

AL Division Series: Royals vs Yankees

Sunday, October 6, 2024
New York, New York, USA
Yankee Stadium

New York Yankees

Carlos Rodón

Workout Day Press Conference

Q. Carlos, to start off, how excited are you to be pitching in your first postseason game for the Yankees?

CARLOS RODÓN: Yeah, I mean, the energy last night was pretty spectacular. What a great game, obviously. Yankees come out on top. It was great to see the stadium full, as always, and they brought a lot of energy, so I'm looking forward to that.

Q. You mentioned the energy last night. When you're on the mound, do you lean into that and use that to your advantage? How do you approach that?

CARLOS RODÓN: Yeah, I mean, the energy definitely fuels me. I think it's something that I have to harness and deliver it towards the plate. But I definitely use that. I'm going to try to use that to my advantage for sure.

Q. You were thrown in the playoffs twice before. Is there anything you learned from those situations, games, that you'll kind of take into tomorrow?

CARLOS RODÓN: I think it's kind of one of those things where at times you just have to slow it down. It can really speed up, especially in big situations. That's kind of it.

Q. You've spoken in the past about harnessing your emotions on the mound. With Yankee Stadium, 45,000 people screaming tomorrow, do you think it's going to be any different? Do you think you're going to have to do anything different to do that?

CARLOS RODÓN: You know, it's going to be a little different. It's going to be a lot louder. These games are pretty important.

I think it's just one of those things where I go out there, I accept that energy, I bring it in and I harness it to the plate



and control what I can control. As soon as that pitch leaves my hand, it's kind of done with me. It's just focusing on what I'm going to do on the mound and what pitch I'm going to throw, strike 1, strike 2, and it's just kind of one pitch at a time deal. All those great cliches that you guys love to hear.

Q. When you look back on last year, what do you think made the biggest difference in not repeating that this year?

CARLOS RODÓN: You know, I think one of the biggest things is the confidence and just finding that confidence again to go out there and compete. The conviction in every pitch. The biggest thing for me is the confidence and then the conviction in the pitch that I'm throwing and going out there trying to win ballgames. That's it.

Q. You had that five-start stretch in mid-June to July where you were really struggling, and since then you've turned it around. What did you change from those five outings, and how do you feel like it's made a difference for you?

CARLOS RODÓN: Well, I think the first thing was just switching up some usage, being a little more unpredictable. The second thing would be, once again, the confidence in myself, the confidence to be able to do my job, and my teammates having my back, as well.

Q. When you look back at your good outings and your bad outings this year, do you notice any similarities of what you did well in the good outings and what came askew in the bad outings?

CARLOS RODÓN: Well, it seems like the stuff usually is there. I feel like I've had my stuff throughout the whole year and carried it to the end of the year.

I think there's some -- there's misses with fastballs. There's misses with breaking balls. They do damage on mistakes. When I'm not in the proper spots I need to be to certain hitters, then they'll do damage. These guys are really good.



I think if you look at the good, I think there's -- I get away with some pitches at times just being one step ahead of a hitter, and there's sometimes where I'm just dialed in and I'm hitting all my pitches.

Q. Can you recall specifically about that last playoff game you pitched for the White Sox? You talked about needing to slow things down. Can you talk more fully about what that means?

CARLOS RODÓN: Yeah, I remember that last playoff game I threw with Chicago. José Altuve starts the game off with a triple, so it was first inning, first pitch of the game, triple down the line, and I was pretty amped up because the crowd was going. I remember just giving up that triple, and it's like, okay, how are we going to prevent this run from scoring. I just stepped back behind the mound, I think I looked at the ground and then took a breath and said, all right, it's one pitch at a time. At this point it's damage control, and that was it.

Q. Is it easier for you to do that now than three years ago in your career? Do you feel like you've mastered that a little bit better?

CARLOS RODÓN: Yeah, I think early on in my career, I'd get pretty flustered. Obviously there's still times that I do. I think that's just kind of who I am. It's a fine line of it can propel me to very high highs and super low lows because it can go both ways. It's a double-edged sword. I like to stay on the right side of the line where we're going high, we're going up.

Q. I know you've spoken about how important last offseason was for you. Almost a year later, how meaningful is it to you to be starting Game 2 of a playoff series?

CARLOS RODÓN: Yeah, I mean, last year was rough, as we know. I did not perform the way I felt like I should have, and obviously up to par. I wanted to be better for my teammates. Going into this offseason with the help of a lot of people, a lot of people from the Yankees, as well, and we just kind of -- we kind of just got to work and put our nose to the grindstone and just got after it.

The biggest thing was to go out there and make every start. I did that, and now this season is over. We've got a new season. It's the postseason. That's what matters now.

Q. Right on the eve of Spring Training starting last year, a few of us talked to you about your weight loss. Looking at you now, it looks like you might have even lost more during the season. How easy was that to

do? How important was that for you? And how much do you think that that has helped you have success this year in being thinner?

CARLOS RODÓN: Yeah, I think I could talk about this for a while. Like I said, I've had a lot of help. One person being my wife who's very committed to my craft, as well, pretty much just as much as I am. She had a lot to do with that. We had a lot of help to figure out just what's right, what are the right things to put in your body. All of us like eating ice cream. Trust me, I do, as you know, all sorts of sweets. You've got to remember that food is fuel.

It wasn't just food, it was just getting to work and putting the effort in at home in the weight room, and as soon as I got to Florida, getting there early with our strength group and everyone that's a part of the New York Yankees -- like I said, a lot of people had a hand in this to get this going this year.

Q. Is there something you're eating now that you hated before? I remember Severino a couple years ago said he hated vegetables and he started eating them and knew it was good for him and it helped him lose some weight. Is there something you're putting in your body now saying, I can't believe I'm eating this?

CARLOS RODÓN: You know, sometimes I'll eat -- I like eating some beets at times. Yeah, beets at times. I don't like beets that much, but it depends on the day, if they're made right, maybe with some feta cheese, I like that.

Q. You've started two games against Kansas City this season. One was less than a month ago. You had some success. How does that impact your game planning and how you attack these guys tomorrow?

CARLOS RODÓN: Yeah, there's some information out there. Obviously they have the same thing that I'm looking at. They know how I pitched to them before. Just kind of going over those at-bats and seeing what was thrown and just using that how we're going to game plan and how we're going to approach each at-bat to each one of those hitters. I'm not going to give you too much information because I can't give you too much.

Q. When you saw last night, was that having an impact at all?

CARLOS RODÓN: Yeah, seeing what Gerrit does and how they were getting after some fastballs and they weren't waiting around, they were pretty aggressive. We'll see how they turn out tomorrow, what their approach is going to be.

Q. You guys used to pitching every five, six days.



This is a nine, ten-day layoff for you. What have you been doing to stay sharp?

CARLOS RODÓN: Yeah, so I can't remember what day this week I threw to our hitters, so I got up-and-down four times and faced them just to stay sharp, and they got to see some live pitching, and that was kind of it.

Q. Do you know what day that was?

CARLOS RODÓN: What's today? Today is Sunday? I think Tuesday maybe, Wednesday. Wednesday.

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