

# AL Division Series: Tigers vs Guardians

Monday, October 7, 2024  
Cleveland, Ohio, USA  
Progressive Field

## Cleveland Guardians

### Alex Cobb

#### Pregame 2 Press Conference



**Q. Does it feel like it's been 11 years since that playoff start here? How long have you been waiting for this opportunity?**

ALEX COBB: Both. It's felt like it's 10 -- is it 11 years? So like on the one hand it feels like it's flown by, and then you look back at all the things that have happened, and it feels like a really long time.

But I vividly remember coming off -- after the celebration here in that Wild Card game, just looking around and just thinking I can't wait to be back in this moment.

And then so many optimistic seasons of you're thinking you're going to get back and so many different things can happen in a baseball season to have that many challenging seasons to go back to back to back, feel like the odds were in my favor at some point to get back, if I just kept putting a uniform on.

So I think there's probably nobody in this playoffs that appreciate it more than I do after being away from being in this for so long and then -- it's hard to even think about all the things that had to happen for me to get back to it.

And then with all the injuries and everything, and then to this year of getting traded while on the IL, and then to get here and get back on the IL and not get an opportunity to get back to the regular season, and then to have an organization and a coaching staff to have the trust in me to still think that I'm able to perform in my abilities to put me on the roster; so I'm extremely thankful for the opportunity.

**Q. Matt Boyd has talked about his experience kind of integrating with this club. Of course that was his choice to sign here, whereas you were traded here. What was your experience at the beginning, and then now what have you learned as you've joined this organization?**

ALEX COBB: I think that no player really wants to get traded during the season. So obviously when you have the opportunity to go to a contending team it makes it a lot easier.

But even then there are so many variables that can happen that it's just almost easier with a family to not get traded and going into the deadline I did not want to get traded. I was coming back from injury. I was in a place that I was going to be comfortable that I could get my feet wet again.

But when I got the call and things started looking like I might be going to Cleveland, obviously the first thing I think about is Bo and Alby and having an opportunity to -- we all came up together in the Minor Leagues, to have that full-circle moment and be able to go not only have a chance to make it back to the postseason, but to do it with those guys, you can't help but just have all these thoughts going on in your mind and just get really excited.

So the moment that happened, my wife and I just were super excited, and knowing that we were going to a place -- I didn't know anybody on the team really. I mean, I knew Boyd. Not too many other players. But to know those two was easy to walk in the clubhouse.

And then by day two, you know, you're best friends with everybody in this locker room. It's just the chemistry on this team is just fantastic. It's a bunch of young guys that came up together and just had more energy than any team I've ever been on and have more fun than just about any team I've ever been on as well.

**Q. Stephen told us during the sim games and that week of preparation, obviously you haven't pitched since September 1st in a Big League game, but they tried to make that as intense and replicate as much as they could, and he said you turned to him and said, You know, I'm ready after that. When did it click in your mind that you were ready to take the ball in Game 3?**

ALEX COBB: I don't know the exact moment, but they did do a great job of -- I was -- rightfully so, I had a lot of



questions that I'd be ready, feel ready and just confident that I'd be able to take the ball in the postseason after not pitching for a month.

And I don't know what gave me the confidence or what moment it was. I mean, obviously that game felt to me as a regular season game because I'm trying my hardest to show an organization that they can have trust in me, that my stuff is sharp. So I was kind of living and dying on every single pitch of those two sim games to give them the confidence that I was ready.

And so the atmosphere having an umpire, having some crowd noise, having some batters that really took it serious, I think as a team we've had the ability -- obviously everybody watches postseason baseball and heard the narrative of division winners and the challenges that come. So the hitters took it really serious of trying to stay as sharp as they could.

I don't know if there was one specific moment, but just kind of all those things rolled into one have helped me feel a lot more confident going into that game.

**Q. Kind of a follow-up to that, just the idea that this will be your fourth start of the season, is that strange to you? Or with the amount of time you've been in the Big Leagues, okay, you're just rolling with the punches, but is it kind of weird to only make three starts before a playoff start?**

ALEX COBB: Yeah. Very weird. I think, you know, you have to really take that into consideration and knowing that you have to do everything you can leading up to that game to try to stay as sharp as you can.

Since I've been hurt the second time, I've nonstop trying to take visual reps in my mind of creating the pitch shapes that I want to see, to a point where you wish you could turn it off at some times and it just keeps replaying in your mind. So I'm always doing that.

I think that's a question I'll answer better after the game, but right now I feel confident, and I think having the type of team we have helps you have a little bit more confidence. We've got the best defense in baseball, best bullpen in baseball. As a starting pitcher, you know you can go out there and go full out as aggressive as you can and as you want to be as a starting pitcher, knowing that you have those two backing you up.

**Q. You may have answered this somewhere in all of this, but what was the hardest part of all the injuries and setbacks that you had to deal with this year?**

ALEX COBB: It's always the rehab. It's the mental side of it. Physically, it stinks. You get hurt, and it is what it is. You go to the field and you do your rehab, but mentally trying to stay sharp, stay focused. And then you finally get to the end of the tunnel of the rehab and you have another setback or things don't go the way you had planned.

It's easy to do that once or twice, you know, but having to do it for a full six months has been -- it's been really difficult. And since the first one I've told myself it's going to be worth it in the end. And without even knowing what that meant or what that looked like, I always had this expectation on this year that something special was going to happen and it was going to be worth it.

So I took every day and did it as much as I could each day. There were moments where I wanted to just say, you know, it's not in the cards this year, but that fortunately didn't last long and I'd find the mindset to get back in and work on the rehab and stuff like that.

So these last two with the nail and the blister have been a little bit different just because it's nothing to rehab. You just kind of have to sit there and wait. So then it just becomes more of a mental game of trying to stay sharp.

But having the letdown of getting back -- I'd say this last one was really tough because I felt like, all right, I had a long layoff, I came back, I was sharp and then now I'm ready to go on this run before the postseason and it didn't work out again. So that was challenging, but I still feel like it'll all be worth it.

**Q. Alex, between those setbacks, when you have been on the mound, what's it been like working with Carl Willis and Hedges and Bo so far? Is there anything you've been focused on mechanically or pitch mix-wise when you have been able to take them out since you've been...**

ALEX COBB: I think the biggest thing is how easy of a transition it's been. Usually have a full Spring Training, full few months to get to know each other and get on the same page.

But since really the first outing, I think maybe the first outing we weren't like totally in sync, but after that it's just been a really easy transition. I haven't thrown to Bo yet, but we threw together in the sim game the other day, and it was fantastic. We were on the same page and talking in between innings, and he understood the thoughts that I have on the mound really quickly, and you could see that develop over the four innings that we threw.

And then Carl is just a legend in this game. He's a calming

presence. He's an easy person to talk to. He's a person to vent to. He's seen it all. So it's just a really good dynamic of a group here. I talked about the chemistry of the locker room, but it's the whole organization. It's the front office. It's the coaching staff. It's a very unique group.

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