

MLB World Series: Dodgers vs Blue Jays

Friday, October 31, 2025

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Rogers Centre

Toronto Blue Jays

John Schneider

Pregame 6 Press Conference



JOHN SCHNEIDER: Sitting at my neighbor's driveway drinking a beer and giving out candy. So this is way, way better.

Q. No costume?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: No. I think Halloween's a made-up holiday anyway. I don't dress up. It's kind of like my least favorite holiday of the year. So if it's a chance to hang out in the neighborhood and have a couple cold ones and laugh at some costumes, I'm all for it, but I like this costume a lot better.

Q. Bo's obviously done everything he can to get back to this point, and he obviously has an important off-season for his career coming up. Wondering what you think it says about his character that he fought so hard to get back even though there's always the risk that that could have set him back for something this off-season?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, man, I think that he kind of -- he gets overshadowed a little bit. Bo's been so good for us this year and his entire time here, really. I'm happy for him to be in this, to be on this stage. It was hard for him, mentally and physically, for a couple weeks, kind of down towards the end of the year into the first couple rounds. I think his mental toughness really came through. He's been such a -- he's grown up a lot this year in terms of what he wants to do, how he wants to do it, who he wants to be in the clubhouse.

So I'm just thrilled for him that he was able to get back and to be kind of on this stage and contribute in the way he is.

Q. Yamamoto in Game 2 was outstanding. What can you take from that game into tonight?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: I think that we've done a good job of adjusting against good pitchers when we see them again. He's tough, man. I said it after Game 2. It felt like he was almost, like, three different pitchers in the first, middle, and last part of that game.

I think you have to watch how he's deploying and see what his stuff is like. Every game is different for every starter

Q. Of all the starting pitchers on your World Series roster, Kevin's been here the longest. How nice is it for him to have this opportunity to potentially close it out today?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, kind of fitting. Since he's gotten here, he's kind of been our guy. Pitched in big games, pitched in big games in years past, and, you know, this season, this postseason. You know what you're going to get. He's got a good way about him. He's about as cool and calm as you can find, kind of getting ready for a start. So it's nice. It's nice that it lined up this way.

Q. When you contrast this year to last year, what's been the biggest difference with Gausman?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Oh, man, I think his delivery has been consistent. I think he had a normal spring training. His stuff has held. I think that all that goes back to his delivery being kind of on point throughout the year. Really second half and postseason, it's been exactly where he wants it to be, and when he's got his good life to his heater, he's usually pretty good, and that's been really consistent all year.

Q. Seeing George back at the top the lineup, what went into him being back in there for you?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: He was pretty close in Game 5. I think having the extra day and a half helped. I think kind of just the feedback we got from him in the last couple days helped, and watching him swing. Maybe a different story if -- the season has the potential to just be two games. If it had the potential to be another two weeks, maybe a little bit different, but he's ready to go.

Q. Wondering if you can remember what were you doing last year on Halloween?



based on their stuff and their location. So any mistakes that he does make, you have to be ready for 'em. If he's throwing strikes, I think you've got to try to force some action too and try to take advantage of the way we make contact, and we'll kind of see how the game starts. Hopefully we can stay on him early and not let him settle in like he did last time. I think our best chance to score was in the first inning last time against him.

But I think that we have a good game plan going in. Again, you're talking about the best of the best when you get to this stage, when you're facing pitching. So he's a tough matchup, but I think we have a good game plan going in.

Q. After Game 5 when you hit two home runs in the first three pitches, postgame Blake Snell felt the Blue Jays were lucky. Do you share that opinion?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: No. I will say, I think he's a great pitcher. I said this yesterday. I don't want to, like, wash over that. No, I thought we took good swings early on his fastball. I think we led the league in batting average this year.

Q. Talking to a few of your players, there's sort of been an odd continuum of how they're feeling right now. Like, Bo says he's felt emotions he's never felt before in his life, and a lot of people have said playing in the World Series is living up to what they thought. But a few guys have said they don't feel like it's the World Series, and they have used the word surreal and they can't believe it. Where do you sit on that spectrum? Is this, like, World Series living up to what you thought it was going to be, can't quite believe this is what's going on?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, I'm trying to just take in the stuff that comes with the World Series and, you know, every game's a little bit different. I think when the game starts, it gets back to some normalcy. Really in real time, you don't think about the things that are going to be said or written or remembered when you're kind of in it.

But this is the only place you kind of -- I mean, this is why you sign up to do this, as a player, manager, so you have to enjoy it. There always comes a time, you know, a Game 6 or a Game whatever, you got to take a step back and appreciate it.

But I think the more normal you can make it, the easier it is to go play. But I have found that kind of operating in real time -- even if it was Game 3, 18 innings, you don't really think about the magnitude of anything historical or things like that in the moment. You're just trying to do what you do. But I'm trying to take it in as well.

Q. As far as Max goes, when we were in L.A., Chris was up there saying that he wanted Max on this team because he thought you guys needed someone like him not necessarily on the mound, someone who was going to question everything, who was going to ask management, front office about every possible everything, and really be a bug in your ear. How has that translated and how much have you -- how much do you think that has helped?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Quite a bit. Again, it's not like one person coming in and changing anything. I think that we kind of did that collectively after last year. But Max has been -- he's great because he's not afraid to question base running, question defense, question offense. He still thinks he's our best base runner on the team from his days with the Nationals.

So he's not afraid to push the envelope, he's not afraid to be curious, he's not afraid to share things that he's been through that maybe I haven't been to. I've already had my 20-minute sit-down with him today and he's been great. I think when you've been through things like this that not many people have, you can really offer some good advice and feedback. I think that he's helped not just pitchers, but he's helped our players kind of have an edge about 'em throughout the entire year, even when he wasn't pitching, which says a lot about his character. So he's been great for us, more than just on the mound.

Q. A year ago their team won the World Series and your team was coming off a last-place finish. Now you're up 3-2 in the World Series. A year ago did you think this was possible? And if you did, was part of it that baseball is amazing sometimes?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, I always have that positive outlook, sometimes to the point of, like, frustration to myself, really, or people around me. I think you always have to say, yeah, that could be the possibility.

And baseball is great. It really is. Like, it's crazy to think about regular season games that affected where we are and every postseason game that has a twist and a turn. Like, you never know. You never know who is going to do what or -- I hate, like, matchups and predictions. You got to go play. I think that we've done a good job of understanding that as a team.

So I guess to answer your question, yes, I thought it was a possibility even when I was giving out candy 365 days ago. But, yeah, man, it just makes you appreciate the game so much and that, you know, timing is a part of it, who is playing well when. I just love how in it and engaged all the



guys are right now.

Q. Besides just having an optimistic nature like that, what was it about last year that you thought maybe that's an outlier and that's not who the real Blue Jays are, that you didn't need to make wholesale changes -- the front office didn't need to make wholesale changes to the roster? What fueled that belief, like, realistically that you could bounce back the way you did?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Is that Miggy?

MIGUEL ROJAS: I didn't know you were there. I'll come back.

JOHN SCHNEIDER: I think just trusting people is kind of what it came down to. I think that last year there was some stuff that happened that we weren't expecting, whether it was health, luck, performance, things like that. I think being kind of convicted in what you do and how you do it, and then being able to take a step back and say, we need to make some changes, whether it's myself, Ross, players, coaches.

Again, that started, like, in September when we were still playing, trying to, like, do it while guys were still here as opposed to the off-season. So I think just trusting people. And for as positive as I am, I think Ross is the same way. It would be easy to kind of knee-jerk react to last year. I don't think he did, I don't think I did, I don't think we did. I'm thankful for that. You trust people and you trust that what you're preparing for is right. Players have to go do it, and they have answered the bell.

Q. What changes did you make?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Me, I just really -- when this spring training started, I tried to just really be myself. Again, not that I wasn't, but this job is hard. It takes reps and it takes messing some things up and having some success. But I think going into it, like, truly authentically saying, Hey, man, this is what we're doing, this is what we believe, and you guys got to trust me, I think that has helped. I think kind of like communicating that to the guys has helped.

Never really felt more aligned with a whole organization, front office, coaches, and players, than I have this year. I just try to be consistent with that and I think that it kind of rubs off to the staff and the group too.

Q. Alejandro Kirk has been playing great the whole series, but are you aware what he did for the country of Mexico?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Recently? No, I'm not.

Q. He's our first-ever Mexican born player to hit a home run in the World Series.

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Oh, Kirky. He's got three, doesn't he? Kirky, man, he's, like, one of my favorite people ever. He's just so lovable, so likeable, so consistent. I know he takes a lot of pride in that. He's really close with his family and people back home. Couldn't happen to a better guy, to be honest with you. I've been so proud of his growth this year, just kind of an unassuming guy that continues to deliver on the biggest stage.

Q. I remember in spring training when we spoke and you talked about David coming in and Lou helping out, it seems like on the field, it's been different offensively for the team. How much credit do you give those two guys and how have they transformed the way you guys want to play offensively this year?

JOHN SCHNEIDER: Yeah, I think it was something -- again, going back to your question, I think we had the people here, right? And I think that we just had to tweak kind of the way we prepared or the way we communicated certain things to players. They have been -- I give them a ton of credit. And Hunter Mense too. Hunter had been here for a couple years. So to kind of evolve a little bit with a new hitting group was hard to do, and he's been instrumental just like they have.

But their energy, their positivity, their content, their work ethic, I think has just been really, really clear from day one. I'm talking day one, like, when I hired those guys. Like, they started flying to guys and talking to them, and they were prepared to give them feedback. So it was cool that the timing of it was what it was. I think of the guys that have been here, George, Bo, Vlad, Kirky, Varsh, they were ready for a little bit more, and Pop and Lou and Hunter were able to offer that for 'em.

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