

AL Wild Card Series:

Tigers vs Astros

Wednesday, October 2, 2024

Houston, Texas, USA

Minute Maid Park

Detroit Tigers

Sean Guenther

Postgame Press Conference

Detroit - 5, Houston 2

SEAN GUENTHER: Hi, everybody.

Q. Sean, in that critical moment, are you thinking ground ball, potential double play, or do you just think any way to get through this batter?

SEAN GUENTHER: It's any way to get through the batter. The ground ball is ideal. I think that's kind of what my job is in that role, is to go in there and it's left on left, go try to get them on the ground soft somewhere. That's kind of my role, and that's what I want to do, and it's just -- I have all the trust in the world in our defense to turn that thing, which always helps, going in the zone against good hitters, trying to get that ground ball.

Q. I know A.J. called it pitching chaos coming in, but the way the Astros lineup set up, did you go into the game thinking, okay, I've got to get ready for Tucker and Alvarez, specifically?

SEAN GUENTHER: Absolutely. With Hinch as a manager, you're almost guaranteed, when you go into a game as a bullpen guy, you're going to be in a match-up for you, right?

So you kind of walk in -- like I walk in on my lefties every time I'm looking at a lineup and then guy before and guy after any major pocket. That's where I spend the majority of my focus, so to speak.

So today was taking a good hard look at Altuve, taking a good hard look at Bregman and I think it was McCormick after Heyward and kind of like, if you go in to get that guy, there's other guys in the lineup that maybe aren't the most favorable match-up for you.

So it's having a plan, if I'm coming in the game, if A.J. is



putting me in the game, it's to get those guys and the guys around them. To answer your question, yeah, controlled chaos day. It's lock in on a small pocket and make sure you have it dialed.

Q. Were you aware of the noise, the crowd noise as you were coming in, or are you pretty good at blocking that out?

SEAN GUENTHER: My biggest concern, honestly, was making sure I could hear the pitch come, to be completely honest with you. I knew it would be loud. This place is famous for being loud. It's 130 games and it is decibels. It is loud. We came in expecting that. We were told this place gets loud.

So after a couple warmup pitches, Rog made sure I could hear the pitch come. Once I could hear that and knew I could hear it, you take the crowd out of it a little bit and just go, try to execute pitches.

Q. Have you had any chance to reflect on just how wild the last six weeks have been for the team as a whole and for you personally?

SEAN GUENTHER: I try to. And then once I feel like I have a grasp on it, we do something else incredible. So to a certain point, yes. I think I'm probably, like, just now getting over the clinch. And now give me another couple days, and I'll probably start processing this one.

Q. I was wondering for family or friends that maybe six weeks ago were on the MLB TV to watch your games and are now seeing you on national TV in big moments, what kind of feedback are you getting from them?

SEAN GUENTHER: It's been such a blessing to have so many people in my life reach out and tell me to keep going. I've been lucky enough that my fiancée's been able to travel a ton. My parents were able to be here this series, which was just incredible.

I've had old high school teammates and coaches come out and lots of texts from everyone. So it's been really, really



cool how much people from my life have reached out supporting me, and I'm incredibly grateful for that.

Q. A.J. talked a little bit earlier about buy-in and setting aside a little bit of ego and pride in a certain kind of way. What were those conversations like when he talked about trying to figure out how to put a team together, do some things that are maybe a little unconventional and that that would require different kind of sacrifices from maybe what a lot of players are used to? I'm curious what you think of all that.

SEAN GUENTHER: I think with this team, it comes down to two things: Trust and belief. If you can trust you're being put in the right spots and you believe like the staff does, you believe that you're the guy for that job, then it just becomes pretty black and white. It becomes can I just do my job and help us win this ball game. You have to trust you're there for the right reasons, and you have to believe you're good enough to get the job done. Those are things we reiterate every day. Lots of affirmation, lots of support.

We're taken care of, and it's a tough job. It always is. When you're getting set up for success, you can go succeed.

Q. Part of that idea of just can I do my job and do my job, is it accepting that that job is going to change day to day and week to week in ways that are also a little bit new?

SEAN GUENTHER: So I think controlled chaos is the apt term for it. It's a great way to describe it. Going into today, I didn't know if I was going to go into that lefty pocket in the third or the eighth or whenever. I just had to stay ready and when my name was called, be ready to go.

I think that's kind of a microcosm of our entire team. You have guys who might not be starting the game, but they know they're going to get a big at-bat. You have long relief starter, bulk inning guys like Brant Hurter it's like I know I'm throwing today. I know I'm going to throw meaningful innings today. When is that coming?

I think everyone across the board on this team has done such a great job of buying in to just stay ready and stay ready to go.

Thanks, guys.

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