

# AL Wild Card Series: Royals vs Orioles

Wednesday, October 2, 2024

Baltimore, Maryland, USA

Camden Yards

## Kansas City Royals

### Matt Quatraro

#### Pregame Press Conference

**Q. You're running almost the same lineup. I wondered the reasons for switching Tommy and Hunter in today's lineup.**

MATT QUATRARO: Well, really it's a tough choice every day for us, really between in the outfield.

Renfroe has had some success. We just generally like that matchup more. We also know with all the lefties they have in the bullpen there's also a really good spot to use Tommy in high leverage.

**Q. About 24 hours after his first game, how is Vinnie feeling?**

MATT QUATRARO: I'll be honest, I did not go looking for him to find out because if I didn't hear anything, I considered that to be good news. But during the game and postgame yesterday he said he felt good. They got a good tape job. He was really positive yesterday. So I took the no news is good news.

**Q. You have Seth Lugo going on the mound today. How much do you appreciate his professionalism and his ability to compartmentalize the moment as he steps on the mound tonight?**

MATT QUATRARO: Yeah, tremendously. His consistency and attitude, work ethic, performance is something that we've relied on all year, and we're excited that he gets the opportunity to do this in the postseason. It's a huge part of why we signed him. We hoped that this was the kind of game he would be in for us.

**Q. First playoff series as a manager. Kind of spitting distance from your college in Old Dominion. Does it make it a little bit more special to you?**

MATT QUATRARO: Yeah, I actually have a fairly good



sized group of my teammates that were here yesterday and a bigger group today. It's really special. Those guys are like family to me, and there's probably 40 to 45 of us that still are on group texts and all that kind of stuff.

But to have them come -- they came to D.C. last week, a really group of guys coming today, too. That's special to me to have people here, and they're family to me.

**Q. Obviously we've talked a lot about Bobby and Maikel and Cole, all these guys making their postseason debuts. Yesterday was yours as a manager. I was wondering if you learned anything about yourself, especially given how intense yesterday's game was?**

MATT QUATRARO: Yeah, that's a great question. I don't know what I learned about myself, but I know that it was fun. It was a lot of fun. I really enjoyed it. Obviously the outcome went the way we would have hoped, so that makes it more enjoyable. Even during the game I was able to enjoy what was going on and appreciate the quality of that game, and that was a great baseball game. Two outstanding pitchers going at it and then the bullpens doing their job.

I was really happy to look around and soak in the fact that I think our players were into the moment, too. I think they didn't get overwhelmed, which is hard to do when you're facing a guy like Burnes and you're not having any success offensively, to stay in the moment, to not let the crowd get you out of your game, and just keep fighting. That's something that these guys have talked about all year is just stay in the game, stay in the fight. Anything can happen.

But as far as me, I really enjoyed being part of that yesterday and definitely did not take that for granted.

**Q. Do you manage this game much differently up 1-0 as opposed to down 1-0 or does the sense of urgency never leave you in a best-of-three format?**

MATT QUATRARO: I've given that some thought. You'd probably manage your bullpen a little bit differently if it was a must-win. Maybe if you were down, go to your



high-leverage guys a little bit earlier, something like that. But we talked a lot about how our team has been constructed and how we rely on our starters. That's what I'm hopeful today develops into, as well.

But as you saw, we're very comfortable with our bullpen, as well. I feel like I'm very fortunate in that regard.

**Q. You and Vinnie obviously share the Old Dominion bond. Have you shared that?**

MATT QUATRARO: Yeah, for sure. It's really cool to me to be able to manage him last year. We also with Ryan Yarbrough on the team, three of us from the same school. That's pretty special for a mid major school to be that way.

There's plenty of other guys around the league from Old Dominion too, but it is cool, because Vinnie has a great personality and he likes to jab me for stuff from back then and I'll give it back to him.

Yeah, it is fun.

**Q. We talked about your rotation all year, but they seem really close, all five of those guys. Wondered if that surprises you at all, bringing in two new players and kind of hoping that everything meshes well with your rotation?**

MATT QUATRARO: Well, knowing Wacha how I knew him, it doesn't surprise me at all that he was going to help be that kind of a glue, and knowing that Ragans is a sponge for anything baseball. Brady as we've talked about for a couple years now is so competitive and loves the environment, and he was on a mission to get back to his accustomed level.

I did not know Seth well at all or at all prior to this year, but as soon as I saw him day one how he approached his bullpen and how much prep he did, and then he stayed out there to watch other guys throw bullpens, it started to look very organic early and that they just gravitated to each other.

I don't know if I would have expected it to be quite as close as they are, but it's been very nice to watch.

**Q. How much does that help on the field, too? Obviously they've got to go out and perform, but just given what they've done all year with all of them?**

MATT QUATRARO: Yeah, I think tremendously. During the regular season when you're playing a team three, four days in a row and they're all going to face them, they start talking about things before the series and they're doing it

in-game and then postgame. They really stay locked into what's the task at hand. I think it helps a lot.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports