

# AL Division Series: Tigers vs Guardians

Saturday, October 5, 2024

Cleveland, Ohio, USA

Progressive Field

## Detroit Tigers

### A.J. Hinch

Postgame 1 Press Conference

Cleveland - 7, Detroit - 0

**Q. A.J., you talked before the game that sometimes you get punched in the mouth and you have to respond to that. What did you see, first of all, from Tyler in the first four batters and then the response from Reese afterwards to kind of hold it there for a while?**

A.J. HINCH: Yeah. Obviously they came out hot. Kwan gets the ball off the wall. But two things I think from a team standpoint, not even with Holton. I guess one part is against this team, as good as they are and as much pressure as they put on you, extra bases and extra outs are really hard to overcome with as good as their lineup is, the way they can move the ball forward and put it in way.

So the walk to Fry sets up a really tough spot against Ramirez. Ramirez puts the ball in play, we get it on the ground and don't record an out, and then it just kind of spiraled there, and then Lane Thomas gets the big hit.

When they punch you with five in the first, it's hard to overcome. I thought Holton rarely gives up back to back anything, let alone like guys getting on base. And we never recovered.

**Q. The mound visit with Olson, what was the concern there?**

A.J. HINCH: When he covered first, it just looked like he was hobbling a little bit, and I was worried about hamstring, calf. Turned out to be nothing, but he just said his -- kind of felt something around his knee, but it was nothing. He just was limping on the way back to the mound.

With the way that first inning was going, that kind of apropos I was going to make sure that wasn't another alarm bell.



**Q. What was your view of the McKinstry error in the first? Did he play himself into an in-between hop?**

A.J. HINCH: Yeah, in-between hop. You get greedy a little bit and want to make a great play as opposed to just make the standard play, and the ball didn't carry to him probably as far as he thought it was. And then all of a sudden he caught himself on his heels with no real ability to make an adjustment, and you're at the mercy of that next hop, and it looked like it ate him up.

Obviously, as things were snowballing a little bit, the energy in the park, the not recording an out and just sort of stopping the -- or at least limiting some of the momentum is key, but the in-between hop is a do-or-die play, and that's the die part.

**Q. It looked like with pitching Malloy and then pinch-hitting Wenceel, you got the matchup you wanted both with Wenceel and Carpenter afterwards. The way it ended up, did it just felt like the way things were going today?**

A.J. HINCH: Yeah, obviously this is a five-game series for a reason, and we're going to see a lot of this bullpen, and the most looks you can get, the better. We're trying to do anything we can to make it a game.

Now, there's an off day. I thought they were going to use their big boys at the end, and they ended up doing it. But the hope is to put something together to put even more pressure on them, at the very least try to give some guys that are going to be in the lineup a look at these guys, because no matter how good they are, the more you look at them, hopefully the more comfortable you get despite how good they are.

**Q. Through September and into the first round, you guys, the at-bats were good, disciplined, getting on base. Not a lot of strikeouts. Today obviously 13 punches. Is that a hat tip to what they were throwing at you or maybe a little anxiousness at the plate?**

A.J. HINCH: I don't see anxiousness. I think this is a lot



about how Cleveland came out. Obviously they're good, you know. And this is their best. I mean, Bibee has been really good. We saw why. Their lineup from the top, you got an All-Star at the top who sets the tone and a beast in the middle and a lot of different guys throughout that put pressure on you, and then we saw their big bullpen.

So this is obviously Game 1, and we get a day off to reset. We've been really good at it, and we plan to throw our best out there in Game 2.

**Q. We assumed we'd see Olson at some point. Was there any hesitancy with using him in that spot with runners on base? We haven't seen him in that situation this season.**

A.J. HINCH: No hesitation. Obviously we told him early in the day that the Lane Thomas at-bat was going to be it. And if you look at the next two Lane Thomas at-bats, that was a little more what we drew up. I mean, sometimes their guy beats our guy. Reese was ready, and no excuses, and we've been doing this with virtually our entire roster.

When it doesn't work, you wonder. But we can't -- you know, we can't fault really anybody other than a good swing on a pitch that changed the game, or separated the game for them and a punch that we didn't recover from.

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