

AL Division Series: Yankees vs Blue Jays

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Yankee Stadium

Toronto Blue Jays Manager John Schneider Pregame 3 Press Conference

Q. In the last couple months as you've gotten to know Shane better as a person, what has kind of stood out to you?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: It feels like he's been here for a while, to be honest with you. Just how he kind of checks every box for a starting pitcher. He's prepared, he's confident, he's got tremendous recall. Just very steady.

I think that was very evident kind of watching him from the other side. And then you kind of get to know him, you get to know him as a father and a husband a little bit too. And just talking to him, he's a confident guy and kind of checks every box that you feel good about a guy and the big stage going out to.

Q. At the start of this series, there was a fair number of pundits from around here who predicted the Yankees would get through this round pretty easily, cruise to the World Series. What message are you trying to send to that crowd?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Don't have one. I think we're just focused on playing our game really. I think that we're confident when we're playing our game. It was a good weekend at home, and this is still -- we're treating this as if it's a 0-0 series. You can't take your foot off the gas.

I think we do a really good job of kind of worrying about what is important to us, and that's kind of how we've done it all year. That's kind of how we've gotten here. It's a tight knit group. I think that they're just going to continue to worry about them.

Q. Forgive me for asking a little bit of a forward-looking question on a playoff day, but with Gausman's history of pitching some out of the bullpen, pitching on different days of rest out of the bullpen, if you came to a decision where you're having to think



about that, would that weigh differently than another starting pitcher who doesn't have experience pitching on short rest, if that makes sense?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: No. I think we've talked to all these guys to where they're going to be ready for anything on any given day, depending on kind of where you are in the series. I think they're all ready for it.

I know maybe a little bit easier if you've done it before, but I think that they're all kind of ready for whatever we ask.

Q. Do you guys hold Gausman back for whatever bullpen he might have thrown between the starts because you're in a playoff series and you don't know what's going to happen, or did he throw his bullpen?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: He's going to throw it tomorrow.

Q. What was your reaction when you heard that Cleveland was making Bieber possibly available, and what was your reaction when the deal was made?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Surprised, to be honest with you, I remember at the time. Just because the player doesn't come right into your clubhouse and start contributing right away, I think it kind of got overshadowed a little bit when we did acquire him.

Yeah, I was a little surprised because how they can play and did play down the stretch. And I don't know if it's contract comes into it. He's going to be a free agent, we know that. But I was ecstatic when Ross called me and told me that one. It's not very often you can acquire a guy like him with his track record. So was more than happy to get him in our clubhouse.

Q. Is your job in any way different than the other 29 in that you don't just represent the city, but in some ways the country?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: I think so. I haven't been anywhere but here, so this is kind of my norm. Yeah, it's pretty cool. I definitely can say that now more than ever, you always feel the weight of the world in decisions you make. But



when you're kind of feeling a country, it kind of gets a little dicey at times. Like the sixth inning with the bases loaded and nobody out and Aaron Judge hitting, you feel like people in Nova Scotia want to come murder you.

So, yeah, I think that that gets magnified a little bit, but it's kind of what I've come to know. It's something I don't take lightly.

Q. When you were catching, how many guys threw splitters? Because it seemed like when Roger Clemens was there and Jack Morris was throwing it, Curt Schilling, that it was a thing, and then it sort of vanished for a while.

JOHN SCHNEIDER: It did, yeah. Not many. I can't recall that many. And I've always said I think baseball goes in waves and trends and things like that. When I was catching, velo was starting to come a little bit. Hard breaking balls were starting to come a little bit, not many.

And then all of a sudden, I think, just in this age of pitch design and facilities, guys are coming up with different ways to throw different things, whether it's a kick change-up, a split, a split change, a sweeper. It's definitely different. But I think it kind of just goes hand in hand with what hitters are doing and trying to combat what hitters are doing a little bit. We've got some guys with some good ones for sure.

Q. Why does it work, or why has it worked as effectively as it has?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: I think it's tough to say for me, who was a very, very marginal Minor League hitter. But when you're talking about the action of certain pitches and the uniqueness of what each one can do, I think that's where it plays. You've got to have the right fastball profile to kind of pitch off of it with, I think.

But it's a weird pitch. Since we've acquired Kevin, we've talked so many nights and hours about where is this ball going to be put in play? Do we shift? Do we not? It's kind of an unpredictable pitch.

So everyone's a little bit different, but it kind of combats what hitters are kind of trying to do these days a little bit.

Q. As the postseason approaches, we hear managers talk all the time about I love the postseason experience on my roster. We hear GMs at the trade deadline talk about, oh, this guy I brought in, he's got postseason experience. I'm real excited about that. Some of the biggest stars so far, small sample size, but some of the biggest performances in this postseason have been

young guys. Not just rookies or second-year players, but guys with five Major League games or four Major League starts under their belt. Schlittler, Chourio, 21 years old, Misiorowski last night, Roki Sasaki, I mean, these are guys with very, very little Major League experience. How do you explain their ability to handle these pressurized moments? What are you seeing out of young players?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: It's definitely different. It's remarkable really. You're talking about a big stage, a big market here. Really anywhere in the postseason is big, but I think players have kind of been developed a little bit differently over the past handful of years, and I think that they probably exude a little bit more confidence at a young age.

I've been asked this question about when Bo and Vlad debuted in 2019 and how is it different for Trey or how is it different for somebody? Players, I think, are just different today. Pitching especially, I think can be ahead of hitting. It's really kind of weird to see. Like the names you just mentioned, those are some prominent guys in the postseason so far.

It's tough to explain, but I think that teams do a good job of welcoming guys in. That's been apparent. You have to kind of look at what the stuff is doing in real time. Will this work? And if it works, you go for it. It's kind of our job to make sure the transition is as easy as it can be and veteran players making it easy for young guys to come into an environment that's really stressful. I think that players have really gotten a lot better a lot quicker.

Q. I'm not sure if you're a speech guy, but I'm curious about the message in the room before a big game like this. If it's not you, who is it?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, it's not me. I've joked, I've told these guys the last couple of days that this is the only year I have yet to have a team meeting with the full group in my managerial life, Minor Leagues and Big Leagues. They are driving the bus.

I think there's certain times where veteran guys -- I think if something needs to be said, there's George for sure, Vladimir for sure, and some of our pitchers, whether it's Chris or Max, who love to talk or Gaus. There's plenty of guys that can kind of steer the ship.

This group is really good at just doing the same thing, whether it's, okay, I'm going to come hit early or I'm going to play cards at this time. I think the more you can operate under normal circumstances in big spots, the better off you're going to be.



Q. You've been at this manager thing for quite a while through the Minors and here in the Big Leagues, and you've been with this organization. How are you feeling today? Just a huge game. Maybe the biggest game of the season.

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Good question. You know, I'm excited, you know what I mean? You kind of get lost a little bit in the day-to-day prep and the day-to-day routine of it. I haven't really thought about it until you asked, to be honest with you.

I think that we've put ourselves in a really good spot. I've been doing this long enough to where you don't ever want to let your guard down. You don't ever want to try to do something you haven't done or you're not good at, both myself and players. So I think you kind of focus on the game. You focus on figuring out a way to get to Carlos, who's really, really good, and try to keep their lineup in check.

I felt pretty good on the flight here for a little bit, and after that, it's kind of get back to work, and you deal with it when you deal with it.

Q. Any family or friends from Jersey?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, I got my wife and my boys coming. They've been here, and Mom and Pop are coming with my two brothers. I told them don't wear a Schneider jersey. You may get hurt. Maybe just wear some neutral colors. Pretty cool to have some family here.

Q. Davis was in here earlier talking about how you guys aren't intimidated by this stage, how it's just basically a bunch of guys here just having fun playing baseball. Has that been the MO since day one, or is that something that's sort of developed as the season progressed?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: I think that was kind of there, but you kind of saw it unfold over the course of the season, where you can grasp onto any narrative that is out there, right? But I think that that's been apparent for a while now. That's been apparent that's what they're doing for a while now.

I joked with Donny and Pete, sometimes it feels like the movie *The Sandlot*, they're just coming in playing. I think if you can embrace that, it's pretty cool, because ultimately, if you want to get to where you want to get to, it's just going to get more and more magnified and more and more tense. It's been like that for a while with this group, which is pretty cool.

Q. When it comes to something like pitch tipping in a game, who are the guys in your dugout that you rely on most to help you identify whether it's on your team or the other team, something that might be going on?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: You know, pitch tipping, it's part of the game, right? We have a lot of guys that look at it. I think you can always say you trust your catcher, what he's seeing kind of in real time. Pete looks at it quite a bit. I think we have some veteran guys. I'm thinking back to the game here when Max was pitching. And it's not very often Ty France makes a mound visit to Max Scherzer. I think if someone sees something, they're going to try to address it in real time.

Again, you don't want it to dominate your day. You don't want it to dominate your prep or what you're doing, but I think we have enough people kind of aware of what's going on.

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