

AL Championship Series: Guardians vs Yankees

Sunday, October 13, 2024

New York, New York, USA

Yankee Stadium

New York Yankees

Anthony Volpe

Workout Day Press Conference

Q. Anthony, when you look at that Guardians team, what's your biggest concern?

ANTHONY VOLPE: They're a good team. They have their record, and they played the way they did for a reason the whole season. They obviously have a really good staff and I think a complete lineup. So it's going to be a tough series.

Q. Anthony, what about the opportunity for you to participate in the ALCS? How excited are you, and what are you thinking about?

ANTHONY VOLPE: It's really exciting. It's what you work for, I think the whole season, but I think for me, my whole life to have opportunities like this to play on this stage for this team and to try to win a pennant.

Q. Where do you feel the team is right now?

ANTHONY VOLPE: I think we're in a really good spot, but I think at the same time, I don't think we have played our best baseball yet. I think at the same time, I think we're hitting our stride at the right time.

Q. Anthony, you hit the ball to the right side really well in that series with little reward. Does that impact how you think about your swing, how you game plan, et cetera, when you're not rewarded for ultimately good at-bats?

ANTHONY VOLPE: I want to hit the ball hard. I want to barrel the ball up. So when that's happening, I feel like I'm in a good spot.

But that's baseball. You obviously want them to fall, especially this time of year, but I feel like if I stick with my process, stick with my plan, especially against those pitchers and the pitchers this time of year, I feel like with



the larger sample size, it will all work out.

Q. You did have multiple good at-bats last series. Just what were you feeling at the plate, and were there any adjustments you made going into these playoffs?

ANTHONY VOLPE: The five days off were big, I think for a lot of guys. You just got to get in the cage. We're obviously here, and we have the Trajekt machine, so we've been getting eyes on all the pitchers, stuff like that.

I think just seeing the ball well and being able to swing at good pitches and lay off the tight ones.

Q. Just following up on the last two questions, your batting average improved greatly this year from last year. I'm just curious how you feel about your performance in 2024 and where you think you're going.

ANTHONY VOLPE: I don't know if I really look back and be able to digest everything from the regular season yet, but I'm very excited for the opportunities these next couple weeks. I think there will be a lot to improve upon and a lot to work on going into next year, but I feel like the story is far from over this year.

Q. Generally have you felt better this year than last year?

ANTHONY VOLPE: Yeah. Definitely. I think obviously the team improvement this year to last year too makes it a lot better, but I always want to help the team win every day.

Q. What did you take away from your first postseason series in terms of the differences between the regular season and playoffs?

ANTHONY VOLPE: The energy was amazing, and the margins felt really small. I think -- it was really intense. I loved it, and I felt like it brought the best out of a lot of guys on our team.

I know the schedule with playing and having a bunch of off days, it really made the games filled with a lot of anticipation.



Q. I know you went to a few playoff games as a kid. Any memories stand out? What was kind of the favorite part of coming to these games when you were younger?

ANTHONY VOLPE: I think for me the playoffs were the highlights of the whole season. When I think back, you just think about specific moments and performances guys had and stuff like that on the biggest stages.

For me, what's the coolest -- what makes it a lot better for me now is as a fan, you always circle October and maybe wait to go to a big game or something like that, but I don't think you really appreciate all the stuff it takes to get there for the players and for the team and everyone involved with the team.

So I think that's what makes it really cool is how much hard work goes into it.

Q. We hear all the time about how the Yankees' expectations, you win a championship or the season was a disappointment or a failure.

I'm curious, as a young player joining the team, how that expectation is sort of conveyed. How do you feel that as a player joining in that, hey, this is what we do here, we win or it's a disappointment?

ANTHONY VOLPE: For me, I grew up a fan, and what makes the Yankees the Yankees is winning and winning a World Series. For me that was always from the standard at least from the outside and getting drafted as an 18-year-old and coming up through the system, learning from the inside how they treat the players. It's first class for a reason, and all the reasons are to win.

Obviously once I got up to the big team, we have a really solid core of guys that also came up homegrown, so we want to win it and we want to win it here.

Q. Having grown up as a fan and having people who live locally, your friends and your family, is there an extra level of excitement when both teams are in it as far as they are in the postseason right now, both the Yankees and the Mets?

ANTHONY VOLPE: Yeah, I am sure for them. It's cool for us too obviously because Mendy is over there, and we have teammates over there and stuff like that. It's definitely been fun to follow.

Q. In terms of Mendy, what were your interactions like with him when you were working with him?

ANTHONY VOLPE: Amazing. He helped me so much my rookie year and just stand up with me every day and try to help me be consistent, learn what it means to be a Yankee. He impacted me and so many other young guys, guys that have come up through the system, and I just can't thank him enough.

Q. From your fan days, did you remember how different and amped up everyone around you in the stands was then, and could you perceive that on the field last week in those two games here?

ANTHONY VOLPE: Yeah, I had a way better view now than I did when I was a fan. There was sometimes where we were like basically sitting with our backs against the upper deck top row, and it felt like the stadium was going to come down shaking.

On the field, I think we want to thrive off that and use it to our advantage. Yeah, it's the most fun place to play.

Q. Was it noticeable on the field how much just louder and energetic it was?

ANTHONY VOLPE: For me, the game was the game, but definitely during the national anthem and everything leading up to the game, at least the first one, yeah, I was definitely getting goosebumps.

Q. Anthony, you played with Judge now for two full seasons. What's the biggest thing that you've learned from him watching him behind the scenes go about his workday?

ANTHONY VOLPE: I think it's hard to really put it into words, but he's obviously our captain and our leader so much on the field, but everything he does, that doesn't get noticed the way he interacts with everyone regardless of who they are, what they do, or anything like that.

We always like joked that he always knows what to say and what to do in every single -- regardless of the situation. Obviously he leads by example, and we look up to him for what he's able to do. But I think when, like you said, behind the scenes and you see how hard he works and how he treats everyone, it just takes it to another level of something to aspire to.

Q. You mentioned Cleveland's pitching staff earlier, specifically their bullpen. How much of a challenge will that be for you guys to face this series?

ANTHONY VOLPE: They obviously have really good pitchers with really good stuff, but I know we'll be prepared.



I don't think you win a pennant or get to a World Series without having to go through the best, and they're probably definitely the best.

Q. Speaking of bullpens, obviously the way your guys were able to come through throughout the KC series, how encouraging is that for you to be behind them as they're doing that one after another?

ANTHONY VOLPE: It's amazing, but I don't think it surprised anyone on our team. I think up-and-down our roster, we have guys that want the ball, want the at-bat, want the big spot.

When you see that and you just see guy after guy either taking the mound for a starter or coming in from the bullpen, I just know everyone has confidence in every guy on the team. So it's a really good feeling.

Q. You mentioned that you feel like you're about to hit your stride and you haven't necessarily hit your stride yet.

How encouraging is it to have gotten through Kansas City without feeling like you're not yet there and knowing what you guys can do potentially if you are all clicking?

ANTHONY VOLPE: At the same time, I think we played really, really well in Kansas City and they're a really tough team. But I think just the little things, having really good at-bats, having team at-bats and trusting each other, and I think if we just keep playing that way -- I know we didn't score that many runs, but I felt like we could have scored ten-plus runs every single game in Kansas City. I think if we keep playing like that, we'll be good.

Q. Anthony, the way that Cleveland works its bullpen, they will go to relievers very early. How much more difficult is it as a hitter when you're facing pitchers only once, maybe twice, as opposed to seeing them three, potentially four times?

ANTHONY VOLPE: It's definitely a different, maybe unique challenge. At the same time, I feel like we're going to be really prepared, and we have ways that we can maybe get more prepared.

For me, learning from my first playoff series, you're going to face pretty much similar relievers a lot. So I think you're trying to download as much information and dissect all your at-bats and learn from them as it goes on definitely helps.

Q. Do you look at a reliever on Trajekt during the game?

ANTHONY VOLPE: Yeah, definitely.

Q. How do you manage that time-wise? Does it matter where you are in the lineup? If you're hitting second or third in an inning, can that give you the time?

ANTHONY VOLPE: For me, I would maybe try to -- I would just play the game the inning before, a couple innings before, and see who they got up, maybe with the lefties or where I am in the order, who I'm probably going to face.

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