

AL Wild Card Series: Tigers vs Guardians

Wednesday, October 1, 2025

Cleveland, Ohio, USA

Progressive Field

Detroit Tigers

Jack Flaherty

Pregame Press Conference



Q. Jack, what does it mean to be in this situation where you don't know if you're going to be pitching tomorrow, but also having the experience of pitching in the World Series last year and how that could help you going into game 3 if necessary?

JACK FLAHERTY: I mean, it doesn't matter. It's kind of hard questions to answer because you're kind of talking about a game that hasn't happened yet in terms of, you know, the one that we got today.

So today is just about going out, being a really good cheerleader and supporting these guys and watching Casey and the bullpen go out and do their thing.

Then, yeah, that's really the whole focus of today. If we get to tomorrow, then we get to tomorrow.

Q. From talking to you all year, we know how you are on these things. But when A.J. has you guys in, it's between you and Casey, who gets this game, game 2, and he picks Casey, what was kind of your mindset at that point?

JACK FLAHERTY: I don't care. I'm going to pitch when I pitch. As long as you're part of these things and you get to be part of these runs and get to be part of the postseason, it doesn't matter to me at all.

So I'm looking forward to watching Casey go out and do his thing and just hoping we take care of business and I'm not important until the next one.

Q. What's it like to -- obviously now where you are, in a situation where you're pitching game 3, it could be an elimination game, or game 1 of the ALDS, both very important starts you'd be making. What is it like? What are the emotions as you prepare for either one?

JACK FLAHERTY: Again, kind of no real thoughts on it right now. As weird as it is, though I may not be part of game 2, it feels like you are, even if you're not playing in it. You feel a part of it, and you're with the guys and you're riding with the guys.

So in terms of looking to whatever start it may be, honestly, my head hasn't even gotten there yet. And we'll get there when we get there. Right now, it's really -- being there with these guys today and not looking further ahead, it's hard to answer those questions.

Q. You mentioned being pretty locked into game 2, you know, today's game, right? In the past, have you been able to talk to Fet or Ding when you're not pitching and talk to even the starting pitcher, or is it more just rooting on the guys?

JACK FLAHERTY: It's a lot of rooting on the guys. May talk about what they see over the course of the game or why this pitch or that pitch. But for the most part, I'll do a lot of homework on myself and we'll get together whatever day I end up starting.

Q. Jack, your journey here with the Tigers, you came here on a one-year deal last year, traded, won a World Series. Came back on another one-year deal. As the season has gone on, do you feel like this is home for you now? Do you feel less of a passing through guy now than you may have last year at this time?

JACK FLAHERTY: Yeah. It's definitely different when you know you'll be somewhere for an entire season. I was able in the short time I was here last year to build special relationships with the guys where when it came time for the deadline, it was weird because I didn't really want to go. Obviously, things worked out in a great way for both sides. I was lucky enough to come back and continue those relationships.

As this year's gone on, it obviously hasn't been quite what it was last year. There's been a lot more ups and downs. These guys have had my back throughout all of it, and I just continue to try to go out and put in work and know that they've got my back. So it's been awesome competing



with these guys, no matter the way that it's gone, the way the season went. We experienced all the highs and all the lows and everything in between.

We may have not gotten here the way we wanted, but I think A.J. said it doesn't matter once we get here. Everybody gets a chance to start over.

Q. Thinking back six months ago, you were at Dodger Stadium getting your World Series ring. A lot of former teammates surrounding you. How much did that moment mean to you, and as you go into the playoffs with this team, how much does getting another World Series ring push you?

JACK FLAHERTY: I mean, it's everything. The reason you get out of bed in the morning is to go out and have a chance to win no matter where you're at. To have a chance to do it with these guys is all the more special.

Receiving it and having that moment there, it was great. It was awesome. But I haven't looked at the thing in five months. It's been put away. So it's been about moving forward and moving on with these guys and competing with them every single day and giving them everything I have. Even if at times it hasn't been the best.

It's all kind of been put behind and we're focused on what's going forward.

Q. As a pitcher when you see Skubal yesterday, you've seen him for the last, basically, year and a half or whatever, what impressed you the most about what he did yesterday?

JACK FLAHERTY: I think it's more of the fact that it might have been his third straight start against these guys, and the adjustments he was able to make. They made some adjustments after he dominated against them through the shut-out. They made some adjustments and he still pitched really, really well.

Yesterday was another level of dominance. It's one of the things -- I've been lucky enough to take the ball in some game 1s, but you're able to set the tone and able to start everything. This is what it's going to be. And you save the bullpen for today, and you save the bullpen for the next day.

We used two guys yesterday with him and Vest, and Vest was incredible. But the responsibility that goes into that isn't just setting the tone, it's also, well, we're going to save the bullpen.

He did something that I don't know if he's ever done

before, which he comes off after seven at 95 pitches. And I'm talking with Casey, I think he's going to go back out. He cruised through that inning. There's no slowing down. He goes back out there and makes some incredible pitches. We'll joke about it, and you can catch the ball and turn into a double play. He's through 8.

We joked about it. He won the game. It's all fun and games. But he's through 8 if this ball goes into his glove. He's still able to recover and get Kwan out and turn it over to Vest.

But he's a workhorse. He's over his innings pitched, his highest total of innings pitched in a season and doesn't seem like he's slowing down at all. It was impressive to watch yesterday.

Q. Jake, how do you build trust with Dillon Dingler this year. What has allowed him to step into such a dominant role this early in his career?

JACK FLAHERTY: You respect the guys that work hard. It's something you respect and like to see and appreciate. The guys that worked hard are the ones you want to compete with and work with them on a day-to-day basis. That guy is one of the first guys in the building every day, and then he's sticking around and one of the last guys to leave.

You see that, and those are the guys you want to compete with. It starts with that. And he's also a good communicator. In conversations, I'm like what have you got for me? If he's got an off day, catching up, conversations, a couple sit-downs of just -- more so on my part, what adjustments do I have to make?

I was scuffling a little bit where it was going from bad to worse. Hey, what do we need to do? Okay, great. We make those adjustments and things start to go in the right direction. Let's keep on this. Let's remember to reiterate those things.

He was part of those conversations and gave some good input, what he's seeing as he's getting the ball or receiving. So, for me, I really appreciate those guys that work hard and want to communicate.

Q. Jack, can you explain to me how hard it is to game plan for a guy like José Ramírez, how good he is. How you guys have been pitching him more effectively, eliminating his power?

JACK FLAHERTY: José is one of those guys for a lot of years, if you ask the most underrated player of the league, he's at the top of everybody's list.

For the guys here, we don't see him as underrated. We think he obviously deserves way more spotlight than he gets for how good he is, and it's just an incredible player. And you just hope to contain them for as long as you can and try and make really good pitches and execute. That's what it comes down to with those guys, especially this time of year.

Comes down to executing. He's going to be locked in. He's going to put together really good, pro at-bats each and every time. You try to get going and compete. You know he's giving his best, and you give him your best. You do everything you can to try to execute against those guys.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports