

# AL Championship Series: Guardians vs Yankees

Monday, October 14, 2024

New York, New York, USA

Yankee Stadium

## New York Yankees

### Anthony Rizzo

#### Pregame 1 Press Conference

**Q. Anthony, what let you know you were ready for this round as you ramped up the workload the last few days?**

ANTHONY RIZZO: Just Saturday hitting and fielding and going through all the drills, really that night getting home, the way I recovered and then waking up yesterday basically felt the same as I woke up on Saturday. So that was a huge indicator that not only can I go tomorrow, but for the rest of the way out.

**Q. Is this still a case of pain tolerance for you?**

ANTHONY RIZZO: Yeah, that's all it is. It's just pain. It's temporary, and the 50,000 people in the stands and the adrenaline and what's at stake is going to outweigh any pain I'll be feeling.

**Q. Where would you say you're at on a scale of 1 to 10?**

ANTHONY RIZZO: Zero.

**Q. How impressed were you with Berti playing first base for the first time and what he was able to do, and also Cabrera playing first base?**

ANTHONY RIZZO: Really good. I think Cabby, his versatility has been amazing. The few years he's had in the Big Leagues, he's been so unselfish and such a team guy playing wherever he needs to play. He thrives at every position.

Whenever he's in the lineup, he's always a really good at-bat. So him playing first, I think was a little more natural than Berti.

Berti kind of had a week to prepare, but he's an infielder. He's athletic. There's little tricks of the trade there that I tell



pretty much every first baseman, but at the end of the day, you've got to be athletic, and he is.

**Q. Anthony, is there anything in particular that bothers you the most, whether it's hitting, catching, fielding?**

ANTHONY RIZZO: No. I feel very confident in both ends. If I slide, I'll probably slide with my right hand up. That's probably about it. Other than that, I feel like I'm at full tilt and ready to go.

**Q. Just how exciting, emotional, just how do you feel about being back?**

ANTHONY RIZZO: I feel great. I've had opportunity throughout my career to play a good amount of postseason baseball, and this is what you play for. The clock is only ticking on my age and getting older. You just never know when you're going to have an opportunity to play for a pennant again, ever again. You can't take any of this for granted.

To be here, to be in Game 1, to be at Yankee Stadium is just -- trying to just contain my adrenaline right now and save it all for the game.

**Q. This may be a silly question, I apologize. If this is a regular season game, are you playing tonight?**

ANTHONY RIZZO: This is Game 1 of the American League Championship Series, so the hypothetical there isn't there. I don't know. I don't know what that answer would be.

**Q. Will you play with any padding or wrapping on the glove, either the batting glove or fielding?**

ANTHONY RIZZO: Yes. I have kind of like a brace made for the glove that can go in the glove that just gives it extra protection. There will be a little padding in my glove for extra protection and then just some protection over my batting glove.

**Q. Was it hard for you to sit and watch last week and**



ANTHONY RIZZO: Yes and no. No, because I just couldn't do it, so it was the right decision for the team and for everyone involved. We have such a good team. And, yeah, it was extremely hard.

This is what you train for. This is what you play for. To be on the bench, it's more stressful than playing. It's really hard to control your emotions on the bench than it is when you play.

But it was great. It was a fun series. I felt super engaged. I felt like I kept my own playoff adrenaline running, so hopefully stepping in today is just back on the ball field.

**Q. Just from a big picture series perspective, Cleveland was second in the American League in stolen bases. Obviously that's a lot on the pitcher and the catcher, but you'll be holding guys on. How important is it in this series to shut down their running game and anything you can do from first base to do that?**

ANTHONY RIZZO: Big time. I think it's always an advantage when a lefty is over there at first, just with where the throw is and to be able to tag. We know they're aggressive on the base pads. That's one of their identities and rightfully so. They have a lot of athletic guys.

It will be up to us and our pitchers to control the run game. We're ready for it. We're prepared. It's not like we don't know what they do. They know exactly what we do. So it will just be a cat-and-mouse game.

**Q. Mentally is there a difference in how you prepare for these games now compared to when you first started playing in the postseason?**

ANTHONY RIZZO: Yeah, definitely. It's a lot of experience. These games are all compete. You just go out there and compete with whatever you have.

I've gone into World Series games, taken about eight to nine swings before the game and that's it and have done well. I've also over-swung before a game as well. So it's all about just being ready for that moment. You don't know when it's going to be. Nothing matters except the at-bat you're on or defense.

It's always one swing away. Whenever anything happens, you have to flush it, good, bad, or indifferent. You have to go right to the next play because the next play is the most important.