

AL Division Series: Tigers vs Mariners

Sunday, October 5, 2025

Seattle, Washington, USA

T-Mobile Park

Detroit Tigers

A.J. Hinch

Postgame 2 Press Conference

Mariners - 3, Tigers - 2

Q. A.J., what was your focus going in? Good at-bats. You got the pitch count up, you got Castillo out fairly early. Was it just lack of a big hit?

A.J. HINCH: Yeah. That was quite a game. Obviously at the beginning of the game, I thought our bats were incredible. It was, like, 50 pitches through two innings, and then Castillo made a little adjustment, started being a little more aggressive in the zone, we started being a little more aggressive in the zone, and he had some quick innings, which bridged the game to the middle.

And we couldn't quite create enough pressure. We had the one inning, I think it was in the fifth, where we had a couple guys on, and then obviously a tremendous job against their pen. Trying to put it together against Brash is not easy. We scored a couple, and they came back and answered.

Obviously it's a frustrating loss because every loss at this time of year is frustrating, but I'm obviously proud of our group and excited to get home.

Q. A.J., what went into the decision to pitch to Julio as opposed to walking him to set up a double play possibility?

A.J. HINCH: Yeah. It's always easy to pass the baton to the next guy. The guy on deck was doing a few things in his own right.

So we trust Finnegan to make pitches. Their guy beat our guy and did a nice job. Even flipping Polanco around has its own challenges with Finnegan.

So it was just the route that we took, and I think he might have hung in a little bit up in the zone. Julio didn't miss it, and that's how they scored their run.



Q. A.J., how did Tork's hit tying the game impact the bullpen decisions, particularly with Finnegan, given how often or how much --

A.J. HINCH: Yeah, before the game, we talked about our bullpen, and our guys were ready to go. So, you know, I think a couple of their good hitters did a good job of hitting pitches that Finnegan left up in the zone. You know, Cal gets the double. Julio gets the double.

Then I thought he battled back -- Finny battled back really well to stay in that. A little bit unlucky with the broken-bat single.

And Hurter came in and was able to get the last out, and there we have one run. If we could get anything started against Munoz, which is a tall task, you know, that was our hope at that point.

But obviously Finnegan was going to pitch in a tie or up game. I had Tommy up -- I'm sure you guys saw that -- if we were in a down game. But at the top of the order, we're going to attack them with our best.

Q. A.J., Tarik obviously set such a high bar for himself. How did you feel about his stuff and command for the bulk of it?

A.J. HINCH: Oh, his stuff was good. Polanco got -- first one was a slider, and he hits the homer and hit another homer. You know, you don't see the same guy get good swings against Tarik very often.

But other than that, I thought there was a walk in there. There was a few pitches that I think he didn't execute. But all in all, he did a tremendous job of keeping us in the game and keeping it right where it was.

I mean, it was a well-pitched game on both sides. They had a couple big swings. You know, we missed a couple opportunities, but I thought Tarik did his part.

Q. A.J., in the fifth inning they pulled their starter, and they went to the bullpen with runners in the corners,



two outs. What did you like about sticking with Carpenter in that situation?

A.J. HINCH: You know, that's a judgment call with two outs, and where only one thing that can help you is the hit. And obviously they would probably love Carp to be out of the game. He came up with the tying run in the game. There's a ton of game late.

And Speier's no easy task with righties or lefties. A lot of punch-out is in his game.

So I chose to keep Carp in the game for the fact that we had so much game left rather than make that move. So Carp had a good look at him last night. I thought he had some good swings. But obviously Speier got him tonight.

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