

AL Wild Card Series: Tigers vs Guardians

Thursday, October 2, 2025

Cleveland, Ohio, USA

Progressive Field

Cleveland Guardians

Manager Stephen Vogt

Pregame Press Conference

Q. Stephen, it's a small flip, but what goes into putting DeLauter fifth and Naylor second?

STEPHEN VOGT: A number of reasons. Strategy. We know more than likely this is going to turn into a bullpen game. We know each other really well. It's more of just protection, different things that we can do with the lineup. So there's a lot of factors going into it.

Q. When you were making a rotation you put Slade in for game 3, you know it's going to be a closeout game. What makes him a pitcher you feel confident in an elimination like this?

STEPHEN VOGT: Over the last month, Slade has been getting better. We saw the slider come back, the curveball have more bite. He's held his velocity all year, which has been impressive. He's super hyper-focused and routine oriented. Something like this is not going to rattle Slade. We like him, the way he's going to take the ball and get the game started for us.

Q. What role does Cantillo have in this, perhaps?

STEPHEN VOGT: He's available out of the bullpen. He has been the whole series. He can provide some length. So he gives us a length option.

Q. How do you decide in those situations if it becomes a bullpen game, when to use a length guy or a guy that maybe --

STEPHEN VOGT: We'll see. Obviously, this is Slade's game. We'll make moves accordingly.

Q. Is this all hands on deck? Is that the approach you take? Will you consider the usage in the first two games?



STEPHEN VOGT: You have to. We're not going to run anybody further than what we think is going to either hurt them or be inefficient. Everybody showed up, ready to go. All the bullpen guys stopped by and said I'm good today. They know what's at stake. They know we have to win today. We're going to treat it accordingly.

Q. When you went home last night, what are you thinking about? Can you turn your head off, or is it total concentration on today?

STEPHEN VOGT: Play a little football with the kids. Be a dad. You're always thinking about the game, of course. This is my job. My job is to prepare for today. It was really fun to see our guys explode in the game late. It was fun to watch Chase make his major league debut. I reflected a lot on the day. It was a lot of fun. We know we'll have another close game today. So, yeah, you start thinking through how you want to approach today, all those things.

But still had some really good family time last night.

Q. What is it -- like a day like today, how do the shadows come into play? When you're a hitter up there and there are shadows, what does it look like?

STEPHEN VOGT: Talked through it yesterday. It's tough to see the ball. It's tough to pick up spin. It's that way for both teams. Execute your pitches. You've got to fight through the negative self-talk of I can't see, and find a way to compete.

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