

AL Division Series: Tigers vs Guardians

Saturday, October 5, 2024

Cleveland, Ohio, USA

Progressive Field

Cleveland Guardians

Stephen Vogt

Pregame 1 Press Conference

Q. Stephen, how do the nerves or excitement compare to this or compared to your first postseason?

STEPHEN VOGT: Obviously very different but it's the same. You're anxious to get going. We've talked to work all Spring Training, all regular season to get to this moment. So for our guys showing up this morning feels like excitement, like Christmas morning. We're waiting for this, so we're really excited to get out there.

Q. You guys obviously have a great bullpen. So from the other side of this, looking at game planning, you know, the Tigers are going to throw their bullpen at you today but then Skubal at you tomorrow. From a managerial personal preference, what would you rather plan against?

STEPHEN VOGT: I mean, obviously, they've got great pitching both in the bullpen and Skubal has been one of the best pitchers in baseball. So we know we have our work cut out for us.

So we've approached every single game, and that's win today. It's find a way to win. Fortunately we've faced a number of their bullpen games throughout the regular season, kind of understand the cadence of what they're going to do to us, and our players are ready for it.

We went through a little phase in the regular season where a lot of people threw bullpen games at us to match up with our hitters, and we feel like we have a very good roster to match those matchups as well. I don't think you prefer either. It's just how do we win today and we'll figure out tomorrow tomorrow.

Q. How did you guys make some of the final decisions on some of the bench guys you brought in and then the pitching?



STEPHEN VOGT: Yeah, I think I'll start with the position players side. I think for us it's finding a way to maximize those matchups. So by having 14 position players, it allows us to work with their bullpen games and be able to find the favorable matchup as often as possible as we go throughout the game.

It's also we have a very good position player group to choose from. We had to make some really hard decisions, and it was not easy. But we want to make sure we have as many versatile players as possible so having Freeman and Schnee who can go all over the field allows us to make the moves we need to make.

And on the pitching side, with the format of this five-game series over seven, eight days, it allows us to really lean on our bullpen guys later in the game. And having the two length options at the back with Gavin and Joey, it allows us to do some different things out of the bullpen that maybe we weren't able to do during the regular season.

Q. Last round A.J. said they're playing with Skubal and chaos, and we're talking about your bullpen quite a bit now, how deep that runs. Is this series kind of a textbook example of where the game has evolved and what it looks like now? Maybe an exaggeration of that, but where it's been headed?

STEPHEN VOGT: Yeah. You look at the teams who have made deep postseason runs the last few years, it's been the bullpen. And you have to have people that can get the ball to the bullpen, but at the same time, our bullpen has been our biggest strength this year, and we also have some very good starting pitching.

So we feel really good about the pitching attack. And I think it is so hard to get Major League hitters out three times, and we're seeing that across the game, and the elite can do it, and then we have a number of guys that can do it as well.

So it's just the way the game has evolved and the hitters are so good now when they've seen somebody two times. So it's something we're aware of, and the whole game is.

