

# AL Division Series: Royals vs Yankees

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

## New York Yankees Manager Aaron Boone Postgame 1 Press Conference

Yankees 6, Royals 5

**Q. Aaron, a lot of back and forth, five lead changes. What do you think about the way your team battled tonight to get the win?**

AARON BOONE: Yeah, what a game, really. Riz came up to me in about the seventh or eighth, we connected, and he was like, What a game? And I was, like, I was just saying that on the step.

Gritty game by them, just the back and forth, a lot of big plays, a lot of big moments. Really happy with our at-bats.

We didn't necessarily sting the ball all over the yard, but, man, we had a lot of heavy at-bats, big at-bats. Almost really close to really breaking it open. We didn't get a big hit in some certain situations, but I thought our at-bat quality, man, we were tough.

Then obviously bullpen coming in and holding the line and Weav finishing it off. Good way to start.

**Q. Austin Wells in particular, we were asking you about your commitment to him in the cleanup spot. What did you think of the poise he had in the batter's box?**

AARON BOONE: Yeah, Zerpa is in that game, he's a tough lefty to go up against there, similar to the at-bat we had against Perez when we clinched. It was just a long, grind it out, not going to chase you, big-time at-bat. That's why I love him in there.

But yeah, some really quality at-bats from him in some big impactful plate appearances.

**Q. Soto, three hits tonight, his first game as a Yankee in the postseason. That play in the second inning**

**throwing Perez out at home, what did you see out of him tonight?**

AARON BOONE: Yeah, I'm watching it -- first I'm thinking, just keep it from going to the corner. I'm thinking maybe it's got a chance to get to the wall. In my head I'm not even thinking the play at the plate. And he put on a great throw and finished off there by Austin to kind of keep that inning from getting away from us. Not only cutting down the run but getting us another out.

They're set up big time right there if they score that run. But that was a big play. We did a lot of really good things on defense tonight. Judgey right out of the gate making a really good play deep in left center there. Jazz made some plays. I thought Gleyber made a good play. I mean, it was a big-time throw.

**Q. You were wrestling with who to start in left field for a while. What tipped it in Verdugo's favor?**

AARON BOONE: Just trusting that he's going to be ready for the moment and his experience and his track record. And again, I know it's been a little bit of an up-and-down tough second half for him offensively, but the guy is a good hitter. Doesn't mean he's not going to hit moving forward.

I forgot to mention that play he made slide -- that's as tough a chance as you're going to have with a left fielder with that ball slicing like that on the run. That's easy to get handcuffed and mess that play up. But great play there, and obviously some really good at-bats.

**Q. On that play, what was your view of it, and what's going through your mind as it juggles off his wrist and chest?**

AARON BOONE: I didn't even know it did that. I just knew he caught it. I didn't go look at the replay. I knew -- I've got a great angle of seeing it slice in there, and I'm like, oh. And that full speed run where you've got to slide, I know that's about as tough as it's going to get. Even cooler that he tipped it around a little bit.

**Q. You talked about in pregame the at-bats that he**

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**was taking. What can a night like tonight do for him moving forward?**

AARON BOONE: A lot. Look, he's a really good all-around player and went through some stretches where it was a struggle. But that's what he's capable of. I mean, just a really good game-winning at-bat there going the other way there. And Jazz's route to home plate was excellent to allow it to be a run. But he's a good all-around player, and it's not always what you did, it's what you're capable of doing moving forward.

I think he's been champing at the bit for postseason baseball. He's had experience doing it before. He's had success doing it before.

I think this is one of those things that hopefully gives him a lot of confidence moving forward.

**Q. What did you see from Gerrit tonight?**

AARON BOONE: It was a grind. They had gotten behind in some counts and they put some good swings on some balls. I thought he made a couple good pitches in that first inning where they hit the ball hard off him where Judge made a good play. So they took some really tough at-bats, and sometimes it was because they got some leverage in the count and didn't miss their pitch.

But thought he battled. Goes out there for the sixth and gave us a chance to win on a night when it was a little bit of a grind for him.

**Q. Clay is another guy who's had some ups and downs. What did you think of the way he pitched tonight?**

AARON BOONE: I thought it was excellent. He comes in in that spot and kind of has to navigate the middle of the order there to give us -- what did he end up giving us, four or five outs? Five outs? Through their middle of the order there was obviously a big point in the game when it's kind of that back and forth. So yeah, really excited for him to get in there and do what we know he's capable of.

**Q. There were a lot of fans who wanted you to replace Verdugo with Dominguez when he was called up. How have you seen Alex handle the amount of criticism that's come his way all season long?**

AARON BOONE: Yeah, I think okay. I'm sure he hears some of it, and that's not always fun, especially when you're a good player in this league. But as far as handling Jasson coming up and obviously playing a lot and taking some time away from him, he's a pro and ready to do his

job and did some really good things when his number was called along with Jasson down the stretch. He's clearly ready for this moment tonight.

**Q. Oswaldo made some pretty nice plays. What did you see from him tonight?**

AARON BOONE: Yeah, that. Just the first pick on the ball that Volpe made a really good play in the hole, like that's a tough one because there wasn't a lot on the throw. So it's not a -- it's a slower pick, not an easy one at all, and he made that. And then obviously good stretch on the ball that was smoked at Jazz that kind of caught on him a little bit. I thought he did a real nice job for us over there tonight.

**Q. How impressive was Luke there at the end?**

AARON BOONE: Yeah, great. Obviously a big out there to get Garcia to finish off the eighth. But to navigate that part of the order, some deep, tough at-bats, Massey had a good at-bat against him, Witt had a good at-bat. Didn't give in and was able to finish those off and then executed once he got ahead of Pasquantino there to get to roll over. Excellent, especially his first time in the playoffs and going through the top of that order right there after finishing off the eighth inning is no easy task, and he was up to it.

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