

NL Division Series:

Cubs vs Brewers

Wednesday, October 8, 2025

Chicago, Illinois, USA

Wrigley Field

Milwaukee Brewers

Brandon Lockridge

Jake Bauers

Pregame 3 Press Conference

Q. What's it like to be on the bench in a playoff game and wait for your chance to start? How are the nerves in those situations?

JAKE BAUERS: Yeah, I think for me, the biggest thing is trying to be engaged early in the game and then as the game gets later and later, you saw throughout the regular season, that pinch-hit is coming at some point, so I think by like the fourth or fifth inning I'm probably sitting down on the bench by myself trying to stay locked in but at the same time trying to be as excited as possible and cheering on the guys. So it's definitely a fine line.

But excited to get out there tonight for sure.

BRANDON LOCKRIDGE: Yeah, I think most of my big league experience has been a bench role like this so far. Obviously right now, it's a little bit different situation. Leverage situations happen sooner in the game now. They've done a good job communicating, telling me to be ready early on. I'm as mentally exhausted with these games so far as I am if I played a game during the regular season.

It's definitely just a different -- you're getting locked in at a different time now as opposed to regular season. But I'm excited for the opportunity to start tonight.

Q. If you are starting tonight, how does that change the nerves or the role or anything like that?

BRANDON LOCKRIDGE: Yeah, I got the lineup last night. Normally you wake up when you're playing off the bench, you wake up and the nerves kind of settle in, but they settled in a little sooner last night when I found out I was starting.



Q. Jake, you kind of said earlier this year that the home run you hit in Game 3 last year, you felt like could be a springboard toward just an improved new season, and I wonder how you feel this playoffs relative to last one now that you have that on your resume if it has changed you as a hitter and if you feel differently going into the playoffs this time around?

JAKE BAUERS: Yeah, I definitely feel a little different. I think last year there was a lot of doubt, a lot of doubt if you could come through on a big stage, and then you do, and so you turn that doubt into nerves, yeah, but also excitement. Looking forward to the opportunity, and it becomes less what if it doesn't happen and more how can I help and what if it does happen. I think that's kind of the switch for me throughout the entire season.

So when you get into the postseason, obviously it's heightened, but it's essentially the same thing.

Q. Brandon, Murph calls you "Breckenridge." Have you been to Breckenridge, Colorado?

BRANDON LOCKRIDGE: I have, actually. I don't know where that came from. I am assuming the "ridge" at the end, it might have been the first thing that came to his mind at the time. But when he says it, I look now, so that's good.

Q. Each game they've scored, you guys have come right back and scored yourselves. It's one thing to do that in the regular season. What has allowed the team to just continue to have that mindset to bounce back right away, for either of you?

BRANDON LOCKRIDGE: I think 162 games of that being the mentality. I think the way we played in the regular season was a good chance to put that into practice and to really solidify that that's going to be our identity and we're going to grind out at-bats regardless of what the score is.

So when you have six, seven months of that being the standard, nothing changes when the calendar flips to October.

Q. Are you actively looking at what's going on in the



other series to see potential rivals? And if you do, which player do you think is the one that is making the most noise this October?

BRANDON LOCKRIDGE: I mean, I definitely have been watching the other games. I love watching good baseball games. Being that I was with the Yankees, I came up with them, I know quite a few of those guys over there, so I've been watching those games. I've obviously seen the impact Vlad has made on the Blue Jays as well, so I'd definitely say he's had a pretty impressive postseason.

JAKE BAUERS: Yeah, I mean, the games are always on in the clubhouse, so definitely watching. My wife is a baseball fan, so I get home from our game, she's got the games on the TV, so we end up watching the rest of them. Like Lock said, what Vlad is doing right now has been fun to watch.

Q. Jake, you had a really strong finish to the regular and you made a lot more contact especially in that last month of September. Does something like that influence how you feel going into the playoffs or what you think you're capable of, or is it good or bad you just kind of go clean slate when you get to this point?

JAKE BAUERS: I think having a little bit of a stretch when I was playing well consistently definitely helps the mindset going in.

I hear Murph talk a lot about meeting the game halfway, and I think that's something that I really started to recognize when I came back off the IL, and instead of trying to drive every pitch that I saw, it was more what can I do with this pitch that I have now, and how can I win the at-bat. I've just kind of taken that mentality and tried to put it into practice a little bit more and seen some good results off of it, so I don't think anything changes.

Q. Brandon, you were asked about the Breckenridge thing. What have your thoughts been on Murph in the short time you've been exposed to him and playing for him and his personality and everything?

BRANDON LOCKRIDGE: I've thoroughly enjoyed it. I feel like he's a great leader in the clubhouse. He makes you kind of feel at ease. Obviously he's got a strong personality, and at first it was a little bit intimidating. But once you realize and you play for him for a few games, you realize that he truly wants every player to get the most out of themselves.

He's huge on the culture, everybody playing together, pulling for the same thing. I think you kind of see that every time we take the field. There's a common goal that if

you're 0 for 4, 4 for 4, the whole team is excited for every single person that pulls through.

I just think that's a reflection of what Murph brings to the table. He's a super easy guy to play for. You really want to get back to the dugout and get that high five from him and feel like he's proud of you.

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