

91st MLB All-Star Game

Monday, July 12, 2021

Denver, Colorado, USA

Coors Field

Pete Alonso

Home Run Derby Press Conference



Q. First of all, Mancini has a great story. How exciting was it to see him compete against you in this last round?

PETE ALONSO: It was awesome, really awesome for him. I know that he's overcome a lot in his journey and for him to put on a show the way he did, it was really special.

And I'm super happy for him and his family that he's back playing ball, doing the things he loves. And I mean, his story is just absolutely remarkable. Helluva bounce back and he's just a high-character guy with ultra talent. So a great guy to compete against, and he for sure made me work in that last round.

Q. In terms of going to left field, was that a strategy with the ballpark or your comfort zone?

PETE ALONSO: Jaussy was just putting them right in the bread basket, and there was a couple times where I went out to center and right center. I feel like I used pretty much the entire field. I mean, I was just focused on being locked in on hitting the sweet spot of the bat. And the balls just went wherever they went. I felt like my timing was consistent, my tempo was great, and my effort level was outstanding and I was able to stay consistent and really, really kind of dominate.

Q. Could you share the story of the different bats?

PETE ALONSO: Yeah, Gregory Siff, L.A.-based artist, grew up in Queens, his artwork for all my bats I use today is just incredible. I talked to him and told him about my story and my personality, and I gave him creative freedom and he gave me the absolute best arsenal out of everyone today. Just super creative. His mind is wonderful.

He's a great dude. He's actually here in the outfield seeing his work being put to the test. It was awesome, really awesome that I was able to collaborate with him, and his artwork is just absolutely incredible. And I believe for it to be functional and put balls over the fence, it's truly remarkable. It's really fun and kind of a great meshing of

two worlds.

Q. When you won in 2019, you showed up at this press conference with the trophy and a big, blinking medallion around your neck. Now the winner gets a trophy and a medallion. Will that be your personal Derby legacy?

PETE ALONSO: It's awesome they give both the trophy and the necklace. It's really kind of sick. It surprised me in 2019. I had no idea that they were doing it, and next thing I know after I won, Daddy Yankee is putting the chain on me. I'm like, oh, my gosh. Now they hyped it up and they really did an excellent job with it. I mean, this is gorgeous. So I'm really excited.

Q. Is it heavy?

PETE ALONSO: Oh, yeah, it's heavy.

Q. You're out there dancing before they are pitching. You just seemed like you are made for this event and like you have a blast.

PETE ALONSO: Yeah.

Q. Other people don't like to come sometimes. What is it about this event that connects with you so well?

PETE ALONSO: For me, I'm a power hitter and for me I think I'm the best power hitter on the planet. And being able to showcase that and really put on a fun display for fans, I just think that it's truly a dream come true for me. Because when I was younger, my parents actually let me stay up past my bedtime to watch this.

So yeah, that was one of the few nights of the year where I actually got to stay up past my bedtime and watch, and just watch absolutely incredible feats that you just don't see in a regular baseball game. And to be able to participate, it's a dream come true, and to be able to do it back-to-back, this is really special for me and really, really cool.

Q. What's your approach to it?

... when all is said, we're done.®



PETE ALONSO: When?

Q. No, I mean how?

PETE ALONSO: For me, I just -- there was no point where I thought I was going to lose, ever. Even months before when the seedings came out, teammates came up to me, "Oh, that's disrespect, you're defending the title. What guy that's defending their title is a fifth seed? Nobody. And are you pissed about that?" I'm like, no, I'm going to win anyways, it doesn't matter.

For me, this is such a fun time for me, and there's no thought. It's just all positive thoughts and fun thoughts. I put myself in a really good position because in 2019, I was able to draw from experience.

And because my plan was executed really well in 2019, I just carried that same philosophy over, conserve as much energy as possible between rounds, do whatever you can to recover, drink as much fluids, electrolytes and use the Theragun and roll out and stay stretched and stay loose. And I feel like that my strategy really paid off and I have really good endurance. I feel like it's a perfect combination for me.

Q. Would you like to come back every year and go down as the greatest Home Run Derby hitter ever?

PETE ALONSO: Right now I feel like I demonstrated that. I don't know if I'm going to do it in L.A. It's going to be such a fun event at Dodger Stadium, but right now I'm just going to enjoy this one. I feel like right now, my Home Run Derby legacy, I'm one of the best people to do it.

Q. I know that those pitches are coming at you fast. Was there one that you watched that you stopped and you wanted to see where it came down?

PETE ALONSO: No, I just wanted to keep going and get this thing and this thing (trophy and medallion). I'll watch the video later and see how far they go and see where they land. For me, I just wanted to win and I wanted to stay locked in on pitch-to-pitch.

Q. What can you say about Dave Jauss?

PETE ALONSO: Oh, yeah, he was putting it right in the bread basket. He was putting it right in the honey hole. I'm super -- you know, I mean, that's what he was doing. He was putting it right in my sweet spot of my swing, and that's what we worked on in practice. And he's my everyday BP thrower and to be able to come out on top like this, this is really special, not just for me and for him.

Because he did this event way back in 1999. He's just a well-traveled baseball guy, old-school baseball guy, and for him to do it again, and for us to take this thing home, it's really special, not just for me, but for him as well.

Q. I thought he did catch you a couple times looking at a couple of those shots?

PETE ALONSO: Yeah, and I had to reel him back and was like, yeah, it's time to keep it rolling.

Q. First round you hit 35 and then Perez gets to 28 and was reeling off at the end. At any point did you think he might have enough to get you?

PETE ALONSO: No. As soon as I saw 35 up there, I'm like that's untouchable. And that was the goal for every round. I know the fifth seed, if I faced Ohtani, then I would have to do the same thing.

My approach was I have to be the standard. I have to be the bar. And I just wanted to make the standard incredibly untouchable so I would advance from the first round and go on from there. So my game plan was to be as untouchable as possible and whoever I face, I'm going to beat no matter what.

Q. If I'm not mistaken two years ago in the finals, you had to beat 22 also. Did you know that when you stepped up there today?

PETE ALONSO: In less time, too. Yeah, I did know that.

Q. In addition to the bat from the artist, you seemed to be enjoying some Queens-based music early on.

PETE ALONSO: Yeah, all my music that was playing tonight was New York guys: Nas, Mobb Deep and Notorious B.I.G. Just wanted to represent the vibe and represent for New York.

Q. Why was it important for you to connect to the city in that fashion?

PETE ALONSO: For me, New York has treated me so well and for me I feel like I'm a part-time New Yorker. I know I'm not born there or from there, but for me, New York has treated me so well. I love the city and playing for the Mets. I just feel connected to the city and the culture of the city.

Q. When was the first Home Run Derby you competed in in your life?

PETE ALONSO: The first Home Run Derby I competed in

was in the Northwoods League, the Northwoods summer league. So it was me, Joe Dudek, who was at UNC at the time, and Jose Canseco.

So I went against Jose Canseco. He hit five homers and I hit six homers. It was the old style. It was the outs-style Derby. Even though I hit more home runs than him, Jose still went to the next round because that's Jose (laughter).

And then my buddy, Joe, he hit ten, so he faced Jose in the championship or the final round. But yeah, that was the first one. I was like, well, that was fun. It was really fun, and almost kind of anticlimactic. But it doesn't compare anything to this. This is so special.

Q. With the back-to-back titles, is there something about Home Run Derbys that you get extra amped up for?

PETE ALONSO: This is just surreal. This is just truly a blessing. I don't know what else, much more I can say. This is truly a blessing. It's really special. It's really special. I get to share this moment with my loved ones and my family that are here, too.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports ...