

# AL Division Series: Tigers vs Guardians

Thursday, October 10, 2024

Detroit, Michigan, USA

Comerica Park

## Detroit Tigers

## Jake Rogers

Pregame 4 Press Conference

**Q. Obviously without talking the strategy talk, can you kind of take us inside the pitcher meetings when you have bulk -- I know this is not a day, but a bulk reliever day? Are all the pitchers in there, or is it still just you, Fett and the opener? How does the dynamic of that work when you know there's going to be multiple pitchers?**

JAKE ROGERS: Yeah. So they have a big meeting before every series, and they go over all the in bulk, the whole bullpen kind of goes overall their pitchers with Fetter and the pitching staff and all the bullpen guys, and obviously the guys that might come in later will be a part of that meeting, the Hurters, the Olson, whoever might come in after.

And then the starter or the opener, or the bulk guy or whatever we're planning on doing that day will meet with me and Fetter, and we'll go over their lineup, all their weaknesses, stuff like that.

But, yeah, mainly it's all the bullpen kind of has their own meeting, and then whoever is starting that day or opening that day will have a meeting with me and Fett, or whoever is going to get the bulk is going to be in the meeting with me and Fett to go over those hitters.

**Q. Jake, you work with Fett and those guys as closely as the pitchers do. What do you think it is about Chris and Robin and Juan that have helped optimize so many different guys this season?**

JAKE ROGERS: Oh, man. First of all, they're great at their job. I truly believe that. And I think all the guys believe that, which trust is a big thing in this game, and it goes a long way.

But, yeah, I work with them very closely and I think all three of them are different, which helps out every single guy.



Everyone has a different personality, and those three guys have all different personalities and some guys cling to others and go to others more than the others.

But, yeah, Fett and them, they get the best out of everybody. I think just with the plans and their usages and stuff like that, coming up and their offseason work, going into Spring Training. I think that's kind of what they've done really well, is kind of get the best out of everybody, because most of these guys have come up and have maybe gone up and down in years past or kind of haven't figured out who they are. And here they are being incredible. Every single one of them has done a great job.

But, yeah, I think Fett kind of brings the pitching, and Lundy is just incredibly smart, says some stuff where I'm like, You gotta put that in west Texas terms. And then Juan, having been around the game for so long, he's got that baseball part of him.

So, yeah, I think that's kind of -- it helps all our guys kind of truly become who they need to be.

**Q. On that note, those three guys have different personalities, this whole bullpen has different personalities, and you're kind of the epitome of gone are the days where catchers are just paired with single pitchers. How have you been able to this season maintain as much uniformity as possible and maybe the method to your madness of game calling when you're working with different guys coming up on the mound at any given time?**

JAKE ROGERS: Yeah. Truly just gotten to know all these guys. That's kind of a catcher's job is to kind of know every single one of them and what they like. If they like to be a slap on the butt or a slap in the face, you know, whatever they kind of like and don't like, you kind of have to learn that.

And I think all these guys, like you said, are different, and I think just kind of the buildup in the relationship that we've had throughout the years, and a lot of these guys that have come up that I haven't really caught a lot, in talking -- because I talked to Dinger because he caught a lot of



these guys in the Minor Leagues and talking to Dinger and figuring out who these guys are as quick as possible that came up a couple months ago or whenever they came up.

Yeah, it's kind of my responsibility to get to know all these guys, and I think just building that relationship has helped me a lot with their pitch calling and stuff like that.

**Q. I asked Beau when he kind of realized the true potential of the pitching staff. He mentioned the Spring Training as being a time when he looked around and realized how deep this group was. What's your perspective of that?**

JAKE ROGERS: Yeah, it's a good point. I mean, we looked around the room in spring and truly, we were like, man, we're going to be a good team. And with the whole bullpen, I think a lot of those guys are coming back for their second year, you know, the three or four guys that kind of have been a part of it for the last couple years, been like, man, these guys are good, with Holton and Foley and Brieske, Vest, just guys that I've kind of known the last couple years. And we trust in those guys, and obviously I think we trust in a lot of those guys in the bullpen now.

But, yeah, Spring Training was a big moment of like looking around the room going like, man, this is not going to be an easy team to make, especially for the pitching staff. They had some tough choices to make out of camp. I'm glad I didn't have to make those decisions. A.J. made them.

And A.J. said it in spring training, there are some guys in here that you think are not going to make an impact and you're going to be a part of it and here they are making an impact and are every part of why we're winning today.

But, yeah, it was an early call this year of going like, man, it's going to be a good team. And obviously we had our downs and we didn't -- obviously behind .500, just trying to catch up to .500, and then here we are one win away from the ALCS. You just kind of never know, and baseball is a crazy game.

**Q. How have you seen Brieske's slider come along and evolve since the start of the season, and what has that done for his game?**

JAKE ROGERS: Oh, man. All his pitches are great. He's got four-plus pitches, and the slider just kind of evolving to what it is today, I mean, obviously he's got the 98 in the back pocket, and I think he kind of uses his slider well to play off of it. The saying is like using your misses kind of deal.

Just being able to throw the slider down and away for a righty and then throw 98 down and away like he has been all year really is really a positive for him, and he's done a really good job of just kind of being able to mix those pitches and use those pitches wisely.

I think in the past he was leaving the slider up, and it was kind of the only pitch that righties were kind of able to catch up to and hit, and he was giving up some damage on it. And I think just being able to locate that a little better and being able to throw it off the plate and then playing a heater right off of it has made him grow.

**Q. Yesterday you said you've seen the ballpark totally empty and you saw it like it was yesterday and you would take yesterday every time. You've been here since 2019. I'm sure you've fantasized about what this would be like. Does this live up to the hype? Is it better than the hype?**

JAKE ROGERS: Oh, man. I don't know. I think it's better. I said it a million times yesterday, it seems like, but it was an incredible atmosphere, and I was sure to soak it all in, and I'm telling everybody to try to soak it all in, because it was awesome.

Yeah, '19 was a rough year for the Tigs, and we lost a lot of games and not a lot of fans wanted to come, which I don't blame them. But, yeah, fans have been through a lot, I've been through a lot.

But, yeah, yesterday was all we've wanted, it's all you ever kind of work for as a player, I'm sure as a fan, too. You come to the ballpark to watch an incredible game, and hopefully your team wins.

But, yeah, I think that's everything you want as a player, and to be a part of that kind of atmosphere, and again, I was glad I'm part of it.

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