

AL Wild Card Series: Tigers vs Astros

Tuesday, October 1, 2024

Houston, Texas, USA

Minute Maid Park

Detroit Tigers

Jake Rogers

Postgame Press Conference

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Q. Jake, I asked Skubal this question. He told me to ask you this question, which I knew he was going to. But one of the few times he got in trouble, he struck out Pena and struck out Caratini. Talk about the way you set up the change-up. You set it up in that at-bat and the 100-mile-an-hour two-seamer on Caratini that led to the chase on strike 3.

JAKE ROGERS: Is kind of what he's done all year. In big spots, he has 100 in the back pocket which makes everything harder to hit. We went hard in on Caratini two or maybe three times in a row. I was just kind of setting up way away, see if we could get some chase. We did.

That's just Skub, you know, being able to command that inside. No one likes to get hit, and we're not trying to hit anybody. But to be able to throw inside these days is a huge, huge opportunity to get some chase away.

Q. Jake, you rarely swing 3-0, put the ball in play like that. Was that, I guess, an adjustment to the situation or just some expectation that you were going to get --

JAKE ROGERS: I told the guys, and I think I told you I swung 3-0 one other time this year and got out, and I was like I don't think I'm ever going to do that again.

But against Framber and when it's good stuff, I knew I was probably going to get a heater somewhere over the plate. So I was trying to be a little bit aggressive there and got a hit.

Q. Jake, overall, what was the approach against Framber? Seems like you guys made him work 1 through 9 and a lot of opposite field hits for you.

JAKE ROGERS: He's got a great sinker. Staying out of



the middle of the field is huge against him and staying through the ball because you pull, especially righties pulling off of it, get some ground balls. He's really good at it, has a really high ground ball rate with all his pitches.

We did a good job staying through the heater. After that did a good job adjusting to his breaking ball. We just had great at-bats. We got deep into some counts and kept fighting him off and found some barrels and some timely times.

Q. A.J. said when Skubal started cramping in the 6th, you went out and said, Do you have a few more in you? What was the conversation like for you?

JAKE ROGERS: Went out. He said he thought he felt a cramp. I said give me one more. Obviously, Bregman, I asked for one more, and he got two. I said one more, and we've got you after this. He just shook his head yes and away he went. Those are some big pitches right there. To get through that, we got three great guys coming out of the bullpen after him to shut it down.

I kind of looked at him and said one more, that's all we need. He was on board.

Q. How much did Beau's situation remind you of Baltimore, and how impressed were you -- this has never been his role in his baseball career, and he's coming up big in these leverage situations.

JAKE ROGERS: Yeah. I think Baltimore was a huge help for him. He's been put in some really -- probably the biggest situations these last couple weeks and has come through.

I mean, he came in today and was focused. And, yeah, he fell behind a couple times, but after that he was filling up his own. And he's been great for us all year. He's been put in several roles, whether that's been starting and opening and then two or three in the middle to here he is in the ninth coming up against some great hitters to get out in the ninth.

So, yeah, it's a tip of the cap to him for just being prepared



for any type situation and attacking a zone when he needs to.

Q. You played with some of these Astros players in the low level minors. Does that make this experience any different for you than it normally would?

JAKE ROGERS: I always like coming and playing here. Even a lot of the staff coached me throughout the minor leagues. I'm going to forget some, but like Jason Bell, Troy Snitker, Omar Lopez. I played with Framber, and I was roommates with Ronel Blanco and Yordan Alvarez and Kyle Tucker.

So a lot of these guys were my close buddies coming up. I always love seeing them. They're great people and love competing against them too because they're great players. I think it makes it special to know those guys. Baseball is a small world. But for those guys to be doing well and see their success makes it fun to come here and see those guys.

Q. A.J., Tarik was really filling up the strike zone early on. What did that let you know about what his mindset was going into this first postseason start?

JAKE ROGERS: He's done that all year. His strike zone rates for all his pitches has been elite all year, which just speaks to his confidence in his pitches and confidence in his game plan and my game plan.

He's been great all year. His mentality is like here it is, hit it, and he's got great stuff to back it up. That helps. I think him commanding pitches in the zone has been his repertoire all year and has done a really good job at it.

Q. We've talked a lot about you guys going first to third so often. We haven't talked to you a whole lot about it. Were you thinking you were going to get to third off the bat on Sweeney's ball?

JAKE ROGERS: Yeah, I was going to go hopefully just to draw a throw and score a run out of it, but he ended up throwing home and Parker got in safe and I got in safe. It was kind of -- what happened was kind of the perfect situation. Yeah, I was going to go off the bat, hopefully to draw a throw and score a run there. But it worked out perfectly.

We've been preaching it and done a really good job at it the last few months going first to third and being aggressive. I think I've said this before, but you see a catcher going first to third and make it, any other guys can do it. And I think that's just kind of the mentality we've had all year. Ball's in the dirt, first to third, be aggressive

because it's hard to make those throws from the outfield, and as a catcher, blocking and retrieving it is a really hard thing to do.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks for coming in, Jake.

JAKE ROGERS: Thanks, guys!

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