

AL Division Series: Royals vs Yankees

Wednesday, October 9, 2024
Kansas City, Missouri, USA
Kauffman Stadium

New York Yankees

Gerrit Cole

Pregame 3 Press Conference

Q. How eager are you to get back out there after the last start?

GERRIT COLE: Yeah. It's been a great series so far. A lot of back and forth. Looking forward to getting another crack at it.

Q. How different do you think it'll be for you -- obviously there was that long layoff last time -- kind of pitching in a more regular manner? Do you think that'll be beneficial for you?

GERRIT COLE: I don't know. I think I'm ready to go, though.

Q. Depending on whether you win or lose, it's either a do-or-die game tomorrow. How does that affect you in any way? Does it change the pressure, change anything in your mind if it's a game that you guys could advance or you guys could go home?

GERRIT COLE: Well, it's pretty simple for me. My goal is to go out there and try to put us in a position to win the game, and whether we lose tonight or win tonight, that game is still a game that we're trying to win. We're trying to win all of them. It doesn't really change the importance at all.

Q. Last time you pitched, it seemed like the Royals were sitting the fastball against you. Does that change your approach with how you sequence your fastballs or anything like that?

GERRIT COLE: Is that a personal observation or --

Q. It looked like that was their strategy. Carlos said it himself.

GERRIT COLE: Carlos said it about me? Yeah, I don't



know. We got them back-to-back times, so there's going to be adjustments on both sides of the baseball.

I think in these situations, it's important to be as prepared as you can, and also to take in the information that's happening in real time.

That's the best part about it is you don't know which way the opposition is going to go. You don't know what you're going to have. But the challenge is when you're out there to go out and fill up the zone and make the adjustments on the fly, so that's the fun part.

Q. With a couple days to reflect, what do you take most out of your last start?

GERRIT COLE: Just how great of a game it was back and forth. We played outstanding defense, which allowed us to minimize some of the damage. Threw enough strikes -- we were efficient enough to get into the sixth inning. Probably Aaron wasn't obviously thrilled with me continuing to pitch the sixth, and so be it.

If you want to keep going, you've got to be sharper. But put ourselves in a good position to be in the ballgame, to win the ballgame, and to get into the ballgame deep.

Looking to sharpen up some of the things that kind of hurt us, and looking to continue just to be as efficient as possible and give our team the best chance to win.

Q. As intense as postseason baseball is, do you find that postseason innings take more out of you, like five of six or six of seven? Does it feel the same or is it different?

GERRIT COLE: It's hard to say because it really just comes down to like what kind of flow you're in.

There have been plenty of games where I've been in a good flow, we have a little bit of breathing room, and maybe it's not quite as stressful as you would expect. And then there are some games where there's just a lot hanging on every pitch. Whether you're giving up runs or not, it's a stressful environment.



Generally probably just the intensity on every pitch in the postseason is greater as we know, but it still can depend on the day.

Q. What's most distinctive about this Royals' lineup?

GERRIT COLE: Well, they don't walk much and they don't strike out much, so the ball is in play a lot.

Q. How much of a challenge is that as opposed to a team that, let's say, walks a bunch and strikes out a ton?

GERRIT COLE: Well, it's a different challenge. It's the way they're formulated. It probably bodes well for them in a large park here. They have a lot of team speed and a lot of contact. I don't know if it's a conscious thing or if they just ended up with these players and they're making the best out of the talent that the players have.

Each lineup poses different threats. I'm not sure I can rank which threat is better or worse because the bottom line is you're trying to score runs, which they do very well. They're here for a reason. They're really good.

Q. A lot is made out of playoff experience and Yankees obviously have quite a bit more than the Royals. How important do you think playoff experience is?

GERRIT COLE: Yeah, I mean, I think it's important for sure. Having done something once already, it allows for you to assess how you perform personally and what are the things that you need to do better. And there's something obviously concrete and objective there.

So as a player, when you have an experience, you try to learn from it and you try to learn from it. So the more postseason experience, the better you can kind of predict some of the distractions or things that lead you to success.

But it's not black and white. It's not binary. When you have a guy like Salvador Perez, Yuli Gurriel, Robbie Grossman, these are 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 year vets with a lot of postseason experience, and spreading that knowledge is an advantage for them, as well. The young guys can take that and run with it.

So it can kind of go both ways. I don't know. It's hard to say.

Q. You've had a lot of different postseason experiences, Pittsburgh, Houston, here. Have you figured out any factors that mean the most to October

success in a short series?

GERRIT COLE: Not anything concrete in terms of performance, no. You have to be convicted with what you're trying to do out there to give it a chance. I think we've seen situations where you execute the pitch that you want and the offense beats you on it.

Sometimes you're convicted to a pitch but you don't execute it, and you win that specific battle.

But the only way that you can have a chance to do what you're trying to do in a game is to be ready to go and convicted with whether you're delivering a swing, making the defensive play, or making a pitch. So the best way to give yourself a chance to be success is to be in the right frame of mind to execute whatever you're trying to do.

But I don't think there's any real performance trends other than just trying to put yourself in the best position to do that.

Q. You've talked about over the years how much you love pitching these types of games at Yankee Stadium. Does it work in the reverse for you? Do you enjoy pitching in a hostile environment?

GERRIT COLE: Yeah, I mean, I take anything I can get in the postseason. I'm not picky, home or road. You're here, you're here, it's a blessing.

This is a wonderful ballpark with a wonderful fan base. I expect them to be very loud and ready to go.

As a competitor, you respect that type of environment and look forward to playing in those situations, absolutely.

Q. Do you thrive on the negative energy?

GERRIT COLE: Yeah, you just flip it. It's going to get loud when things are going good at home and it's going to get loud when things are going good for the opposition on the road. You just factor that into your mental approach.

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