

AL Championship Series: Guardians vs Yankees

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Progressive Field

New York Yankees

Clarke Schmidt

Workout Day Press Conference

Q. Can you tell us what this Cleveland lineup, what challenges you have ahead with them?

CLARKE SCHMIDT: Yeah, I mean, I think obviously they won over 90 games for a reason. They've had a great season. You've got guys who have been in the league for a long time and had a lot of success with Ramirez and Kwan's obviously an All-Star caliber player.

I think they do the small things right, and they're very -- when you face lineups like this, they have guys obviously who can hit the homers with Naylor and those guys, but they find ways to score runs.

When you face teams like that, they pose a challenge because you can't really take anyone off. Anyone can get a hit, top to bottom. Obviously Rocchio is doing what he's doing in the bottom of the lineup.

Yeah, I think very scrappy team, but also have the ability to slug and score some runs and they'll find a way to score anyway they can.

Q. When Aaron Boone talks about you, a lot of times he brings up your confidence. Where does your confidence come from? How early did you start to develop that?

CLARKE SCHMIDT: I would say there's a lot of things that go into it. I think my faith is one of them. I think when I have something that I think is kind of bigger than me and something that I can always lean on, it's almost like a crutch for me. I kind of trust the plan that's laid out in front of me. It's not really in my control to control a lot of these things.

That's the biggest thing is it's kind of out of my hands, and I trust that.



I think the other thing is I put a lot of work in. I trust all the work that I put in in the offseason, the work that I do in season with my body, with my preparation, whether it's prepping for a lineup, game planning, or it's prepping my body to pitch and to go out there and be my best when I'm out there.

I trust myself, and I think a lot of the work that I put in is on the mind, as well. I try to be fearless when I'm out there. I know that there's very few things that we can control when we're out there, but the one thing that we can control is our mentality and how we handle ourselves out there.

Especially when you're in these environments, in playoffs, if you let the noise get to you and you start paying attention to the outside voices, I think you really can get thrown around a lot.

For me, I just try to stay within myself, trust myself, and understand that if I'm out there and I'm as fearless as possible when I'm on the attack and I trust my work that I put in, then I'll be in a good spot.

Q. When you pitched and watched against the Royals last week, what did you learn about if there was anything you had to do differently in these postseason games?

CLARKE SCHMIDT: I think obviously the environment is the biggest thing. Hitters are a lot more locked in. I think they're trying to attack -- they know your strengths. They know what you're trying to go at. They know the areas you're trying to get to.

It's almost a little bit more of a chess game than it might be in the regular season. I think over the course of a regular season, it's more of a longevity game, and there's so many games, and it's a larger sample size.

Now teams are looking at what you just recently did, and they're trying to pick apart what you do best. It's almost a little bit more of a magnifying glass on your strengths and what you're trying to do.

I think you have to make adjustments more on the fly. You



have to read swings a little bit more.

I think the chess game -- the game within the game becomes a little bit larger, and I think just being able to adjust and see and kind of see what the team is giving you, what is their game plan against you, and try to -- you have a game plan going into it, but obviously you have to be able to adjust it.

Q. The last two nights, what were you looking at as Carlos and Gerrit attacked Cleveland?

CLARKE SCHMIDT: Yeah, obviously Carlos was amazing, and even Gerrit last night, he started out really strong. They started to make some really good adjustments, and that's what good teams do.

You just kind of pay attention to the way our guys are attacking them and kind of how they're responding to it and what adjustments they're making. Obviously they made some adjustments with Gerrit that paid off for them.

Just reading swings, reading foul balls, reading just the small things, trying to pay attention to all the details as much as you can.

I think everything you see that goes on in the game, it might be overlooked to the outside eye, but everything that happens kind of happens for a reason, and it's almost like -- you just have to pay attention to the game within the game a little bit more I would say.

Q. Your first two postseason games happened in Cleveland. Do you think that's helped you in any way? What did you take away from that?

CLARKE SCHMIDT: Yeah, I think obviously having those experiences and kind of understanding what that environment is like, especially in that situation that I was in, back end of the game, I think it was probably the rowdiest part of the game. I think you have a lot of takeaways from there, and I've learned a lot from that and being able to take bits and pieces from that and try to adjust my game.

Also it kind of prepares -- it kind of prepared me for the moment, and I understand what that kind of environment is like and what to expect in a sense.

So yeah, I would say it was definitely kind of stamped in my mind. It's something I'm looking forward to going back out there and pitching in that environment. I definitely love being out there in those moments. Last week in Kansas City was great. That environment was awesome. And pitching on the road is something that I like to do.

I mean, I love pitching at home, but pitching on the road with fans coming at your throat, it's kind of fun to be able to have the ability to silence them whenever you want if you get the job done.

Q. Before your last start, I'm pretty sure you said you weren't nervous, you were just excited. I'm curious if once you got out on the mound, first postseason start, did you feel any nerves at all, or was it just business as usual for you?

CLARKE SCHMIDT: Yeah, I mean, it's not like -- I'm not like super human. It's not like I don't feel nerves at all. I think it's a hard feeling to describe. I would say it's not nervousness, like, of what the outcome might be or what the environment is going to be like. It's almost just like butterflies, anticipation, excitement to get out there, all of those kind of emotions combined. Maybe there's a little bit of nervousness.

But I think just kind of being in control of your emotions, breathing, all those things, slowing the game down as much as possible, and almost trying to bring it back to business as usual is something that can kind of snap me out of -- if I kind of feel off a little bit emotionally.

But it was a really fun environment, and I would definitely say there was definitely a little bit of -- you can put nervousness on it when you're in the dugout and your team is hitting first and you're up going out there. That little moment, that brief moment in there, there's some excitement for sure.

Q. Not that those emotions are necessarily a bad thing, but having been through it now, particularly in a road environment, a rowdy environment, is there anything you can do now to maybe squash the butterflies a little bit this time?

CLARKE SCHMIDT: Yeah, I think it's a good thing in a sense. I think if you use it -- if you use that emotion and kind of channel it into almost like -- it takes you to another level if you can use it in the right way.

If you focus more, if maybe your execution can go to another level, the sharpness on your pitches goes to another level. I think I try to channel all the emotions that I feel and make it into a positive manner.

For me, I'm kind of hoping -- I know that I will have those same exact emotions. I would say the biggest benefit I got out of having last week, starting last week on the road is you kind of know what to expect when you're starting on the road. You kind of know what the bullpen is like, the preparation, fans chirping you, which all this stuff, it's all

part of the game, and it's fun. It's why we love sports.

As a professional athlete, I think you dream of situations like that, of the pressure, of being on the road. You have to get the job done, and a lot of expectations, and so all these things I welcome. I think it can take me to a higher place for sure if you use it in the right way.

Q. After the win last night, you guys are two wins away from the World Series. I'm curious last night maybe today around the guys in the clubhouse, are you guys starting to taste it a little bit? Is that hard to not look ahead when you still have two more to get?

CLARKE SCHMIDT: I think just you know how sports are. Two games might not seem like a lot, might seem like right there on the tip of your finger, but it's just -- these games can change so quick, and the momentum can change so quick.

I feel like we show up and it almost feels like we're down in a sense in the locker room. We've still got a job to do. We know that we're going on the road in a tough environment. It's business as usual I would think in this locker room. We know these next two games are pivotal games, and we're trying to get the job done as quickly as we possibly can.

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