

# AL Division Series: Tigers vs Guardians

Saturday, October 5, 2024

Cleveland, Ohio, USA

Progressive Field

## Detroit Tigers

## Tarik Skubal

### Pregame 1 Press Conference

**Q. Tarik, I think you talked about this some before, but what did Matt Boyd mean to your career when you were first coming out?**

TARIK SKUBAL: A ton. He invited me over for my first dinner in the Big Leagues because it was COVID so we couldn't go out to dinner, and we probably weren't supposed to be in each other's rooms. He had dinner for us. He's a great mentor and leader. I'm still really close with him to this day. Him and his family are special people. It's going to be fun.

**Q. When Matt first signed over here, did you ever think about the possibility of having to face him, not personally face him, but having your team go up against him and having a matchup maybe in a situation like this?**

TARIK SKUBAL: I think my first text to him was that he was a trader, signing within division. (Laughter). I think I texted him right there.

But also his story coming back from Tommy John and he signs with a team and gets an opportunity to prove that he's healthy, and he's looked great. So I actually watched a lot of his rehab starts, too, and texted him after those just because the process is tough. Tommy John is a tough injury to have. Just more mentally than physically.

But I think my first text was that he was a trader signing within the division. But now we're on this stage. So I think that's pretty special. It'll be fun to watch him go play. But I'm going to be rooting against him pretty heavily.

**Q. How much did you learn in the early years from him on just how to, I guess, prepare yourself for the Major League but also just about the pitching side?**

TARIK SKUBAL: Yeah, I struggled pretty heavily in '20



and a lot of early '21, too. And I had a lot of discussions with him, just like, you know, mentally, how do you take -- you're worried about going up and down, how do I just focus on my job. And he had a lot of advice and a lot of good stuff for me throughout all that.

So I think that speaks to the guy he is. I think he's the nicest guy in the world. I told him that like, dude, you should act a little more mad sometimes. He's so nice all the time.

But, yeah, he means a lot to me. He means a lot to me. It'll be fun.

**Q. It seems like you guys still talk quite often. What has he said to you about the season you've been able to put together this year?**

TARIK SKUBAL: He's texted me after good outings, after bad outings, always positive things. It's never like, hey, you looked bad out there. But always positive things. Yeah, I mean, he's such a good person. I can't say enough good things about that guy.

**Q. Tarik, from your perspective, what are the challenges of facing this team, a team that's pretty familiar with you?**

TARIK SKUBAL: Yeah. This is a good team, good lineup. They can flip, mix and match, lefties, righties, no matter who's on the mound. They put the ball in play a ton. They're competitive at-bats. They grind-out at-bats. Across the way I was a big fan of how they play the game: pitching, defense, bullpen, timely hitting.

They play good baseball. It should be a fun series because we're doing the same thing right now, and I look forward to the challenge.

**Q. The outing you had against them here in July with like the ten hits but only one run, we've talked a lot about the dominant outings you've had. What did it say about you that you were able to, even with all those hits, hold helm to one run, and how proud were you of that outing?**



TARIK SKUBAL: Yeah. That was a grind of an outing. When the bases are constantly filled with base runners, innings can kind of unravel a little bit. I think with any team you just have to continue to make pitches, and I felt like I did a good job against them last time.

That's when I'm at my best, when I'm executing pitches and getting ahead of guys and making guys uncomfortable, whether that's ten hits, I don't know how many of them were singles or hard hit or any of that.

But, yeah, I mean that's baseball. It's what a team like this can do, too.

**Q. How much of your prep for tomorrow is going back and looking at that tape or just knowing that you've evolved, they've evolved, and it feels like that was forever ago?**

TARIK SKUBAL: That was a long time ago. I feel like we played them ten times in a week and a half. What was that, right after the All-Star break? And our team is so much different than them, and so is theirs.

As much as we played each other, whatever, 13 times this year, this I think will feel a little bit new in terms of us versus them. I think that's also fun, too, right? But, yeah, I mean I'll go watch tape and do all my scouting report. I do the same thing for pretty much any team.

**Q. They have a very good record at home. Is that discussed at all amongst you guys, or you don't care about what you're walking into here?**

TARIK SKUBAL: I didn't even know that.

**Q. That's all?**

TARIK SKUBAL: Yeah. I didn't know that. Good for them. Win your home games. It matters.

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