

Barnes comes up clutch in big league debut



By Gregor Chisholm / MLB.com | @gregorMLB
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HOUSTON -- Most rookie pitchers are eased into the big leagues. Blue Jays right-hander Danny Barnes was thrown right into the fire, and he responded better than anyone could have expected.

Barnes, who was promoted from Triple-A Buffalo on Tuesday afternoon, came through later that night with a scoreless eighth inning to help the Blue Jays hang on to a **2-1 victory** (<http://m.bluejays.mlb.com/news/article/193213664/hrs-help-blue-jays-snap-minute-maid-skid/>) over the Astros.

Toronto's bullpen was left battered and bruised following a pair of back-to-back extra-inning losses to Baltimore and Houston over the previous two days. The Blue Jays entered Tuesday night's game with five of their eight relievers unavailable, and had no choice but to hand the ball to Barnes.

He delivered.

"It was probably good that it was a tight situation there, because you can kind of get caught up in the moment," Barnes said. "This is obviously a day that I'll never forget. It was good that it was a tight game, because you're just focusing on getting three outs, get it to [[Jason Grilli \(http://m.mlb.com/player/276351/jason-grilli\)](http://m.mlb.com/player/276351/jason-grilli)] and win the game. That made it a little bit easier, I guess."

Barnes was doing more than just trying to protect a one-run lead. He was trying to do it against the top of the Astros' batting order, and although the nerves were surely there underneath the surface, Barnes never let it show.

The 26-year-old started the eighth by getting [George Springer \(http://m.mlb.com/player/543807/george-springer\)](http://m.mlb.com/player/543807/george-springer) to hit a weak popup to shortstop after a three-pitch at-bat. Barnes then recorded the first strikeout of his career by getting Alex Bregman to swing at a 93-mph fastball.

The only minor threat came when [Jose Altuve \(http://m.mlb.com/player/514888/jose-altuve\)](http://m.mlb.com/player/514888/jose-altuve) hit a sharp single to left. Barnes promptly bounced back by getting cleanup hitter [Carlos Correa \(http://m.mlb.com/player/621043/carlos-correa\)](http://m.mlb.com/player/621043/carlos-correa) to strike out on an 83-mph changeup.

Just like that, a successful big league debut was in the books.

"A lot of guys will get out there in their debuts, and they get jelly-legged a little bit," said starter [R.A. Dickey \(http://m.mlb.com/player/285079/ra-dickey\)](http://m.mlb.com/player/285079/ra-dickey), who picked up the win after allowing one run over seven innings. "It's easy to do. There's no shame in that."

"You just get captivated by where you are. You've worked your whole life to get there, and the next thing you know, you've got runners at first,

second and third, and you're not enjoying the moment so much. I'm speaking from experience, so I can tell you, it's not easy. He should be proud of what he accomplished tonight, that was really neat."

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