

# AL Division Series: Tigers vs Guardians

Saturday, October 12, 2024  
Cleveland, Ohio, USA  
Progressive Field

## Cleveland Guardians

### Lane Thomas

#### Postgame 5 Press Conference

Cleveland - 7, Detroit - 3

**Q. Lane, just take us through that fifth inning. They get a run across, you guys answered. What was going on there for you and your team?**

LANE THOMAS: I think first I was hoping our best player wasn't hurt after getting hit. And then, second, you know, you don't get to hit in a situation like that without some guys taking good at-bats in front of you. So it just felt good to come through for the guys and have a big inning.

**Q. Are you deciding between two-seam, four-seam in that situation?**

LANE THOMAS: No. I think that's tough. He's got 100 in the tank and 95 on the sinker. My first time with the bases loaded I kind of was looking soft. I thought in that situation he wasn't going to come at me, and he proved me wrong, and then the next time I was like, you know, I gotta be ready for the fastball. And he threw a good one that I could hit.

**Q. Keep talking a little bit about your journey since coming to Cleveland. Did you feel like you had some struggles early on and just needed to settle in with the new team, or was there more to it?**

LANE THOMAS: Yeah. Definitely had some struggles those first two weeks, or maybe even the month. But I'm just thankful they kind of hung with me and let me get my feet under me and kept giving me at-bats, and you just gotta be thankful for that, first off. And it felt good to kind of come through late in September and obviously in the playoffs. It was good.

**Q. Can it be fun to sort of bat by José, in other words, because he takes a lot of focus?**



LANE THOMAS: I just like watching that guy hit. He's a fun guy to watch go to the plate every time. I've learned a lot from him being here for only a month. So absolutely.

**Q. Stephen Vogt just said that you did have a talk with him in Kansas City like one time you thought you would be in the lineup, and he said he challenged you, and you responded, and he hasn't been able to take you out. Was that a turning point for you in any way? What do you remember from that conversation?**

LANE THOMAS: Man, you know, obviously I was in DC for the last two and a half years. No matter what, I knew that I was showing up at the ballpark and I was going to be in the lineup. So I think I hit a homer off Wacha, and then the next day I didn't play. So I was like, Vogter, fill me in here. Like what's this look like going forward, you know? Obviously I'm prepared for any role that you give me, but I just want -- so we had a great talk, and he kind of gave me some at-bats to end September, and here we are.

**Q. Lane, I know it's a team game. Everyone did a lot. You personally hit a big home run in Game 1, a big Grand Slam here in Game 5. This is the stuff you dream of. Right? Coming up in those big. What does this feel like to have this kind of series for you?**

LANE THOMAS: Yeah. I don't even know if I have the words to answer that question, but you dream of at-bats like that as a little kid, and to do it at this stage, in this game and to come through for the guys in the clubhouse, it feels awesome.

**Q. And for this to be your first playoffs, how sweet is it to be able to put this together, and what were your emotions like celebrating with the guys when you got the championship belt, too?**

LANE THOMAS: Yeah. No, it's incredible. I've said this a lot over the last few weeks. It feels great, how they accepted me coming in here and trying to just keep this thing rolling. Obviously we've played well this first series, and we gotta keep it going for another couple.

**Q. Lane, tell us about Rocky Top. Where did that**



**come from?**

LANE THOMAS: I'm from Knoxville, so that's the Vols kind of fight song.

**Q. Why did they start playing it at the clincher, for the clinch?**

LANE THOMAS: Because I'm from Knoxville -- I don't know. I guess that just relates with the town that I'm from.

**Q. Two things. Number one, you have your family back there. What's that feel like in this moment? And also Steven Kwan has 11 hits in this series. How does he get the table set at the top?**

LANE THOMAS: First off, this wouldn't be possible without them. Gets you a little emotional hearing your son make noise back there in the background. My wife's been a rock through all this, too. So that's incredible.

Watching Steven Kwan hit, too, like I said, you don't get to hit in situations without guys taking good bats in front of you, and it's contagious. You want to come through because they came through. So that's how I feel about that for sure.

**Q. Did you feel any sense of like team-wide confidence or whatever about facing Skubal? The way you guys were able to get after him, did you feel like that could be the way you guys entered with the mentality you did?**

LANE THOMAS: Absolutely not. I think he threw, what, 14 scoreless innings maybe or whatever the number is. About the third inning I was talking with some guys, and I'm like, Whatever we're doing doesn't seem to be working. We gotta like put the ball in play.

Our hitting guys do a great job of giving us a good plan, and we seemed to execute it that one inning. I'm glad it worked out when it did that one inning because he was pretty damn good the previous.

**Q. This may sound strange, and knowing what you just said, but as it's leaving his hand, how quickly do you know you've got one maybe you can put a swing on?**

LANE THOMAS: You know, with the success that that guy's had this year, I think you have to respect the fastball at all times. And he finally threw me one over the plate. I was telling Val, our hitting coach, I was like, Man, I've never seen someone throw that hard and just locate in on me so well.

It seems like every fastball he threw me he just painted the top up and in rail. And you just kind of tip your cap. He threw one over the plate after four at-bats, and I was able to put a good swing on it.

**Q. And as far as like mentally and emotionally, getting traded from Washington, you have a family, you're here. You go through this long series. Where are you at heading into the next series? Are you tired? Are you drained? Are you fired up? What do you think?**

LANE THOMAS: I mean, after a game like that, you're fired up. You're ready to run through a wall. Like I said, we just gotta kind of feed off that game and keep going.

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