

AL Division Series: Tigers vs Guardians

Thursday, October 10, 2024

Detroit, Michigan, USA

Comerica Park

Detroit Tigers

A.J. Hinch

Postgame 4 Press Conference

Cleveland - 5, Detroit - 4

Q. Share your general thoughts on this closely contested game?

A.J. HINCH: What an incredible game, with a lot of big-time performances on both sides, and a hard-fought game.

Expect nothing less from these two teams, playing for the chance to advance. It's exactly how the games have gone the entire season against these guys. They put up a really good fight, got some big swings, some big pitches. We did the same, and now it ends in a Game 5.

So baseball is incredible because there was a lot going on in that game that I'm proud of, and obviously it's a tough loss.

Q. A.J., a lot of the matchups that you got yesterday that were successful flipped. You got Brieske and Fry, and Fry won this one. Is that the game? Was that an execution issue in that particular at-bat? Or how did you see that?

A.J. HINCH: Yeah, these are elite players at the highest level that you can play, and so it's a competition, you know, and it's incredible to watch these guys continue to fight. You make a small mistake or a hittable pitch, and we were a couple pitches away from getting them to pop up, it barely gets into the stands and he stays on a fastball and drives it out of the ballpark, in that particular play.

That's just one of a ton of at-bats back and forth that were incredibly competitive, whether it was when we took the lead, when they took the lead, a scratch run off of Clase at the end, them doing a safety squeeze with the very guy that hit a homer. Really good baseball game.



Q. A.J., what happened with the Carpenter injury, and what's the level of concern?

A.J. HINCH: Yeah. He's going to get some tests on his left hamstring. He came around third. I think we all saw him start limping back to the dugout, and he couldn't go any further. So we've gotta get him looked at.

And anytime a player like him has to leave the game, it's concerning, but I'm going to hold off any thoughts until the doctors give me an update and he gets imaging and all the things that we need to do prior to Saturday.

Q. Great game, A.J. Those bats came alive, obviously, but in the ninth inning, was there any thought to bringing in Vest to start the ninth or certainly to face maybe Rocchio and Kwan?

A.J. HINCH: Yeah. There always is a thought. I had him up for Fry, because Jackson is more than equipped to get those guys, and we've gotta get some other guys to shoulder some of the load, and you got ahead of Rocchio and ends up giving up the base hit. They had runner in motion, and Kwan, who's been incredible this series, gets the base hit to go first and third. So now we need a ground ball or a punch out, and what we get is a safety squeeze.

I didn't really want to use Vest in a down game. I know you're chasing against Clase, which is really hard. Ended up going to him to give ourselves the best chance we could, and they executed a fundamentally sound play.

So I had no problem with Jackson in that inning. At that point in the order, we fell into some fastball counts and gave him some fastballs to hit, which is probably something we'll look at, but we gotta find our outs.

Q. Guardians ace went today. Your ace goes in Game 5. How quickly do you flush this and get your guys focused on Saturday?

A.J. HINCH: Oh, we'll be ready. These elimination games are incredible. Everything that we've been playing for up to this point is now going to be on Saturday.



So our guys will be able to reset and we'll pack tonight. We'll get on a plane tomorrow. We'll go have a short workout and get the opportunity to do it on their turf.

And I expect them to show up ready to play, too. Why wouldn't these two teams come with everything they got on Saturday.

Q. A.J., you've obviously expressed a ton of respect for Jose Ramirez. Did it just feel like a matter of time before he was going to make his mark in this series?

A.J. HINCH: Maybe I should stop talking about him. I hate when he comes up to bat. I love the player from the other side. You know, we've been keeping him in a pretty good place so far, but up to this point, the fourth game of the series, he shows exactly what he's capable of.

So we've made good pitches. He's going to leave his mark. What we haven't done is take care of the guys in front of him. I know that wasn't -- the sole homer wasn't -- didn't have anybody on in front of him, but just trying to avoid the big at-bat coming down to him.

But they got so many guys that can hurt you, and they showed it tonight, whether it's Kwan getting on base all night, Fry coming off the bench doing a multitude of things, and Rocchio at the bottom had a couple good swings. I just as soon Jose Ramirez not come up in a big spot.

Q. After two games of mixing and matching and a lot of plays and matchups is it comforting to have Skubal there?

A.J. HINCH: It's always comforting to have Tarik Skubal on the mound. So we'll be there on Saturday, and Tarik is going to be the starting pitcher.

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