

# AL Division Series: Tigers vs Mariners

Saturday, October 4, 2025

Seattle, Washington, USA

T-Mobile Park

## Seattle Mariners

### Luis Castillo

#### Pregame 1 Press Conference

**Q. Luis, you've had quite a few starts in the playoffs. What do you love about pitching this time of year?**

LUIS CASTILLO: Yeah. I think the adrenaline. I think the adrenaline is different. These kinds of games, you know, they come with a lot of intensity, so I think -- or I hope that today's and tomorrow's game, you know, the fans bring it and bring that intensity.

**Q. Luis, you've got a playoff start with that energy and a playoff start at home. What are you expecting from the crowd, and how do you feed off of that energy?**

LUIS CASTILLO: Yeah. You know, it's a lot. I mean, the fans -- you can really tell how much they love us. They bring us that energy. I think it was -- they deserve what we were able to bring, this good team that we have this year, build up on it.

They definitely bring a lot of energy, and we're able to feed off of it. They bring those vibes, and as we've all been saying, a lot of good vibes.

**Q. What did it mean to get that opportunity to start within these first two games and potentially help the Mariners have that lead early?**

LUIS CASTILLO: Yeah. You know, I think I've just got to give thanks. In 2022 they -- I was blessed enough that they gave me to Game 1, and, you know, now they're giving me Game 2. So I've just got to give them thanks for keeping me on that same page and just letting me throw the ball early in these first few games.

**Q. What do you think of your nickname "The Rock"? Who gave it to you? Do you like it? What does it signify?**

LUIS CASTILLO: Yeah. You know, I think the nickname



came from early, when my mom was pregnant with me. It was basically she was ready to go into labor on that day, and my dad had gone early to work to go take care of some of the produce that they had just picked from the ground.

My dad came in at 6:00 a.m., came home, found my mom on the ground, and she asked him what had happened. My mom said -- my mom was in pain, obviously, and as we say, she was ready to throw the baby, throw the baby out. But right away, my dad called my grandma. They found a truck and rushed to the hospital. And I think that was in 1992, so a long time ago.

My grandma grew up in a -- like, up in a hill, not many resources, so they have some beliefs, you know, from previous or past times. And while they were being rushed to the hospital, my grandma picked up a rock and would put it on my mom's head to kind of help distract her or help relieve some of that pain while she was going through contractions.

The other one was when I first got to the Reds around 2017, I went to go throw my first bullpen, and just me being the new guy, wanting to impress people, I just went in there and just started throwing as hard as I could. I was throwing 98, 97 in that bullpen.

And I remember the catcher that was catching me at the time -- he's not playing anymore, but Tim Allison, I think his name was. Yeah. He was catching me, and right after that bullpen session, he just came up to me and said, "Welcome, The Rock."

And I think based on those two stories, you know, that kind of nickname just came into fruition.

**Q. The other question was: You were already an established pitcher, a top-level pitcher when you came here. How has the Mariners' pitching philosophy lined up with you or helped in your evolution as a pitcher?**

LUIS CASTILLO: Yeah. You know, they've helped me a lot, really. They have a really good philosophy. I mean, I don't see myself as a guy with more experience or as an



older guy in that pitching staff or the starting rotation, but I see myself in that group as just another guy, someone who needs help, who can ask for help.

And that's what's great about the group, the pitching coach. Any other guys in that rotation, we're always giving advice and trying to help each other in whatever it is that we need.

**Q. When George and Bryce and Logan all spent time on the injured list, how much responsibility did you feel to make sure you posted every outing and be a stabilizing force when the whole rotation was battling injuries?**

LUIS CASTILLO: Yeah. You know, I think I just try to stay on the same page that I'm at. I really don't try to change anything. I know we've had some guys on the injured list come back now. Woo is a little bit hurt, but I think for me it's just trying to communicate, just check up on him every single day. I think I ask him how he's doing every single day. He's a great pitcher, and that's a guy that we really need here in the playoffs, and I'm trying to be as supportive as I possibly can.

**Q. Luis, The Rock is more than just a nickname for you. It's a statement of who you are, consistent day in and day out, that positive mindset that you talk about. When did you develop that? Has that changed over time? When did you realize how important having a consistent, positive mindset was in this work?**

LUIS CASTILLO: Yeah. You know, I know I'm The Rock on the mound, but I know there's a Rock out there that's a little more stronger than I am.

But I think the positive mentality came. I always try to have it because it helps me and not doubt myself, you know, doubt my abilities, doubt what I can -- or make sure I don't doubt in what I can do.

And I think that came from my dad. He told me that: "If you stay positive, you can't really doubt yourself, because when you start doubting yourself, that's kind of when you start losing who you are."

**Q. Luis, since that start in Atlanta, you've kind of taken your game to another level. How were you able to kind of get in that groove and pitch as well as you have in the last couple of starts?**

LUIS CASTILLO: You know, right before Atlanta, we were having some bad moments. The team wasn't performing well. But I've always said it every time they ask me, "It's a long game, baseball, and you live through good times, and you live through bad times."

And after that start, I kind of got a sense that things were shifting, and right away the team started performing well. The team started playing great games, and thanks to that, I think that's why we're here right now.

**Q. Luis, we see in the postseason hitters' approach sometimes change or offensive approach. There's more bunts, runners are going for an extra 90 feet. Does the pitching mindset change at all, or does it do anything to reflect that, or is it really the same game all around?**

LUIS CASTILLO: Yeah. I don't think so. I mean, I've always said it. I think the game speaks to us pitchers, you know, right from the very beginning. So a batter always comes up with this plan or always adjusting, so I think we kind of have to do that.

If we're always staying on the same page, keep doing the same thing, I think you're not going to have the best results. So you're constantly having to see what the -- something different the batters are doing, what's going on in the game, and because of that, you're able to have those good results.

**Q. Do you think that the twelve-team playoff, the bracket being expanded, does that allow for you guys to -- I don't want to say coast in the postseason, into the postseason, but you can get that rest, you can get that priority, versus in the past teams needed to really push until the end, conscious of playoff season, things like that. Just because you guys were able to at the end of the season take a few games, get some rest, things like that?**

LUIS CASTILLO: Yeah. You know, those are just rules, formats that happen, and you just kind of have to deal with them.

But I think for us, the rest kind of came at a good time. You play 162 games, and it is a long pause, but I think, you know, with the scrimmages, the practices that we have, you're able to adjust mentally, physically, kind of get back into rhythm.

But I think some of this rest does come into effect that does really help us, and I think you've got to take advantage of it.

**Q. Year after year, the Mariners' pitchers always seem to throw a lot of strikes, not a lot of walks, a lot of strikeouts. What is the sort of overall emphasis or strategy that the Mariners try to tell you pitchers?**

LUIS CASTILLO: Yeah. You know, when I first got here



with the Mariners, they told us, "Go and attack the batter. Try and get that first-pitch strike."

And I think it helps because, you know, it gives you that -- you start off right away ahead on the count. So I think it hasn't helped just me, but I think it's helped the whole pitching staff, just helped develop and kind of keep control of it. So I think, you know, that philosophy has really helped us.

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