

AL Championship Series: Guardians vs Yankees

Sunday, October 13, 2024

New York, New York, USA

Yankee Stadium

Cleveland Guardians

Alex Cobb

Workout Day Press Conference

Q. Alex, when did you find out you were starting?

ALEX COBB: Like 30 seconds ago (laughter). But I think that obviously I figured I was. I just didn't officially get told. It was lined up perfectly through my bullpen and everything like I was pitching this game the whole time, but officially I just got the word.

Q. We sort of talked about this last week, but can you try to explain what it's like to basically be starting your season in the postseason, what that's like mentally?

ALEX COBB: It has its challenges. It's probably not how you draw it up to start the year, but I feel like I've done everything I can to make sure that I've mentally stayed sharp, gone over my delivery as much as I could with the long layoffs in between.

I think, even though it was only three innings in the DS series, it helped a lot to get back into that game action and feel the adrenaline of the postseason, and I'll be able to take that into my next stop.

Q. That's what I was going to ask you, what do you think you kind of found -- or did you find anything in those three innings?

ALEX COBB: It's really hard to articulate what it is that a game situation does for you, but you can go through all the bullpens, a lot of BPs you want, but until you get the adrenaline, the consequences of an actual game, it's hard to sharpen your stuff to that degree.

Being out there, maybe being a little bit quicker with your delivery than you normally would in a bullpen or a live BP, those are things you've just got to be out there to feel and to experience.

It just gave me game reps. Even though it was only three



innings, it was game reps, and I'll take all the reps I can at this point.

Q. When they made the trade for you, did you expect -- I know two trips to the DL, but did you expect to get here and make the second start in the postseason?

ALEX COBB: No. I fully anticipated at that point to make hopefully ten starts in the second half, and then obviously be ready to pitch in the postseason, but that didn't go according to plan. I've had to kind of make up as much as I can in the bullpens and a lot of BPs.

Dating back to Spring Training, I felt on pace to have a pretty normal season after the hip surgery and just had setback after setback that didn't allow me to get on the field. I don't think anything's gone quite like I expected it to this year, but to look up and to be in the ALCS and have an opportunity to set the tone early is something I'm going to cherish for a long time.

Q. I mean, it's been a long year for you obviously in general, just taking everything in. Is there an advantage at all to having this type of a season? Are you able to spin it in that way, when you reach the postseason, of none of these opponents have seen me yet? And you can try to spin it in your own way for this being some sort of positive out of all of it?

ALEX COBB: I think with a team like the Yankees, they've seen me plenty over the years, most of the guys have at least. I think the positive is that you've gone through all these adversities throughout the year, and you're sitting here and getting the ball in Game 1 of the ALCS. I don't think there's much you've got to look more towards than having that opportunity.

Whatever's happened in the past, this year's happened, and I'm just excited that I'm in the position I'm in right now.

Q. Going to several organizations over the last few years, has there been anything you've had to learn about adjusting to different pitching coaches and different analytics staffs that might have different ideas from what they want you to do?



ALEX COBB: I think that most of the teams that have acquired me over the last few years kind of know the type of pitcher I am and are okay with the stuff that I bring and sign up for that.

One of the biggest things you learn as a Big Leaguer is that you have to be your own best pitching coach, and that's going to be the only constant that you're going to have throughout your career. And being able to make the adjustments that you can take from game to game is what allows you to have a long career.

It also helps you deal with the changes year to year in personnel. Even if you're with the same organizations, coaching staffs change quite a bit, lots of things change. So learning yourself, learning your own pitch calling, learning all those things is really important to figure out at an early age so you can deal with all these changes that you're talking about.

Q. Are you surprised at all at what the Guardians have accomplished here, especially in the second half going down the stretch?

ALEX COBB: I think I probably was from afar when I was on the West Coast and looking up and seeing the position that they were in. Just after the year they had last year, you could tell that they're a good team, but to be leading the division at that time of the year -- I don't know about surprising, but it stands out.

Then you look deeper into it and you see Vogter and Albe at the top, and they're both just winners in everything they do. You get traded over here, and it probably took me a game or two to look around and see how special of a team it is, each and every position, how good a defenders they are, how aggressively they run the bases, taken the extra bag, and then the competitive at-bats that they put up.

Then you see the bullpen that they've put together. Every time they come out, you see the ERA on the board, and it's hard to believe that people are putting up those numbers in mid to late August.

So it didn't take long to see that this is a team that belongs in the postseason and to make a deep run, but I think it took a little bit of time being in a different league to realize that.

Q. What kind of challenge does the Yankees lineup present?

ALEX COBB: A lot. Top to bottom, they're experienced hitters. Obviously the ballpark itself presents its own

challenges, so trying to keep the ball on the ground is big here. Trying to keep the crowd out of it is going to be big.

Obviously you want to not let the big three, four guys to beat you, but the bottom of the lineup presents its own challenges as well.

We know we've got our work cut out for us. The catching staff here and the coaching staff always put together excellent game plans. You pitch your game, and then in certain situations, you know you need to make a pitch or two that you've gone over that situation, and it leads to just executing it after that.

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