

# AL Championship Series: Guardians vs Yankees

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Progressive Field

## New York Yankees

### Aaron Boone

#### Workout Day Press Conference

**Q. You talk about Clarke, typically the first thing you mention is his confidence. When did you start noticing that, and was there a moment where you said, this guy has got a little bit to him?**

AARON BOONE: Yeah, the bubble in 2020 when we were getting ready and kind of Spring Training 2.0 up here and the live BPs and stuff. He was very much not a finished product at that point, but flashed all his stuff and weapons. You're like, man, this guy, he just didn't have real command yet, but had a presence to him and a swagger to him. He's never not had that.

The cool thing is just how much better and better he's gotten each year, too. He loves pitching. He loves all that goes into it, the physical preparation for it, the way you train. He'll get in the lab and figure different things out. The cutter has been a pitch that's become a real factor for him over the last couple years.

But he's just -- he's gotten better and better each and every year. That's been really cool to witness, but starts with a foundation of confidence because he's really talented.

**Q. Also, we've seen what Giancarlo can do on the field. In the clubhouse, how do you perceive the players receive him, and what does he contribute?**

AARON BOONE: Yeah, reverence for him. He's not a -- doesn't say a ton necessarily or he's not a big-time talker, but when he speaks, we all listen up. He's very thoughtful in the things he says. There's been some real profound things that he's said over the years in critical moments that get your attention. Certainly everyone, when he speaks, people listen to him.

**Q. How is Rizzo feeling this morning after playing back to back?**



AARON BOONE: Good. He was in here when I walked in. He was already in the training room, getting full treatment already this morning. I asked how he was doing. He said, pretty good, better than the day before -- like yesterday he woke up, he was pretty sore. I think today less so, according to him.

He'll continue to get treatment and hopefully continue to improve day by day.

**Q. You were saying last night you expected him to be at the stadium a couple more hours getting treatment. Is he round the clock in the training room?**

AARON BOONE: Yeah, I asked him if he slept here in the hyperbaric chamber. Yeah, he's been here a lot. He did go home last night, though. But yeah, he's just been -- it's really been his last couple weeks, just really trying to get as much treatment as he can and trying to move the needle just as much as he can to obviously be available.

**Q. With Clay, when there was a lot of noise about the blown saves and everything, you were very much in his corner. You kept saying you think he's really close. What were you seeing at that time?**

AARON BOONE: Yeah, I never felt like he was far off. Even in some of the past couple years when obviously he's had outstanding years for us, he's had moments in the season where it wasn't real sharp or he'd lose it for a week or two and really -- he never really went through that this year.

It was just he had some tough luck in the first half -- in the first few months, some tough saves where it got away where you really look at it and you go back and watch the outing, it was pretty good. He was firing in some holes.

Then there was a stretch where he got hit hard a couple times and lost some saves, but he never really was erratic with his command and the stuff was all there. And knowing the kind of person he is and knowing how tough he is mentally, like, I knew he'd be able to get through it.

I always felt like even though I changed the role a little bit,



knew he had everything to handle it, especially being a really good pitcher.

It's been good to see him really finish the season as strong as he did and obviously pitching as well as he is for us right now.

**Q. When you were taking him out in the ninth inning, did you have to sit him down and have a conversation? How did you explain that to him?**

AARON BOONE: Yeah, yeah, we talked a couple times. Initially it was, hey, I might pick some spots where it's still going to be you, but it might be somebody else at a certain spot in the game. If I like the spot in the order for you, I might do that to where it kind of graduated to more than that, where I was going to take him out of the role for at least temporarily.

I don't think he was thrilled about it, but always a pro, and you wouldn't know it by how he was pitching and how he went about his job and how he went about things. It's been really cool to see him kind of having the success he's having.

**Q. Has Nestor thrown his bullpen today or is he later today?**

AARON BOONE: He's throwing live in about 10 minutes.

**Q. If he comes through that okay, what's the next step?**

AARON BOONE: He'll probably have another live this weekend. So he could potentially have two or three lives. If we were to get through this series, it would potentially set him up to have a good body of work under him to potentially be an option if we're able to get to those series.

**Q. Is he sort of in the same position as Anthony was at the beginning of the Division Series, or is he more of a long shot for the World Series roster?**

AARON BOONE: No, I would say no, he's more in play to me at this point. Now, he's got steps to go and he's got to continue to feel good and bounce back and things like that, but the way it's gone to this point has been encouraging.

I think he's at least a realistic option. Not saying for sure, but the timeline lines up to where if things go well, he could definitely be an option.

**Q. I wanted to ask you about Jose Trevino. With the three games in a row coming up, do you foresee him getting a start here? Even though he hasn't played so**

**far in the postseason, how would you characterize what his contributions have been behind the scenes?**

AARON BOONE: Yeah, there's definitely a possibility he could get in there. Trevi, since the day he walked into our building in Tampa right before the start of the 2022 season, he's been super impactful in our room, with our pitching staff, with all the catchers and just with his teammates.

He's been such a model teammate, an impactful teammate, a productive player, and that hasn't stopped. Even as some of his playing time has gone away here down the stretch, he is integral to everything we do and such a presence in our room.

**Q. You mentioned before Giancarlo saying some profound things over the years. I was wondering if any particular examples come to mind.**

AARON BOONE: Yeah, I think one thing that stands out to me, and something that I've made a part of my opening addresses to players in Spring Training to kind of constantly reminding them, like, he's so good at dealing with the noise that especially comes with playing here in New York, playing with the Yankees.

When we lost to the Red Sox in 2021 in the Wild Card game, he spoke afterwards and just talked about all the pitfalls that you can find yourself from a noise standpoint, whether it's going down the rabbit hole of social media and talking to guys. Like, man, you want to find out how great you think you are or how terrible you are and everything in between, it's all there and can be a distraction for guys.

He's so good at not making it a distraction, but really talking about it in terms of it's all toxic. None of that noise should matter to where your focus and where your energy lies. He lives that.

Just the way he said it in 2021, I'll never forget it, in the visiting clubhouse of the Red Sox, and it really stuck with me. Has always since then, like for me, made it a point to, like, make sure you're focusing on the right things and trying as best you can to not let unnecessary distractions leak into your performance and your ability to do your job at the highest level.

**Q. Austin Wells is going through this for the first time. Not a lot of hits or a lot of strikeouts, but when you look at what he's done behind the plate, not a lot of stolen bases, passed balls, the pitchers are still talking about how they like throwing to him, calling good games. Are you impressed with how he's not hitting, he's hitting in the clean-up spot, not getting hits, but he understands catching is his first job and this is**

**postseason and you guys are winning a lot because of pitching?**

AARON BOONE: No doubt. He's been -- that's what's been really, really cool to see, his continued growth behind the plate and his presence behind the plate.

He's done an outstanding job, all the while going through a little bit of struggles offensively. It was really good to see him have that at-bat he had last night, his last at-bat where he smoked the ball to right field I felt got a lot of good swings off Gaddis there.

Yeah, it has been impressive to see the kind of development we've seen from him defensively and the kind of impact he's having behind the plate because you're right, that's job number one, especially this time of year.

You've got to be impactful behind the plate and with your pitching staff. He does a really good job. He kind of has a veteran presence to him. He handles it all really well and knows he's also going to have important, impactful at-bats moving forward.

**Q. Have you seen cases where rookies have struggled hitting and let it affect the rest of their game? Do you think that mental toughness of him being a catcher has helped him and he's different?**

AARON BOONE: Yeah, his presence has always stood out to me from the first time I got to be around him a lot in his first Big League camp a couple springs ago. That always impressed me.

Then what impressed me also was the defensive growth that we saw from him, even starting a couple years ago. Like okay, and then when he got called up last September and I felt like really held his own behind the plate, I think has improved over the winter and into this season, and as his role has grown, he's continued to grow in it.

But he's not at all like a rookie.

**Q. You've talked a lot this year about how your group has been through adversity and has been very resilient. What do you like about your team being up 2-0 and continuing to plug away and maybe not let the advantage get to their heads and still win these next couple games?**

AARON BOONE: Yeah, it's been one of the traits of this team all year. They're really good at the excitement of the day or the downturn of a week or two weeks of a season. They do a really good job of just kind of keep moving forward.

We talk about it a lot, like the next play is too important to get bogged down by a result that just happened, good or bad. They're excellent at that.

They've modeled that really all season long, and it's continued here in the postseason.

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