

Ryan Goins recovers from Game 2 misplay with monster Game 3 performance

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By Israel Fehr 20 October, 2015 1:25 AM

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TORONTO – Ryan Goins showed how quickly one's fortunes can turn with a positive attitude and the support of the people around him, going from his worst professional moment to playing quite possibly the game of his life less than 48 hours later.

Goins stood in the visitor's clubhouse Saturday night in Kansas City with tears in his eyes after his misplay of a lazy fly ball to short right field led to the Royals' five-run seventh inning and the Toronto Blue Jays going down 2-0 in the American League Championship Series.

It was a routine play, a play a defender as good as Goins makes 100 times out of 100. Except this one time. Goins called off right fielder Jose Bautista, but at the very last moment he backed off and the ball dropped between them. The beneficiary was Ben Zobrist, the first of six Kansas City baserunners in the inning, and the Royals took advantage, taking the lead on their way to a comeback win.

Goins took responsibility for what happened, but he couldn't dwell on it. He had no choice but to wipe those tears away and come out Monday ready to play. He knew his team needed him at his best.

"I put the game in Kansas City behind me, had the off day yesterday, came in, worked out, and today it was probably the last thing in the back of my head. I didn't even think about it," said Goins. "Came in with a mindset to do what was needed to win."

And he delivered. Goins drove in Toronto's first two runs in a [11-8 Game 3 win](#) over the Royals with a single to left field in the second, and then put an exclamation point on his offensive performance with a solo home run to right-center in the fifth.

When he wasn't ripping hits, he was taking them away with his glove. Goins flashed the leather at second base on a sharp ground ball up the middle in the seventh to rob Lorenzo Cain of a single.

"He felt good. I mean, he's been carrying that load around a little bit. But he stepped up, really got us on the board with that great at-bat (in the second), picking up those two runs (with) a base hit to left and then, of course, the home run. He hasn't hit many home runs, but he's hit a couple key ones for us, and that was a key one again today," said manager John Gibbons. "It was really the perfect game for him the day after. He'll feel much better about himself."

It shouldn't come as a surprise, because Goins was there for his team when the Blue Jays needed him multiple times this season.

The 27-year-old Texan began the year in Triple-A, and earned a call-up a couple weeks into April to be the team's backup middle infielder. He filled in at shortstop for a month when Jose Reyes went down with an injury. Second baseman Devon Travis was hurt two weeks after Reyes returned, so Goins stepped in as the starter at second for over a month.



It wasn't long before Travis was sidelined again and Goins became Toronto's full-time second baseman for the final two months of the season. That's when he played his best ball, too. He hit .282 with a .371 OBP in 57 games between the end of July and the season's last series at the beginning of October.

After the game, it was apparent how much Goins' teammates were rooting for him to do exactly what he did at Rogers Centre on Monday night.

"It's huge. That just shows you a lot about who Ryan Goins is as a person and the amount of character he has," said third baseman Josh Donaldson. I know he wanted to come out and prove people the kind of player he is today, and he did that."

"People outside this room want to blame him for our loss (in Game 2)," added center fielder Kevin Pillar. "We had our opportunities. We could've scored more runs. We could've gotten out of that inning. Did he need this? No. The guy's been outstanding all year. But I couldn't be happier for him, to be able to step up like that and kind of shut up the critics."

From the lowest of lows to the highest of highs. That's life in the postseason.

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