

AL Division Series: Tigers vs Mariners

Saturday, October 4, 2025

Seattle, Washington, USA

T-Mobile Park

Detroit Tigers

Kerry Carpenter

Zach McKinstry

Postgame 1 Press Conference

Tigers - 3, Mariners - 2

Q. Kerry, you've had a lot of success against George Kirby in your career. How much were you looking forward to getting potentially a third crack at him there? And take us through what happened at that at-bat.

KERRY CARPENTER: Yeah. I tend to see him well. He's so good, though. He has great stuff, and in the first inning he was really good, and so -- yeah. I'm pretty confident against anybody I go against.

I saw -- I was seeing him well tonight, especially after that first at-bat. I feel like I got my timing back a little bit. And I just wanted to make sure to get a good pitch to hit that at-bat, because they had a base open, and I didn't know how they were going to pitch me. And so I felt like I was on time and had a good approach there.

Q. Zach, in extra innings, and obviously a runner on second, and two guys punch in row, there's two outs. Where is your emotions at and where is your heartbeat at in that situation?

ZACH MCKINSTRY: Yeah. I was kind of leaning on the you know he was going to throw 80 percent two-seams, and just kind of leaning on that and knowing what he was going to throw there. Just trying to attack early. Winning that 0-0 pitch is going to be huge for us.

Q. Either one of you can take this one. But just how -- the win tonight with Skubal going tomorrow, how big of a flip is this, you know, in terms of -- it's more than momentum. It's mathematically a big flip to win this game?



KERRY CARPENTER: Yeah. It's huge. To get a win before the best pitcher in the world pitches is pretty special, and I feel like Skubal is made for these moments, so he's going to be at his best. And that's a heck of a lineup over there, so they're going to be at their best too.

But to have the opportunity to go 2-0 here, we're really confident in our guy because we should be because he's the only one with back-to-back Cy Youngs. So it's pretty special.

Q. Kind of on a similar vein to that question, how does it feel to know that you guys are kind of hitting your stride at the right time? A lot of people made it out to be how things went down the stretch, but the way that you guys fought and clawed back in Cleveland to get a win here, does it feel like you're hitting your start at the right time?

ZACH MCKINSTRY: Yeah. Definitely. I mean, all year long, I feel like we were either down or we were up. We're up right now, and we're getting a lot of wins. Things are going our way, and it's baseball, and we're looking forward to compete our butts off and just go out there and play our game to the best of our ability.

Like he said, we've got Skubal going tomorrow. He's a great pitcher. He's been one of the best in the game for the last two years. We look forward to going out there and playing defense behind him. He's electric. The energy he brings is next to none. He's our ace, and we love to get wins behind him.

Q. Zach, how much did this game embody what you guys do well when you are at your best, whether it's you with a crucial single, Javi with a big play, Keider with his first save, a lot of people contributing in a lot of small ways?

ZACH MCKINSTRY: Yeah. It's huge. I mean, Keider getting his first save in the postseason, and I think maybe his career. So it's supercool to see him do that and just go out there and get the ball and I'm going to get it done.

Yeah, a lot of great things. Defense looks really good right



now. We're playing the best we've played all year on defense. And the bats are just going to keep unfolding, and we have the most confidence going into the box. I don't think there's a guy on this team that's going to go up there and say, I'm going to get beat today. So we're just going to continue to compete and have good at-bats.

Q. Kerry, in the fifth inning before your at-bat, they had a mound visit, but they also had a lefty warming up in the bullpen. Were you wondering at all if they were going to go to that lefty there in that situation, and what was it like when they did stick with Kirby and you got your opportunity to face him for a third time?

KERRY CARPENTER: Yeah. It's always -- before I leave the dugout, I probably know if they're getting a lefty up or not.

But once I'm out there, if George Kirby is on the mound, I'm getting ready to face him. So I was just thinking about my approach against him that whole time. And yeah. It was great to get another opportunity off him, you know, the third time through.

I always feel like the more I face people, the more opportunity I have to have success. And so yeah. I was hoping to get another opportunity off him.

Q. And you mentioned the approach against him. What kind of was your approach going into this? Obviously he has the high fastball that can be really lethal, but you got to it.

KERRY CARPENTER: Yeah. He throws hard, so getting on time is a huge thing. It's a huge thing for me in general.

But being able to be on time for the fastest pitch he could throw, which is, like, a front-hip sinker that starts at me. So I just wanted to be on time with that.

And usually when I get on time with that, I can see everything else, and I saw the slider pretty well the first pitch. And I just trust with my eyes at that moment and put a good swing on it.

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