

AL Championship Series: Guardians vs Yankees

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Cleveland, Ohio, USA

Progressive Field

New York Yankees

Tommy Kahnle

Workout Day Press Conference

Q. Looking back to this spring with the injuries that you've had the last couple of years, did you think that you'd be able to get back to this point where you're this consistent and a high-leverage option down the stretch?

TOMMY KAHNLE: Yeah, so dating back to spring and last spring dealing with the multiple shoulder injuries, there was never a doubt in my mind that I'd be able to come back. It was just dealing with the same injury over and over. It kind of gets tiring.

I think it's just something that I've learned to deal with, especially being injured quite a lot the last four or five years.

It's really been difficult at times, but never a doubt in my mind that I'd be able to come back and have the same success, I guess.

Q. Is there anything you can pinpoint that's allowed you to have this much success this year? Anything different than you've done in the past?

TOMMY KAHNLE: I think just mentality-wise, when I'm out on the mound, I haven't strayed from the same confidence I've always had, and just using that has always been kind of my philosophy is just attacking hitters.

Sometimes it goes well. Sometimes it doesn't go well, but overall that's always been the way I've always pitched, and it seems to have success.

Q. Clay, what do you think has allowed him to bounce back so strong after getting moved out of the closing role?

TOMMY KAHNLE: Yeah, so Clay, obviously everybody saw him get moved out. I think that he never deterred from



the demotion, and he just kept working on his craft, kept getting everything kind of back into rhythm.

I think a big thing was getting his fastball back and using his fastball more. I know we were trying to get him to use it more. And I feel like over the last month-ish, he's gone back to his heater, and he's even been throwing four-seam fastballs, which has been amazing.

It's been a great time watching him develop and being with him the last couple years has been great.

Q. With Luke taking over there, did you see this coming? Did you know he was capable of that?

TOMMY KAHNLE: Yeah, I mean, obviously we saw him this spring and early on in the season, you saw his stuff. I didn't think for a second in my mind that he couldn't do it. You saw the passion and everything he had.

And obviously I was surprised by it because I never saw him like that. He was only with us for a little bit last year. And then coming into this year and seeing him now, he's thrived in it, and I love it. His passion out there, his emotion, especially with his stuff, it's been incredible.

Q. Clay obviously had a great All-Star first half and the way things shook out in the second half with Luke ascending to that role, that's the type of thing that can probably be awkward maybe for some teams in different situations with different personalities, but it really seemed like it wasn't an issue for you guys.

For you personally, being one of the veterans down there in that bullpen, how did you view your role during that time? How did you try to support those guys through that time?

TOMMY KAHNLE: I mean, I know it's a difficult time, especially for guys to get demoted, because I've seen it with guys that are setup guys and have a bad string of outings and get demoted into a middle relief role or long-man role, stuff like that.

Overall, Clay handled it perfectly. We were always there



trying to help him, and we're such a tight-knit group in the bullpen that I think it really helps all of us kind of feed off each other, and we always talk with each other.

I feel like we're around each other a lot, obviously, so that helps big time, especially how close we are.

I think him having me, Weave, Tim, all these guys down here to lean on was big time, and we kept him -- he kept his head right, and you see him now, he's back to the Clay we know.

Q. You've been away a bunch of times doing rehab, and when you come back to the group, what do you think your exuberant personality brings to the group as a whole?

TOMMY KAHNLE: I'm sure they don't miss it much when I'm gone. But I've been a little bit more mellow, I would say, this year in recent past because I'm more tired at home because of my kids.

But yeah, I think the personality definitely helps in phases, I should say. Can't overdo it. But I would say, yeah, I'm sure it kind of reminisces with the guys and they enjoy it. We have a lot of characters on here, so I think that's a good thing.

You've kind of got to let guys be themselves. It's fun that way.

Q. How much do you think you help keep it light in the tense moments?

TOMMY KAHNLE: I hope good. Nobody has ever really come out and said. But down in the bullpen, I know we all try to keep it light. Even into the later stages of the game, you don't want to get too stressed out because obviously I always feel like if we're light and still doing the same thing -- even these playoff games, I've tried to keep it the same way we are during the season, nothing out of the ordinary. So far, so good.

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