

AL Wild Card Series:

Tigers vs Astros

Wednesday, October 2, 2024

Houston, Texas, USA

Minute Maid Park

Detroit Tigers

Andy Ibáñez

Postgame Press Conference

Detroit - 5, Houston 2

Q. Andy, I heard you say on the field that this was the biggest at-bat of your life. Can you kind of take us through your September struggles and how you stayed confident. We knew you would be ready. How did you stay confident in yourself to come through in that situation?

ANDY IBÁÑEZ: I know that September was not the most productive month for me, but I've just got to trust myself and I'm grateful for my, first of all, God. Second of all, my coaches and my teammates who supported me all the way down until having a good result today.

INTERPRETER: The question about coming out of Cuba, have you ever thought about the opportunity and the possibility to be the hero in the game in which a team clinches?

Andy's answer is: Never. Never, ever. I've been in the big leagues for couple years. Every time, I just watch the Astros on TV. And funny thing, this morning, I talked to my buddy, Adolis Garcia, who owns the Astros, and he was happy for this.

Q. Andy, how early in the game did you start preparing yourself mentally or even swing-wise for Hader, and how early in that at-bat did you feel like you had him timed up?

ANDY IBÁÑEZ: I was getting ready from the second inning. And here is -- we were talking about let's go to the cages. Let's get ready because at some point in the game, they're going to bring a lefty and both of us will have an opportunity to play. We went into the cage and I was ready for that moment.

Q. Andy, did you know off the bat your ball was going



to land fair? What did you think when you saw it hit the grass?

ANDY IBÁÑEZ: I think as soon as I made the contact, I was just pushing for the ball to be fair. Most importantly, I was pushing for the runners on the base to go, go, go, go, go.

As soon as I got to the base, the second base, I saw the Tigers fan on top of our dugout, and it was a very touching and emotional moment, and I'm very happy.

Q. You mentioned the coaches. How did the coaches help you prepare even through different points this season to prepare you for this moment?

ANDY IBÁÑEZ: They have a huge merit because all the time they are sending videos through the iPad that we see. As soon as they notice something, they immediately come to me and show it, hey, this is what this guy is doing. And they've been very helpful and been very supportive of everything we've done, and I'm grateful for them.

Q. Andy, what is it about this team that, after Houston taking the lead like that, you guys face the heart of their bullpen and put together good at-bat after good at-bat and bounce back like nothing had really happened?

ANDY IBÁÑEZ: First of all, we have good players out here. Most importantly, we have this connection, this togetherness that makes us like a band of brothers all together supporting one another, and we push for each other and keep working and working and working all the time just to get the results.

Regardless that nobody was rooting for us, regardless that nobody was putting us in the playoffs in a good spot, we didn't care. We just put in hard work and hard work just to make the results come.

INTERPRETER: Regarding the question about what has been key for this team to get the results, and his answer is: You know, again, as I just said a couple of minutes ago, togetherness, this unit we have, this camaraderie we have,



whether we win another, as soon as we hit the field, we're pushing for each other. That has been the key for having a good environment down there in the clubhouse and in the dugout as well, just to get the results, the good results we're having.

THE MODERATOR: Andy, congratulations. Thank you for coming in.

ANDY IBÁÑEZ: Thank you.

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