

AL Division Series: Tigers vs Guardians

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

Detroit Tigers

Kerry Carpenter

Postgame 2 Press Conference

Detroit - 3, Cleveland - 0

Q. Congratulations.

KERRY CARPENTER: Thank you.

Q. Can you take us through the at-bat? I think he threw you three straight sliders. I don't know if you might have been sitting on that last one. Just kind of take us through it, please.

KERRY CARPENTER: Yeah. I wasn't sitting on it, but I was just on time for his hardest pitch and that cutter, and I was like zoning in for it to start in a certain zone, and my instincts took over and he missed a spot, so I took advantage of it.

Q. Kerry, all game long how much did you guys feed off Tarik's emotion?

KERRY CARPENTER: I mean, I can't say enough about Skubal. It's incredible. His emotion, he's our leader. Every inning that he goes out there, even if he was getting in trouble today, no one in our dugout thought that he wasn't going to get out of it.

He's incredible, and the way he fires up our team and the way he goes out and executes and gets ground balls when he needs to, gets strikeouts when he needs to, it's fun to watch, and I'm glad that he's on my team and he's my leader.

Q. A nail-biter of a game. As the innings continue to wind down and it's still 0-0, there's already playoff pressure, but do you feel more pressure building as it gets closer to your time?

KERRY CARPENTER: I wouldn't say there's more pressure. I just think of it as another game. And it's not



another game, but, I mean, I don't think any added pressure is going to help. So you just have to go out and execute, and Skubal was doing that, and then we were executing in our at-bats and nothing was falling. Wenceel had an amazing at-bat and Kwan made a great play. So I didn't really feel extra pressure. It was just go in there and lock in.

Q. When J-Hen got the start, how many swings did you do in the cage during the game or none at all?

KERRY CARPENTER: I had zero swings in the cage during the game. They have a little tee area right next to our dugout, but, yeah, I felt good before the game, and I don't typically need to take a lot of swings during the game.

But, yeah, so I felt good. I took some swings off the tee, but, yeah, I didn't go down in the cage.

Q. Did you feel okay like it was a no doubter as soon as it left your bat and as you were rounding the bases? I noticed your helmet fell off. Just the breeze running through your hair at that moment, can you describe and tell us what it was like running around the base pads at that point?

KERRY CARPENTER: I don't know if I can describe it, but, yeah, I knew it was gone, and it was just an amazing feeling being able to come through for this team, because our pitchers are keeping us in these games like crazy.

And it's amazing to be able to come through for our pitching staff, especially Skubal, Vest, Brieske. These guys are just laying it all out there for us. And to be able to come through for them and during a shutout today, it's incredible. That was kind of my emotions. I wanted to go celebrate with everybody on the team.

Q. With two outs, two clutch two-out hits in front of you, you weren't even sure you were going to get up in that inning, how big were those two guys in front of you, and I guess just watching from the dugout and realizing you were going to get a chance to face him in that inning?



KERRY CARPENTER: Yeah, I wanted a chance, and those guys put together great swings because there's probably not too many innings this year that Clase gave up two hits in one inning let alone three. So for a guy like Rog, we all trust Rog up there.

And then Sweeney has been in the Big Leagues for a couple months, and he continues to impress me every single day. The double play that he started, everything that he does at the plate, it's extremely impressive. And the fact that he was able to give me a chance, I was thankful and honestly not surprised because he hits big when it counts.

Q. Kerry, what was it like in the dugout as the game was going on and at zero, zero, zero, zero and pitching and great defense on both sides? Do you guys in that situation feel that you're in a good spot, then, just give you a shot, or how were you feeling as the game was unfolding?

KERRY CARPENTER: Really confident, because they have a really good bullpen, but we have just as good of a bullpen. So when it's 0-0 going into the late innings, at least for me I feel really confident that our pitchers are going to go out there and keep throwing up zeros because they've been doing it all year.

So they've been incredible, and today was no different. And somebody was going to get a big hit at some point, either for us or them, and it happened to be us.

Q. Kerry, you mentioned that you weren't taking a lot of swings during the game. What is the difference between your preparation in the game that you're coming off the bench versus starting, and how were you able to be so confident?

KERRY CARPENTER: I wouldn't say my preparation differs that much. It's just the fact that I haven't gotten at-bats the first part of the game like I normally do. So when I'm playing the field or DHs, I typically don't take too many swings in between at-bats anyway. It's not too different. It's just I want to be ready for the first swing I have to take in the box. So that's kind of the way I look at it.

Q. I know it's a big moment anyway, but does it feel even more special coming off the best closer in baseball?

KERRY CARPENTER: Yeah. It is special because I don't know how many runs or home runs at least he's given up this year, so I feel like it's a lot of God's grace right now. And it's pretty fun to be a part of this and to do it off of him

is special, because he's literally the best closer in the game for a reason. And he's tough. But I like battling those guys.

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