

# AL Division Series: Royals vs Yankees

Saturday, October 5, 2024  
New York, New York, USA  
Yankee Stadium

## Kansas City Royals Cole Ragans

### Pregame 1 Press Conference

**Q. Cole, how are you feeling after -- I know the leg cramp thing was a storyline in your first start.**

COLE RAGANS: All good. Good to go. Ready to go.

**Q. I wonder, after your first start, first postseason experience, what did you learn about yourself, the postseason in general, your team and all that?**

COLE RAGANS: Yeah, I mean, it's the same game. Obviously maybe a little louder. But at the end of the day, after the first pitch, the nerves kind of settle down a little bit, and it's the same game of baseball we've played all year. Just trying to keep that mindset of just execute and it's the same game of baseball. Just a little louder.

**Q. What have you thought of some of your teammates, especially Seth Lugo, doing what he did in game two, and then Michael Wacha going into this game three tonight pitching-wise?**

COLE RAGANS: I mean, they're incredible. They have postseason experience. They're obviously unbelievable pitchers. We're lucky to have them. Glad they chose Kansas City. We wouldn't be here without them.

They've obviously helped us on the field but also off the field as a pitching staff. They've been incredible for us.

**Q. I'd like to ask about Brian Sweeney. What are his best traits as a pitching coach?**

A. He's the game guy every day, regardless good day, bad day, he's the same guy. He shows up every day. We're doing our homework to prepare for the game, but he's also doing his to make sure that we're prepared the best we can be to go out there and compete and win a game.

**Q. And then Tyler Zombro how has he changed your**



career?

COLE RAGANS: That's my contact at Tread. Obviously he's helped me tremendously just with -- they give me my workouts, mechanical analysis, all that kind of stuff. He's the guy I talk to when I have questions like that. He's awesome.

**Q. How did facing the Yankees previously that one start maybe prepare you, and how do you navigate this lineup?**

COLE RAGANS: I mean, do my homework and execute. If I execute my pitches, I feel like I have a pretty good chance. Obviously they're an unbelievable team. They have two of the best hitters in baseball. But just execute. That's my goal. Trust the guys behind me and execute.

**Q. I'm interested to know, have you had a chance to reflect on last year's trade going from an organization that ended up winning the World Series to now being in the center of a rotation that has a chance to go there?**

COLE RAGANS: Yeah, I watched all the postseason games last year. I have some friends that I'll have for the rest of my life in Texas. Yeah, I watched all those games.

I still keep in touch with some of the guys over there, like I said, Nathan Eovaldi every now and then me and him will shoot texts back and forth. Obviously he's unbelievable in the postseason.

But I have guys like Michael Wacha, Seth Lugo, Will Smith, Chris Stratton, they've all pitched in the postseason a lot, in our locker room. So just talking with them, brainstorming with them, seeing what they do, if anything changes, all that kind of stuff.

**Q. You were working out of the bullpen exclusively for the Rangers last year. During that time, what gave you the belief and the confidence that in your heart of hearts you were still a starting pitcher?**

COLE RAGANS: They sent me down and said I was going



to be a starting pitcher. I mean, whatever it takes to be in the Big Leagues and help a team win, that's what I'm going to do. Whatever the coaching staff decides, I'll prepare the best I can -- to be the best I can be in that spot for the team. That's all I care about is helping the team win.

**Q. But before you came over here, I mean, when the Royals told you that they were going to have you work as a starter, is that something you were excited about?**

COLE RAGANS: Yeah, I've been a starter my whole life leading up to that, so I had a really good routine I felt like, so it was going back to that routine. I had obviously switched up my routine a little bit, becoming a reliever for a few months. So just going back to the routine I had, tweaking some things, and going from there.

**Q. That homer that you mentioned, how much is that centered on Aaron Judge and Juan Soto, navigating those two guys, and what kind of challenges do they provide?**

COLE RAGANS: Yeah, it's centered on all 15 guys over there. I mean, obviously those are the two guys you've got to be careful. You can't make mistakes. They make you pay. Maybe do a little bit more digging on them two, but I've got to get seven other guys out, as well.

Like I said, it's just doing my homework, figuring out where I can go with certain pitches, where I should kind of stay away from with certain pitches, and go from there.

**Q. How has the way the Royals worked with pitchers and prepared them been similar and how different from how the Rangers did it?**

COLE RAGANS: I mean, I wouldn't say it's too much different in a sense. Everybody obviously has their way explaining things, but it all kind of comes back to the same concepts: Get ahead, stay ahead, fill up the strike zone, command your pitches and trust the guys behind you. That's the biggest thing I feel like everybody preaches everywhere.

**Q. What was the messaging heading into the offseason from the team to you as they wanted to make sure there was a winning mindset coming off last year?**

COLE RAGANS: I mean, I feel like we have a pretty good thing. We wear the "Today" shirt. We don't care what happened last year. That's last year. This is this year. We're focused on day by day. That's what our mindset was coming into Spring Training. We expected to be a lot better, and we're not done.

**Q. Regarding the "Today" shirt, whose idea was that?**

COLE RAGANS: Just take it day by day. No need to dwell on yesterday, no need to think about tomorrow, just focus on today, and when tomorrow comes we'll focus on that.

**Q. Your hometown Tallahassee, who were the people back there that were the most instrumental in you choosing to play baseball?**

COLE RAGANS: Oh, man. I don't really know. Grew up obviously playing. The people that helped me the most, my high school coach Mike Posey, his son Micah Posey, Zac Cole. Those were my high school coaches. I had some travel ball coaches in there, Matt Gerber, guys like that.

But growing up, I feel like everybody plays baseball. It's not really until middle school, high school where you really figure out if you love it or not. But I'd say those guys, Mike Posey, he saw me in sixth grade and we went from there. There's five people back home that's helped me tremendously to get here.

**Q. You mentioned Wacha. What can you tell us about him that the average person doesn't know or doesn't see on the day-to-day basis?**

COLE RAGANS: He's one of the best human beings you'll ever meet in your life. The way he shows up every day, the attitude he brings. He pushes every single person in that locker room to be better every day. If you see him in the dugout he's always cheering on whoever is on the mound, at the plate. It doesn't matter.

He works unbelievably hard to be prepared to help the team win every single day. Like I said, just unbelievable human being, obviously an unbelievable baseball player, and we're lucky to have him.

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