?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: It's nice, man. It's a good way to start the series obviously. Happy for the guys. Happy for the guys that have been here for a few years. It was a really kind of all around well-played game. Pitching, hitting, defense.

So it's nice. It's a nice way to start the series.

Q. With Vlady, his start, the home run and then on defense, does that set the tone at the top? Does that change things off the top?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, I feel like we talk about Vlad three times a week during the regular season. But I think having him get the scoring going, the double play at first with McMahon, it's nice. It gives you a little bit of a jolt because it's Vlad and what he means to this team.

Happy for him to get off to a good start too.

Q. All season long you've been getting production up and down your lineup. It hasn't mattered offensively or defensively or who. Was today a quintessential Blue Jays win?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, that game kind of sums up our season right there. Great day from Kirky, Vlad obviously. But Gimmy having a big day, Lukey having a big day. Kind of just going down the line, guys having productive at-bats and guys making plays in the field. That's how we've done it all year.

You get to the postseason, you never know who it's going



to be. You circle big names, and a lot of times it's guys that are just steady and they continue to do what they've done all year, but that was kind of the blueprint of what we've done all year.

Q. A little bit more on Vlad. This morning you were kind of saying he's right where he needs to be and your confidence in him seemed really high going into this week. Was a game like today kind of what you expected from him almost?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, man, he's always close to a game like that. Going back to having the few days off, it can work either way. I think it was good for him to kind of sort some things out and kind of just feel where his swing should be a little bit. Three hits and the homer, he took some really, really good swings today.

I've seen Vlad long enough. When you know it looks pretty close to being right, you have a lot of confidence in him.

Q. Then in that sixth inning with Gausman, sticking with him to get the big strikeout on Judge. What was going through your mind as you're looking at the pitching matchups as the inning unfolds?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: It wasn't great, to be honest with you. That's the last guy you want up. I think Kev's pitch count was low. They were really, really aggressive against him. I think being in that situation a few times, you try to just take all the information you have, right?

With the lefties coming behind him, kind of Belly's reverse splits, where Gausy's stuff was at that point with his velo, that's a huge, huge strikeout obviously to who is going to be the MVP of the league probably. And you're kind of feeding off the emotion a little bit too, to be honest with you.

It didn't feel great, honestly. With Judge coming up, bases loaded, nobody out, that's not what you want to see. But Kev made big pitches, man. Even after the walk, getting the pop-up to Rice, and then with his pitches being where it was in that inning, wanted a little power against Stanton, and Louis came in and was just great.



Q. You just answered it, but why is Louis that guy? You've talked about unlocking him in that stuff. Why was it Varland in that spot?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: I think what he's been doing recently, the confidence and conviction he's throwing with, you kind of just say, all right, what do we need in this situation? I've said that so many times during the course of the year. What do you need right now? What's important right now? To me, that situation, you needed 100 versus a guy who's had a storied postseason career in Stanton, and you needed a couple breaking balls, you know what I mean?

Again, just trying to put guys in where -- just go do what you do.

Q. As far as Lucas getting that big hit in that big spot, since you sort of nestled him in there between Springer and Vlady, he's hit well. And the team, I think you're 11-4 with that 1, 2, 3, going there. What are you seeing from him, and what he did for you there?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: He's been consistent all year. I think trying to hide him from some lefties, and with them having one in the bullpen, they're probably going to get a righty for George, so it kind of lines him up fairly well.

I'm thrilled for him, for a guy that's grinded for a lot of years, Minor Leagues, kind of establishing himself here. It's his first postseason game, and he just stayed right here. I thought his at-bats were awesome all day, the double and even the single late. Nate's a productive Major League player, and he is kind of just the epitome of what we've built here, where just go do your thing.

Q. Obviously the playoff situation was the whole ball of wax today, but do you sense -- I mean, the comments he's made in the past and how great he's been against the Yankees, is there a little bit of an extra thing, extra pleasing feeling for Vlady to do it against the Yankees?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: I think for Vlad, he's shown well against them here and in New York, but I think for Vlad more so it's the postseason. When you think of his time in the Big Leagues in the postseason, it hasn't been fun for him or anyone really.

I think more so where he is right now. We've signed him. We've locked him up. I was kind of interested to see how he came out today. There was a little bit of a different feel about Vlad today. Again, not that there isn't always that, but I think not against the Yankees, no. I think Vlad, where he is right now, where we are right now in the postseason

was big for him today.

Q. Further to Vlady, just wondering what your thoughts were on that defensive play where the barrel of the bat is kind of coming at him and he gets the two outs there?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, it's a weird play when a bat's flying at you. When Vlad's locked in, it can be contagious. It shows, I think, everyone how great he can be. For him, it's a pretty routine play. I think you're watching the ball and you hope the bat doesn't hit you, right? But he was really focused on the task at hand, whether it was in the field or at the plate today.

That definitely gave us a little bit of momentum for sure.

Q. For a guy who's been in this organization for so long, you have a couple players who have been here for a while, what does it mean -- I know you have a lot more that you want to do, but what does it mean to get this first one, get a playoff win under your belt?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, it's nice. I feel like we've been here for a little bit, and things haven't gone our way. Every season there's a different feel and a different vibe. I've said it before, there's a different feel with this team.

Again, it's one game. There's a lot of series ahead of us, but it's nice. I feel a lot of fulfillment for the guys in there that have grinded and put in a lot of work and had some good years and not so great finishes to it.

I think it's nice to get the first one out of the way. You got another tough task tomorrow, you know what I mean? I think that for me and for the staff and for the guys that have been here, it feels good to kind of move in the right direction.

Q. All season long you say tomorrow's another game, win or lose. This was obviously a great win up and down the lineup. What can the players take from today's win into tomorrow?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: You have a 1-0 series lead really. That's a really good team over there. We played really well today. I think, when you play your game, it just gives you confidence to kind of roll it over into the next day.

Every game is different. Every starting pitcher is a different assignment and different task to tackle, but it gives you a little bit of a nice little momentum going into tomorrow.

Like I said, I've said it before, this team is really good at moving on, you know what I mean? I think they'd move on



if the result was different. Again, tomorrow is going to be a totally different set of circumstances that I think they'll be ready for.

Q. With the way you guys set up your roster and set up your pitching plans, for Gaus to get you into the sixth there, how does that fit with sort of how you envision bullpen usages for Game 2 and beyond in terms of setting you up for the rest of the series?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: I think it sets us up well. I was kind of laughing with Pete a little bit during the game where you have four lefties in the pen and the first guy you bring in is a righty. Like I said, man, you can have all the plans in the world, and you've got to just react. The game can just turn on you.

I think Kev going where he did with his pitch count was key. It keeps everyone available for tomorrow. Again, tomorrow may be a whole different set of circumstances and everyone will be ready to go.

What Kev did, to have some quick innings, and the Judge at-bat was huge, to get that out and kind of squash that a little bit right there was really big, but it sets us up nice going forward.

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