

NL Division Series:

Mets vs Phillies

Monday, October 7, 2024

New York, New York, USA

Citi Field

Philadelphia Phillies

Aaron Nola

Workout Day Press Conference

Q. What was kind of your perspective watching that game yesterday? Was it kind of like a helpless feeling, there's nothing you can really do to affect the outcome?

AARON NOLA: That was a wild game, kind of back and forth. That's what playoffs are. It's a hard-fought battle all the way to the end. You just never know. No team is ever out of it.

Just like last night, all it takes is one big hit to kind of get things going, and we got things going, and they answered back, and then we answered at the end. That's just what the playoffs are, and that's why they're so fun.

Q. What was your reaction when Rob told you, hey, you're going to go Game 3? Were you surprised at all by that, and maybe do you relish getting the ball here on the road, in front of a pretty hostile fan base?

AARON NOLA: Yeah, I was fine with it. Yeah, I mean, super happy for Sánchez to be able to pitch at home. It's incredible to pitch at home. Obviously, his first start in postseason, which was awesome. I thought he threw the ball really good.

But, whatever I can do to try to contribute and try to put the team in the best chance to win in a playoff game, whether it's home or road I was fine with. This is a pretty cool place to play. Pretty cool place to pitch. I pitched here quite a few times, and first time in the postseason. So definitely looking forward to it.

Q. You just mentioned that, pitching well here, why do you think you've had such success here? Is there something about the ballpark, dimensions, coincidence?

AARON NOLA: I'm not sure. I feel like I've had some



good games and bad games here. I just always thought it was a beautiful ballpark. I always liked coming here. I'm not really sure.

Q. The other day before Game 1, J.T. was talking about Zack in the pregame meetings you have. Zack almost feels like he's going to fall asleep or he's meditating, he's so relaxed. What are you like in those meetings? Are you more engaged than Zack or are you falling asleep?

AARON NOLA: Definitely not falling asleep. I feel like I'm a little bit more engaged. I like to do some homework on the hitters. Just kind of talk about a game plan, you know, and if that game plan doesn't work out, what do we go to next type of thing. But I feel like Wheel's is a different type of guy. He's just got it like that.

Q. When did you start preparing for this start in terms of approach towards hitters?

AARON NOLA: First game, first game of the postseason when Wheel's pitched. Just kind of watching the game from the dugout. I'll do a little bit more stuff today. Just watching the game and really trying to be in tune and pay attention to hitters and kind of what they're doing. And watched some of the Wild Card game. I feel like I pitched against several other guys quite a few times, so I kind of know what they got; they kind of know what I have.

At the end of the day, it's all about me executing my pitches and making good quality pitches.

Q. Earlier this year you said this is the best bullpen you've had behind you in your career. If you don't go all the way tomorrow night, how comfortable do you feel leaving the mound and giving the ball to those guys in a big situation?

AARON NOLA: They've been so good all year. Every time I come out of a game or any of the guys come out of a game, we feel confident with those guys coming in and shutting the door.

Sometimes there are slip-ups, it's happens. It's baseball.



We're all humans. We're playing good teams. We're playing a good Mets team earlier. I feel confident, for sure. They've been really good all year for us, they're going to come in and do the best they can and do what they've done all year.

Q. A lot was made about the layoff for hitters. But it's a layoff for pitchers, too. How do you stay sharp? How do you stay with it? Not overdo it? How do you handle being off for so long?

AARON NOLA: Just try to map my week out, about a week and a half out the best I can after two bullpens. Just go around, try to elevate my focus on throwing a little bit more, just because I'm not in the regular five-day routine, going in from the last game I pitched.

So I just try to get good throwing sessions in, good running and workout sessions in. Keep my body healthy and ready to go.

Q. Alonso has been a challenge for you. What do you think it is about his approach against you that maybe he's gotten you before, and what kind of challenge is it to face him?

AARON NOLA: It's a challenge. I've thrown some balls over the plate he hasn't really missed, hit them for home runs.

I think especially playoffs, I think it's a little bit different, too, because everybody is a little bit more focused, I feel like. And every pitch is a little bit more heightened and matters just a little bit more.

Not just Pete, I feel like the whole team is going to be obviously trying to get hits, just like I'm trying to get them out. They're all going to be competitive, and I'm going to be as competitive, too.

Q. You mentioned facing Alonso a lot and facing his team. What is the biggest challenge facing a team that you faced so many times and some of the hitters you've faced so many times here in a big situation and making adjustments back and forth before they sort of notice that you're making those adjustments?

AARON NOLA: Yeah, I feel like I've thrown just about everything to a lot of them. They've seen all my pitches, they've seen what I have, and I've seen what they have. It's all about executing as best as possible against them, throwing the right pitch at the right time and really just trying to get them out any way possible. So that's all I can do.

Q. You made at least 32 starts in each of the last six seasons. How much of that is a point of pride for you, and how much more difficult does it become to maintain that consistency as you get older?

AARON NOLA: That's definitely one of my goals every year is to make 32, 33 starts, and I've been blessed to do that over the past six years, and I want to continue doing that. I just want to be a pitcher for this team that's available all the time and someone who they know they can count on to make a start.

After I got hurt in 2016, I really wanted to do that for this organization. I wanted to go out and throw every five games and be available. I've been able to do that. That's always one of my goals every year.

Q. It's a lot of hard work, but does it also take a lot of luck, too, for nothing to come up in the last six years?

AARON NOLA: Yeah, you think about -- I think about it sometimes. I got hit the other day in DC in the back or on the side and stuff like that. You know, to be able to be lucky enough and be blessed enough not to have a ball get hit in a bone or something, right back at me, to break something, it's been great.

So I feel like definitely you have to have something like that to not happen to you to keep making every start. I just try to put a lot of work in to make sure my body is healthy. Going into every start, going into every year, I try to put a lot of work into my body and educate myself on my body and how I feel and what makes me feel good and what makes me not feel as good and traveling. If my body is tired or not tired. So there's a lot of things I take into account to stay healthy.

Q. We've seen some guys throw harder than they normally do in the postseason. I think Wheel's did. What does it feel like to go out there with a little extra on your fastball? Can you tell that the moment is going to sort of contribute to how hard you're throwing?

AARON NOLA: I think it is just adrenaline. Sometimes you feel it; sometimes you don't. That's just speaking for myself. Like I said, I feel like when you watch pitchers you can kind of tell. Like Wheels the other night could tell, he was 98, 99 the first couple of innings and his fastball was dropping off plenty of times since he's been here.

I feel sometimes you know it's the adrenaline is going to kick in. For me I kind of have to calm myself down a little bit. I try to overthrow. I feel like overthrowing kind of gets me out of the zone and gets my command out of whack a

little bit. So I'm just really trying to settle the emotions down and the adrenaline down a little bit.

Q. What does it look like for you when you're trying to settle the adrenaline down?

AARON NOLA: I don't know really what it looks like.

Q. What do you do? Do you breathe?

AARON NOLA: I just breathe and try to really focus on my next pitch. Try to make my next pitch. Nothing really special. That's just kind of how I always reset everything, just focus on that next pitch because that next pitch matters.

Q. Do you take a peek at the scoreboard to see how you're throwing?

AARON NOLA: Every now and then. Every now and again. The hitter will kind of tell you most of the time what your stuff is doing. Yeah, sometimes I'll check the fastball and changeup and cutter and curveball.

Q. Just to see, that felt really good, let me see if I hit 95?

AARON NOLA: Sometimes. Yeah, sometimes. I mean, I haven't been able to get up to 95 as much this year or past 95 that much. So for me I don't really check that as much. I kind of go off how it's coming out of my hand and kind of the ball flight.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports.