

MLB World Series: Dodgers vs Blue Jays

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Dodger Stadium

Toronto Blue Jays

John Schneider

Workout Day Press Conference

Q. We've asked you a bunch of times during these playoffs about your plane rides and what the vibe is, so I'm just wondering if you could set the scene and tell us what it was like coming here.

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Pretty normal. Card games. Lost a little bit of money. But I think just kind of talking about tomorrow night's game and what we got ahead of us. But it was a long flight, but pretty normal. Guys are resilient. They move on to the next thing. I say it all the time.

Q. Obviously you don't have to set the lineup for a little while yet, but how is Bo doing? What's his availability, do you expect, for Game 3?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Doing well. Expecting him to be in there. He's out here working out today. Felt good coming out of yesterday. I think with each day that goes on, he'll probably get as close to normal as he can at this stage of the year. But the fact that he's out here working out today is a good sign and expect him to be in there tomorrow.

Q. Bigger picture with your offense, you guys have been the best team in baseball in the postseason by a pretty big margin. Then Game 2 Yamamoto was so good. How do you view those two elements in relation to each other?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: I think it's a really good game by a really good pitcher. Up to that point, I think we have been pretty consistent. I mean, these things are going to happen. It's the two best teams left, and he was on his game yesterday.

So as a whole, I love what we've been doing throughout the course of the postseason, expect us to keep doing it. But again, man, it's a tough task every night against these starters, and you move on to another one tomorrow.



Q. With three games in three days, how significant will it be for you getting to their bullpen early and trying to avoid them getting to your bullpen early?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, that's kind of what you want to do every series, right? Again, we're trying to approach this as seven -- if it gets to that point, seven one-game series. So at this point, it's going to be all hands on deck. These guys are going to -- I think everyone will be able to throw three days in a row. But you want to try to see those bullpen arms, you want to try to get a little bit familiar with 'em, and hopefully have a little bit of fatigue set in. That's both sides going.

So starting pitching is going to be important for both sides, for sure, and guys that can throw multiple innings are going to be important in these next three days. But I think especially against this team, you want to try to wear down their starters and get into their pen.

Q. And do you, in your mind, wonder what Max's reaction will be if and when you show up at the mound?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: (Laughing.) No. We were just talking earlier today. He's got a really good idea of kind of how he's feeling and what the game state may be and how to react and how to adjust, so I'm going to try to avoid any mound visits with Max tomorrow.

Q. Two questions for you. First off, it's so incredible, Blue Jays fans. Like, 11:45 at night I'm out there with all of them outside Rogers Centre freezing, but we want to wave to the buses as they go by. It's incredible. The connection that all of the Blue Jays have to you, it's a family. Glue Jays, as you guys say. Do you ever just step back and realize how incredibly special it is, the connection the players have with the fans? Like it's really magical.

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, I mean, we felt it all -- we feel it all the time, I think, just being a team that represents a country. But throughout the postseason, it's -- I mean, I enjoy seeing those fans as we're pulling out. It doesn't happen very often in any scenario, any sport. So we feel it. We love it. It's awesome to see some of the videos of the

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fans outside of the Rogers Centre cheering, and I think it kind of shows what kind of fan base and support that we have. But definitely don't take it for granted.

Q. My dog was out there with his Blue Jays jersey. Second question: Speaking of that, you just left Toronto. We are here in L.A.. who has the worst traffic, Toronto or L.A.?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: L.A.

Q. Really?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah. Hands down. Yeah.

Q. Is Jersey going to get honorable mention in that or no?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Oh, man, I haven't been there in awhile. But I think anything is a, sometimes, a close second to L.A.

Q. Going back to the three games in three days thing, what did you learn from that process in the ALCS and what's the challenge like, I guess, mentally of when you're determining whether or not to expand or contract your what we might call circle of trust?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, we were fortunate in the ALCS with starters, getting to where they did in those games. So you want that to happen again to try to save some arms. I think in terms of circle of trust, again, I've said it all along, I trust everyone that's on the roster, and we're probably going to need everyone when you're playing three games in a row. So we tried to build it to where there's multiple guys that can give you multiple innings, but I think that it starts on the mound with the starter. If you can churn through some innings and -- even if it's just saving one winning here or there for one of your bullpen guys, that's huge. So hopefully we can be as fortunate as we were in the CS.

Q. When you talk about guys getting multiple looks, either multiple looks at starters, multiple looks at relievers, just the elite level of both lineups, I mean, is that going to be a pretty significant boon the hitters on both sides, just because they're really good and they're really smart?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: I think so, yeah. Yeah, it's well documented in the game, you know, being familiar with the starter, right? I think it holds true when you're playing a long series, the same team seven -- we saw it with Seattle and how certain at-bats can be affected. I know a lot of people were talking about George's at-bat, seeing the

same reliever for, I think, the third or fourth time, whatever it was.

So that's where the adjustments come in, that's where the gamesmanship comes in. You have to be able to adapt and show a guy a different look, a different pitch, a different location. So it's a battle. These guys have really good stuff, our guys have really good stuff, we have really good hitters, they have really good hitters, so it comes down to really making one pitch at a time, not being predictable.

Q. Just wondering, the role you guys have used Louis in throughout these playoffs, kind of like the first man out of the pen, the early leverage situations, is that what you envisioned for him when you guys acquired him or if not, how has he kind of grown into that role?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Based on how he was used in Minnesota with who else was in that bullpen, that's kind of what we liked about him, you know, a guy that can go up and down, finish an inning, go back out, maintain his stuff. I think it's kind of happened with where we have been in certain lineups too. It's not going to be him every single night as the first guy in, but he's got a real good way about him to be ready to come in and squash an inning and then go back out and stay focused.

So we view him as that. I have no problem with him closing a game, I have no problem with him starting a game, so valuable is an understatement to say about him in a bullpen.

Q. Who won the money off you in those playing card games?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: I'll keep that on the plane. Someone who makes more money than me.

Q. Given that you were only 8 years of age at the time, would a kid from New Jersey have a visual memory of the home run that Kirk Gibson hit here in 1988?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, I do. It was pretty cool. I think watching that in real time and then -- you know, that whole sequence of events, I was lucky enough to get to know Mel Didier, a longtime scout, when he was working with us. And to hear him tell the story of the 3-2 backdoor slider from Eckersley, sit on it, and to kind of look at Gibson, step out, and say he was thinking about that.

Didn't know it at the time, but you look at that -- and I remember Lasorda running out of the dugout and obviously the fist pumps and him limping around and stuff. That was ingrained in my memory. But then to hear that kind of add-on part of the story was pretty cool.

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Q. I know a lot's been made about the Dodgers experience in this kind of level, but to have a guy who is made 26 postseason starts who has experience playing on this stage, what kind of added sense of comfort does that give you that maybe just this moment obviously wouldn't be too big or anything like that?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: For Max? Yeah, I mean, that's kind of why we lined him up for tomorrow without having too much of a layoff from a rest standpoint. You look at some of these guys, they got, you know, almost a regular season full of stuff in the postseason, you know, when you look at him or George, a lot of guys on their roster obviously too. So you feel good about that. You feel good that he's going to be able to absorb the situation, the atmosphere, what comes with it, and then kind of get to competing and locating.

So we're fortunate to have those guys, and you throw Trey in there who we asked to do Game 1, right? I think that having the other guys around him helps him with that too. But I'm looking forward to seeing Max go out there on a field he's familiar with and a stage that he's familiar with.

Q. The Dodgers manager, Dave Roberts, talk about the Dodgers baseball. What is the definition for you of the Blue Jays baseball?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: I think watch Game 1. That's kind of us. The definition of us is everyone doing their job, guys playing the game the right way and understanding situations that happen throughout the game, and responding accordingly. Everyone pulling for one another and everyone ready to contribute in some way, shape, or form. I think that kind of sums it up.

I also think that we really lean into the way that we can score in different ways. It's not a one-sided attack. It's a pretty creative, balanced, and unique offensive approach.

Q. The other day Andrew Friedman was talking about how one of his goals when he came here was to turn L.A. into a destination. He sees you guys behaving in similar fashion. What would you like players around the league to have noticed about the Toronto experience, Blue Jays baseball, the way you guys play, what you've built over the course of the off-season? What are the takeaways that you hope they take?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Man, I hope and I think -- not I think, I know people recognize how we play the game and how we use everyone on our roster and how we try to keep people involved. I think that can lead to some

sustainability in terms of winning. Facilities are second to none. Fan base obviously in my mind is second to none, when you have a whole country behind you. But I think more than anything I'm proud of the fact that it's pretty clear what we stand for and what we think is important on the field. I think we really showed that this entire season and this postseason. And everything that comes with it, from whatever you need to get better, we have. But I just like the fact that I think 29 other teams around the league can kind of pinpoint what we do well and how we do it and kind of what we value.

Q. Speaking of your opponent, a lot is made of what Shohei has done both on the mound and otherwise. But also on this team is Mookie Betts, who switched positions. I'm just wondering what your thoughts are on him as a baseball guy, looking at him playing on that infield, and how well he's done so far in this series against you.

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, I've always respected him the way he plays the game. Going back to when he was with the Red Sox. Makes playing shortstop look easy for a guy that's a Gold Glover in right field. He's just consistent. I think he understands the speed of the game, understands big stages of the game. I think any manager feels comfortable and confident writing a lineup when you got a guy like that in there every day.

A couple plays that he's made, man, just going to his right against us in the first couple games, pretty impressive what he does. And the fact that he's hitting at the top of the order, I think Mookie's a hell of a player.

Q. Just back to Bo for a second. You mentioned going into the series shortstop could be a possibility. Just for Game 3 are the options second base, DH or is there anything else on the table?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: He's going to play second base tomorrow.

Q. When you're at home or in the clubhouse and a Dodger game is on TV, do you kind of look up and take notice when Ohtani's at the plate or on the mound?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: If I'm awake. They're three hours behind us. I kind of -- I'm always watching baseball. But if I'm tired and it's time to hit the rack and he's coming up to lead off the next inning, I'm asleep.

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