

AL Division Series: Royals vs Yankees

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

New York Yankees Manager Aaron Boone Pregame 3 Press Conference

Q. You have Cabrera back in there at first base. What made him the right choice?

AARON BOONE: I don't know, a lot of confidence in Oswaldo. Especially he's had a really good second half of the season with us. Offensively obviously a lot of confidence wherever I put him on the field. I thought he handled himself really well in Game 1. It was one I deliberated on yesterday a little bit, but felt good about Oswaldo being the guy.

Q. And Soto just said you have a short memory when it comes to the postseason. What have you thought overall of this team's resilience and ability to bounce back?

AARON BOONE: Yeah, I would agree with that. It's one of the things we talked about going into this. Every game is -- there's obviously so much put into it, and every victory is huge and every loss can be deflating -- as much as you can, you've got to block that out and just keep playing.

It is something I feel like our group has done really well this year. As you go through the inevitable ups and downs or tough losses or whatever it may be, I feel like they've bounced back really well over and over again.

I think it's just because of that understanding of -- obviously baseball is a tough game. You don't win all the time. But you've got to be able to process, get over it, and keep moving.

Q. Just to weigh in on the difference between managing a game like tonight when it's 1-1 and neither team can be eliminated as opposed to a game where you could clinch or be eliminated like tomorrow will be?

AARON BOONE: Yeah, and this is our first game of the



series where there's no off-day behind it, so we play tomorrow again for the first time, which isn't usually the case.

But look, we're in a best-of-five. It's a race to three wins. There's always urgency in every day.

I guess just short of being -- yeah, it's not win or go home yet, and you've got a game tomorrow, but that doesn't change the urgency of the playoffs. And especially coming out of an off-day where you're in pretty good shape with guys from a pen standpoint.

Q. Soto was asked about how to narrow down what Lugo does throwing so many pitches. He said wait for a mistake fastball. Is that an adequate overall strategy or does that just work for hitters like Soto?

AARON BOONE: Yeah, I mean, look, ultimately -- sports, but baseball, it's a game of execution. Hitters are trying to be disciplined to a plan or something they're looking for. Generally speaking, you're hitting off the fastball with Seth. He's going to give you a few different looks with the fastball. He's going to sink it, he's going to four-seam, he's going to cut it.

You're hunting a particular area, and hopefully the handful of pitches you get opportunities to do, you make hay with. That's ultimately what it comes down to.

Pitchers, when they execute usually have a lot of success, but the mistakes that pop up or show up in the course of a game, you've got to be able to take advantage of.

Q. What made your team so good on the road this year?

AARON BOONE: I don't know. I'd say a veteran group, but that's not necessarily the answer. There's young teams I've been a part of that -- I think that was the '99 Reds team we won 50 games on the road and we were a blend of young and old guys. I don't know. There's a comfort playing on the road. I think there's a confidence with the group that it doesn't really matter where we play. They feel that way.



It's always different than playing at home where you're more together with your guys around the clock and hanging, and that can always be fun and cool.

But I think we have a team that's confident wherever the ball drops.

Q. How do you feel about Gerrit going into tomorrow, whether it's up 2-1 or down 2-1?

AARON BOONE: Yeah, I feel great. He's one of the game's great pitchers, obviously, and I feel like he's thrown the ball really well here now for the last couple months. Obviously they had a little bit of success against him in his last start. I've seen that over the years where he has that bump in the road, and by and large he usually answers with a really good one. So that would be my expectation for tomorrow.

Q. Obviously the best way for you guys to score runs is when Aaron Judge hit home runs. He hasn't been producing like that. Talk about your team's ability to compensate for that.

AARON BOONE: I feel like we're in a pretty good spot and well equipped with kind of the supporting cast, if you will, around Judge and Juan and obviously the historical seasons they've had.

But we have a lot of guys in this lineup that I feel like are capable of beating you. We didn't get a ton of big hits with runners out there but still threw up six in that first game.

I feel like we're capable more so than we have been in some years this time of year with some of our supporting cast guys that have delivered for us a lot all year.

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