

AL Division Series: Tigers vs Guardians

Sunday, October 6, 2024
Cleveland, Ohio, USA
Progressive Field

Detroit Tigers Wenceel Perez

Workout Day Press Conference

Q. Wenceel, how you doing?

WENCEEL PEREZ: I'm good. How are you?

Q. Good. I know you were in the system when Matt Boyd was with the Tigers. I'm curious, did you have any interaction with him? And with a lefty starting, I mean, is it a chance that -- I mean, do you know what kind of situation you might find yourself in tomorrow in terms of starting, or are you going to be that switch hitter off the bench?

WENCEEL PEREZ: I probably I faced Matt Boyd when I was in the Minors. I think it was during rehab, in rookie ball when I was there. So I think I faced him a couple years ago.

I didn't know what is going to happen here. I don't know if I'm in the lineup or not. I'm just going to be ready for tomorrow no matter what situation might come into it. And then I'm trying to be my best to help the team.

Q. I know your day is just getting started there, but can you get a sense for the mindset, the attitude? A.J. talked about everybody kind of being upbeat just like you have been all through August and September. Do you feel the same kind of freedom going into Game 2?

WENCEEL PEREZ: Yeah, yeah. We feel the same kind of freedom. You have to stay in the fight. You have to stay together. We just try to keep pushing the way that we've been doing it.

And I think they have a pretty good game the first game, and I think we can do a better job with the offense in the next game. I think with Skubal on the mound, I think that should be pretty good to have a offense coming up and help them to win the ballgame.



Q. I remember that last day in Houston Andy talking about how you and him got in the cages as early as the second inning to get ready for pinch-hit opportunities, and I was curious, how has the transition gone for you to not being an everyday starter, and how helpful has Andy and other guys been in terms of how to prepare for late-game situations?

WENCEEL PEREZ: You know, this is my first year in the Big Leagues, and I'm thankful for the opportunity to put me in this situation that I'm a first year in the playoffs. I just want to be prepared for any time that A.J. says the team needs me.

And then Andy is just a guy that he's always ready. When I'm on the bench, I'm just trying to be around him because like Andy is always ready. He's just like, oh, if we left in the pen, hey, I will have to go in ready because probably we will come in the game when that lefty come out.

So in the second inning he told me, hey, let's go to the cage, let's stretch out. Let's do some movement. And hit some balls on the machine and be ready for a late situation because I think we will come into the game for him.

Q. And also wondering what kind of challenges do late afternoon games in ballparks like this create in terms of shadows, and how much tougher does it make it to see a pitcher, especially a pitcher with a little bit of spin like Boyd has?

WENCEEL PEREZ: I think for me or for guys probably that are working with it, I just try to focus on the ball as much as I can, see their release. Because sometimes if you look up, like around, probably that won't help you at all.

So I just try to focus as much as I can on the ball and the release of the pitcher and trying to minimize like what I can see, and trying to just see if the pitch is in the sun or something like that. If I can see, I just try and make sure if a pitch that is in the sun.

Q. If you go back to Spring Training when you move from infield to outfield, how did the team kind of present that idea to you, and what was the process like



for you to make the most out of that?

WENCEEL PEREZ: I think last year the manager told me, I think he called wanted me to play in the outfield. I thought I was going through a tough moment because I was kind of overthrowing at second base a little. I can't control any of my throws when I was playing second base.

And then like A.J. told me at Spring Training that I have to play defense to be in the Major Leagues. So I think when he told me that, I think anything that I was caring about, it was just different, trying to work on my defense the best I can to help the team in that situation that it's going to be a part of.

So when he told me that, I was trying to be better in the outfield, but in the infield, trying to adjust those little things that I was know adjust, and the outfield coach, too. And I think the confidence with being like with the veteran guys when they were here, Javy and Gio, they helped me a lot with all this stuff.

And I think I just every day that I'm playing the outfield right now I just feel more confident. And then as soon as you start playing even more, you just get that mindset and that momentum that I can go for it for every ball.

Q. Just given that change and the amount of time and years you spent in the Minors, what's it meant to you to be a part of this team in this run to the playoffs?

WENCEEL PEREZ: This is an unbelievable run for us. I've been through the Tigers system my whole life. I've been through all the systems since the Dominican Republic through here. I've been like up and down a lot.

And for me to be here now to be part of a winning team, it's just special because like we create this. The other guys that I play with since we were in the Minor League, and then I think this is great because we just were like three years ago playing in the Minors together, and now we're here in the postseason playing together and enjoying all the process that we went through in the Minors.

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