

# AL Division Series: Tigers vs Mariners

Friday, October 3, 2025  
Seattle, Washington, USA  
T-Mobile Park

## Seattle Mariners

### George Kirby

#### Workout Day Press Conference

**Q. Hey, George. Just what was your reaction when Dan told you you're going to start one of the Division Series? And kind of discuss your thoughts about it.**

GEORGE KIRBY: Yeah. I mean, for one, I was super honored, you know. It's a big game and something you always dream of, being able to start Game 1 or any game in the playoffs, for that matter.

But yeah. I was super excited and ready to take the ball tomorrow and go out there and get them all.

**Q. You knew you were going to throw at some point, but were you surprised at all to get the call for Game 1?**

GEORGE KIRBY: No, I wasn't surprised. I think it's a good idea.

**Q. George, you've talked after your last outing about just kind of the focus on the mental side of the game. How much has that helped you over the past month or so?**

GEORGE KIRBY: Yeah. It's been super helpful. Like I said before, kind of just being able to just write something down or just kind of the ideas, just get your feelings out, don't leave anything on the table.

And it kind of just allows me to forget about a lot of things, whether it's a bad game or just some, like, stress or anxiety leading up to something. It kind of just allows me a little freedom kind of to just worry about the game instead of everything else that goes along with it.

So just being in control is kind of the only thing I can control. And after that, it just gives more confidence and stuff like that.



**Q. George, the Mariner pitchers have always been so good at attacking the strike zone and throwing strikes, and you personify that.**

How is it -- how were you guys able to be so confident in the zone, and how did you approach kind of resonate with your mentality when they started emphasizing that in the Minors?

GEORGE KIRBY: Yeah. Since day one we always heard just dominate the zone, and quality strikes in the zone. I think they did a really good job of just hammering that in our minds, and all of this -- that was kind of the identity a lot of us had before we got with the Mariners.

But I think a lot has to do with just confidence that you can just beat people in the zone, that you don't need to expand so much. And hitting's hard, and you just have that, you know, go-at-them-type mentality, more times than not, you might win that battle.

And what they've always said, 94 percent of the time, if you throw a first-pitch strike, you got to get the ball back or it's out. So a lot of people take that to heart. So I think it's, one, just them just pushing that mentality into us; and then, two, everybody has just unbelievable confidence in themselves and their arsenal to get guys out.

**Q. Last time you guys faced the Tigers, it was right before the All-Star break, and since then the starting rotation has gotten healthy, everybody's kind of hit their stride. What do you think you can take from that series before the All-Star break and apply it to the team you guys are now, even with the lineup, the additions of Naylor and Gino?**

GEORGE KIRBY: Yeah. Obviously having Naylor and Gino back in the lineup is awesome, but I think it will be good to go over game plans for then, but right now, playoff time, you kind of get rid of your ego, and everyone playing for one goal is just to win the game. So however we can do that to give our team the best chance to win, that's the kind of mentality.

**Q. George, I'm curious about the journalling. And did**



**Bern turn you on to that?**

GEORGE KIRBY: Yeah.

**Q. I know a lot of other players do that.**

And when you write stuff down, are you writing ten words? Are you writing ten pages? Does it vary? Because you talked about it being really helpful, but I didn't know what the process was when you do that.

GEORGE KIRBY: Yeah. I think the best thing is, you know, don't try and write the perfect thing down. You just kind of spew everything out. It just feels the best that way. You don't leave anything in the tank.

And then whether you grab him to talk about it or whatnot -- but, yeah, you just let everything out on paper, and it just feels a lot better.

**Q. You obviously got some experience in '22 going through the postseason. I'm curious, what were your sort of takeaways when you look back on that, things that you learned and experienced in that playoff run?**

GEORGE KIRBY: Man, I mean, just -- I mean, just enjoy the moment, I think is the biggest thing. You know, playing 162 games, just getting to the playoffs itself is a huge accomplishment, so kind of being grateful for that.

And then, honestly, the adrenaline is just my favorite part. Most of the time you're going to have your best stuff at this time of the year, getting into these games.

And, you know, just having the fans behind you, your teammates behind you, everyone kind of just coming together and just getting after it. That's kind of my favorite part, just the close battles, everything. Everything about the playoffs is awesome, so I'm excited.

**Q. George, the rotation had some struggles this year, particularly with health. And then getting back into it, where do you see them right now? How did they get there? And will we see your knuckleball?**

GEORGE KIRBY: You probably won't see the knuckleball in the playoffs.

But, yeah, everyone -- you know, all the starters right now -- they're feeling good. Everyone's in good a good spot health-wise. Hopefully -- Woo's been doing really well too, so we'll see him back.

But yeah. I think just like the rest of the team, we're all just kind of playing really well at the right time, and everything's

clicking. Guys are playing free and kind of just enjoying the moment. And you can really see it too. It's not just something that you might just say, but you actually feel it too, which is good.

**Q. George, going back to the injury for you in particular earlier in the season, how did you navigate that your first time on the injured list in your career? At what point did you feel like you were right again?**

GEORGE KIRBY: Yeah. It's never good being on the IL, being hurt, but it kind of takes a little bit just to kind of trust your body again and just have that same sort of confidence.

But I don't know. I guess when you stack a couple good games and kind of limit some -- I don't know. The more you go, the more you feel better. You start hitting corners better, all that kind of stuff.

So I think just limiting damage to certain areas, stuff like that. And then honestly, just for me, just kind of feeling like myself again out there, confidence-wise. I think this last month I've been feeling really good. And even before that. But right now I'm just mentally and physically feeling really good. So yeah.

**Q. George, the numbers indicate that after you came off the injured list, that your arm slot has dropped this year. Because of that, do you feel like at times this year as you've had to work your way back, that you've had to learn, maybe certain pitches in particular, how to throw them differently from a different arm slot? Has that been an issue you've had to work through?**

GEORGE KIRBY: Yeah. I think just maybe command. That was a little bit challenging, just figuring out arm angle and whatnot.

But this month or two, I feel like I'm back where I need to be. Instead of -- I think I was kind of aiming a lot, kind of really -- because I wasn't used to missing a lot all the time. So it's kind of stressful. And you go back to being yourself. It's not really a mechanical change or anything like that. Honestly, it's just having confidence. And right when you release the ball, that moment, you're free, and everything just takes over, all your practice and everything like that.

So when I was able to get to that point, it just kind of was a lot easier for me. But I think my arm's gotten higher as the season has gone on, so that's good. Yeah.

**Q. Is there any correlation in your mind with transitioning from the splitter to the changeup with your new arm angle, or are those separate things?**

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GEORGE KIRBY: They're separate. I just -- it's more just like a feel thing. It wasn't really arm-slot-related. But that's going to be a pitch I'll still work on offseason to try and get it back for next year.

But yeah. Right now the curveball, slider, and two heaters have been working really well, so I'll keep attacking with some of those, and we should be good.

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