

# AL Championship Series: Guardians vs Yankees

Tuesday, October 15, 2024

New York, New York, USA

Yankee Stadium

## New York Yankees

### Aaron Boone

#### Postgame 2 Press Conference



Yankees - 6, Guardians - 3

**Q. Aaron, I wonder if everything feels better around the Yankees when Judge has a big swing in a game?**

AARON BOONE: Yeah, it was. It gave us some breathing room there. Game got a little short for us there, having to run through some pen. It was a big swing to kind of give us that cushion.

Yeah, I think the bench was pretty pumped when that happened.

**Q. Gleyber Torres said earlier that he wasn't really happy with his season, especially the first half, and this was his most important season of his career. Then he went out for three hits tonight.**

Can you go over what he's given you guys from the leadoff spot? I know you talked about it earlier, but a little bit of after this particular game.

AARON BOONE: He's been excellent. It was a tough first half, without question, for him. But he started to find his way in the second half in the final, I don't know what it was, two months of the season and now into the playoffs. He's just been a complete catalyst for us, good at-bat after good at-bat, really consistently day in and day out now for going on a few months.

That's who he is. That's the kind of player he is. That's the kind of hitter he is, but he's been enormous for us.

**Q. What did you see from Cole tonight?**

AARON BOONE: I thought he was really good early. Really, really in good rhythm. I thought he established his fastball and was mixing the other secondary pitches well too. Predominantly left-handed lineup tonight.

I thought he made some really big pitches when he got in trouble there in the third to Ramírez to get him -- he got him back-to-back cutters.

Then just got a little out of the zone, in and out of the zone there, kind of lost that good rhythm he had going, I felt like, in the first few. But he grinded. He competed really hard. They just pressured him a lot those last couple innings where he got a little bit off.

Fortunately, we were able to kind of piece it together there, but he got us off to a good start and gave us a chance to secure the second game.

**Q. Aaron, what's the feeling heading into Cleveland with a 2-0 lead?**

AARON BOONE: I mean, certainly like right now, it always feels good to get wins in a series and in the playoffs. Obviously knowing we have a day off tomorrow, we'll travel tomorrow, so we'll enjoy this tonight.

You know, it's just you've got to keep moving. We need two more here, but we can't get ahead of ourselves. We just talked about it, it's one game at a time. Excited to hand Clarke the ball in Game 3 and hopefully try and get another one.

**Q. You mentioned piecing it together after Cole. You leaned on Tim Hill pretty heavy today, five outs for him. What did you think of his performance, and once again the bullpen coming through?**

AARON BOONE: They were great. Obviously Clay coming in in a huge spot there to get us out of the fifth and keep the lead for us. Then Tim Hill was huge, going from the bottom -- I think I started him with Rocchio there, had the 1, 2, 3 inning, was considering going right to Tommy there in the seventh for Ramírez, but once we extended the lead by two, I really wanted him to go back out and go through Naylor.

He got both of them out, which was huge, and I was able to shorten it a little bit there for Tommy. Tommy gets four big



outs for us obviously, and Weaver finishes it off. Great job out there by those guys. They did their job really well tonight.

**Q. Judge added some insurance there in the seventh inning. You always said you're not worried about him. Did you feel it was just a matter of time?**

AARON BOONE: Always. Always. Always a matter of time with Aaron. I thought, again, he had some good swings tonight. Big sac fly to extend the lead a little bit when he was behind in the count off a pretty tough customer in Smith there, able to fight that one off.

The pop-up that they dropped, I thought he got a great swing off too. It's one of those you miss. It's that close to being a home run, but definitely good to see him put one in the seats and really give us a cushion there.

**Q. What did you think of Anthony Rizzo tonight? But also just the entire bottom of your order?**

AARON BOONE: Yeah, I mean, Rizz was great. Kind of same bullet he hit last night to get things started up the middle, and then really good at-bat there off the lefty to get us another tack-on run there, which really allowed me to send Tim Hill back out there for two more big outs.

It's those little things that are so important in the course of a game that allow you to navigate just a little bit easier.

Then Anthony Volpe, more good at-bats. Thought a great two-strike hit to get his day started. I thought got some really good swings off, really encouraged by how he's looked here, really since the week of work before the Division Series, carried it into both series where I feel he's having a lot of really good at-bats.

**Q. I'm just curious, based on these last two days, would you say that you're content with the performance the team delivered in these first two? Are you happy with it? Are you enthused by it? Where are you at given some of the sloppy base running things that happened today?**

AARON BOONE: It's about getting wins. We're in the postseason. I mean, those things are going to happen. We're going for a double steal. If he gets thrown out at third, you don't say anything, but he got picked off doing it.

It's going to happen. We're not going to not be aggressive in certain situations, try and guard against it as best we can. Then Rizz just had a funky read on what he thought kind of ended up going to the backstop.

I feel overall we're playing pretty well.

**Q. Were you surprised at all when they decided to walk Soto to get to Judge, and how do you think he responded to that's not a common thing for him?**

AARON BOONE: I can't say I was totally shocked there. No, you never know what a team -- you got to pick your poison sometimes, and they were up against it a little bit in that situation in going to Smith that early in the game, down three.

You're kind of trying to -- you need something to go really well to keep yourself in the game. Sometimes you've got to take a shot that's a little bit unconventional.

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