

MLB World Series: Dodgers vs Blue Jays

Saturday, October 25, 2025

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Rogers Centre

Toronto Blue Jays

Louis Varland

Pregame 2 Press Conference



Q. Obviously you didn't pitch yesterday, but just given how much you've pitched in the playoffs so far, have you ever experienced anything like this physically before and what are the feelings of kind of being up and throwing basically every day?

LOUIS VARLAND: I guess I've never really experienced this amount of use. I pitched a lot during the regular season, basically, like, a picket fence, like, one day on, off day, pitch, off day, pitch, off day.

But I like the ball, I like to pitch. Thankfully I haven't been too sore to say something, speak up, say, Hey, I need a day. But I will say that if you ask any other pen guy to do what I'm doing, they would gladly do it.

Q. And then just looking back at your season on the whole, the trade at the deadline, moving away from home, now in the World Series, what has these last three or four months been like for you?

LOUIS VARLAND: It's been really crazy, but everything happens for a reason. I believe that. So it's been a lot of fun.

Q. On those lines, was there a point where you kind of felt like I've got my feet under me here in Toronto, like, I know I've kind of got a sense of the organization and what to expect here?

LOUIS VARLAND: Yeah, I guess I was, like, more to myself originally. I didn't ask too many questions. But then, obviously, yeah, you get comfy, start asking more questions, meeting more people, and things get easier.

There's growing pains with every trade, especially your first one, so I guess it was as expected to slowly get used to things and find my feet and get used to it.

Q. Yesterday was a rare, rare off day for you where you didn't pitch. What was it like to watch the team perform the way it did and especially Barger hitting that home run?

LOUIS VARLAND: Yeah, it was great. Barger, that hit was unbelievable. We were screaming and yelling in the pen. Extremely hyped. Yeah. But, I mean, I guess it was nice to have an off day. It was more nice to win the game. So, yeah, great start.

Q. I think the cameras during the anthems caught you with a Hi, Mom, I believe, and a Wow at the end of it after the applause that you got. What was that moment like for you and maybe talk about what your family means to you and what you were thinking about in that moment.

LOUIS VARLAND: Yeah, my family is my biggest supporters, I said, Hi, Mom because I knew she was watching at home. She will be in L.A., though. I guess I said the Wow because I don't know if the crowd was cheering more for me or that we were done with, like, all the nonstarter intros. But I thought it was pretty cool.

Q. Two questions. The first is: Obviously, Chris Bassitt has been coming out of the bullpen in the ALCS and now in the World Series. What's it been like having him in the bullpen, obviously, as a wealth of experience.

LOUIS VARLAND: It's great having him out there. Him and Hoffman both having, like, a lot of experience. Seranthony as well. He's very vocal guy, as you probably know. He's great to have out there. He's crushing Red Bulls and showing us the way, and a great guy to have in the pen for the World Series.

Q. Second question is: Ross Atkins, since becoming GM here, has always spoken about the importance to him and the organization of bringing in players, personnel, coaches that have high character, good values. Since you're one of the newer arrivals, have you felt that in the clubhouse, not just with your teammates, but with other people in the organization, whether it's coaches, trainers, whatever?

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LOUIS VARLAND: Yeah, absolutely. From the coaching staff to the players to the support staff to the chefs, like everybody's great, everybody's friendly, welcoming. I saw this the other day, the Glue Jays. That's, like, a perfect way to sum it up. Everybody's so close and everybody's a great guy and girl.

Q. Your line of work is so volatile, especially even more so in the postseason. What's it been like, you got a little taste a few years ago, but watching over the years what playoff relieving looks like and now getting just tossed into the deep end this postseason?

LOUIS VARLAND: Yeah, it's just being ready since pitch 1 and doing whatever it takes. Once you're called upon, you got to be ready, so just go out there, prepare yourself as best you can for anything to happen.

Q. Is there kind of a chance for guys who are struggling to maybe rewrite a narrative, like, there's no choice but to go to a guy, and then he can kind of turn around the perception of him after stringing a few good appearances together?

LOUIS VARLAND: Yeah, absolutely. I always say it's not what you've done, although it does matter what you've done, but it's what you do next and making the most of opportunities of your next outing to correct a bad outing before or anything that went poorly before or to keep a good outing into another good outing, that's important too, and do a little streak.

Q. As intense as these postseason games are, do you feel more drained or more sore after pitching in them?

LOUIS VARLAND: No, I don't, thankfully. Yeah.

Q. Do you feel more hyped up in the games?

LOUIS VARLAND: Absolutely. Yeah.

Q. How do you measure that or control that?

LOUIS VARLAND: Yeah, I guess at home, I let it fuel me because everybody's cheering for me. On the road, you get tunnel vision and block it out and do your job and take it one pitch at a time.

Q. Thinking a little bit about adapting as you were talking off the top and us finding out about Addison Barger having to sleep on a couch. I just wanted to know if you've had any opportunities as a new guy in town and then having potentially newer guys in town anyway that you've helped to adapt people here, any

couches or otherwise that you've given on offer?

LOUIS VARLAND: I've never really had that opportunity to help somebody else or anything. I mean, my living situation has been pretty convenient for me. I moved into Will Wagner's apartment, who was traded from here. I came in, took over his lease. So I never really needed to rely on anybody's couch to sleep on or anything, so it worked out.

Q. Yesterday was an example, also Game 4 at the bullpen day in New York, where the highest leverage point from a pitching perspective for you guys was the middle of the game as opposed to late. Just wondering, as you've been watching the postseason, what's your sense of how leverage can sort of swing to different points in the game where typically you think it would be late, but sometimes it comes a lot earlier and the key outs are in the 4th, 5th, 6th as opposed to 7, 8, 9.

LOUIS VARLAND: Yeah, that's just baseball. The starters seeing the meat of the order for the third time is a big thing, and once you get traffic on the bases, you want to keep them, like, away from touching home. So it could come in the 5th, 6th, 7th, or even in the 9th in some games as well. That's just how baseball goes.

Q. What do you do to recover between outings? Whether it's food, stretching, music you listen to, what do you do?

LOUIS VARLAND: Yeah, I have my routine. I think I naturally just recover well. I don't know what my anatomy has different than the average human, but I've always been a believer in blood flow. You want new blood to the tissue that's been used. That pretty much starts the whole recovery process. So increasing in heart rate, I do that a lot.

I have my routine that probably checks a lot of other boxes to help me recover and everything. I do a lot of contrast, hot tub, cold tub, back and forth.

Q. How has it felt for you to be the guy who has been called on so much, not as far as the workload goes, but as far as the trust goes, as far as John Schneider wanting you in 10 of the first 11 playoff games, how has that felt?

LOUIS VARLAND: Yeah, it feels great. Sometimes they don't go as planned, but it means a lot to me, him to throw me right back out there the next day. Trust is earned. I don't know if I fully earned it with how my extreme series has gone so far, there's been some ups, there's been



some downs. But I think them for bringing me over to the Blue Jays, that was the whole purpose to put me in these positions, and thankful I'm blessed and I can't wait to throw tonight.

Q. As far as the Glue Jays things go that you were talking about, everyone in that clubhouse talks about the unique closeness of that room, how it's unlike any team that they have ever been on before. You've only been here for three months, but do you sense that as well, and not to disparage any of your old Minnesota teams, but is this that special, do you think?

LOUIS VARLAND: Yeah, absolutely. I think everybody's personality and attributes blends and meshes well with everybody else's, and everybody just has a lot of fun, gets along, and wins.

Q. There are a lot of Canadians that live in Minnesota, Minneapolis, St. Paul. Do you get a lot of feedback from people back home as far as rooting for you and the Blue Jays?

LOUIS VARLAND: Yeah, absolutely. I heard a couple parades have been happening recently. I don't know, I know there's one in my hometown, North St. Paul. There's banners and stuff here and there. I didn't hear about it until someone told me recently. But, yeah, a lot of Canadians, a lot of Minnesota fans rooting for me.

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