

# AL Championship Series: Guardians vs Yankees

Friday, October 18, 2024

Cleveland, Ohio, USA

Progressive Field

## New York Yankees

### Aaron Boone

#### Postgame 4 Press Conference

Yankees 8, Guardians 6

**Q. Aaron, you went to your bullpen a lot today. Leiter just added to the roster. You brought him into one of the biggest spots of the game. He hadn't pitched since September 29th, and you knew they still had Noel on the bench. What gave you the confidence to bring him in that situation and made him the right call?**

AARON BOONE: Well, we still had a long way to go to the finish line, and frankly I wasn't quite sure how we were going to get there. But I knew Noel was going to come in. I didn't necessarily think he would come in for Leiter, but I knew he would if I brought Mayza in in that spot.

I liked Leiter against -- I know he's going to have to go through a run of lefties if he's efficient and we liked that. But he did a great job, managed contact. Other than Naylor getting the lead-off double, I thought he was really good. Unfortunately didn't complete a play there on the tough little squiber, but I thought he threw the ball excellent and obviously in an enormous spot.

**Q. What did you see on that play?**

AARON BOONE: Just a little squiber that he knocked down and then kind of kicked, so he still had a chance to make the play and got really close to Rizz, so you kind of just handcuff, so it became wonky once he got over there. You have to secure it there on the first thing, but what an effort.

**Q. Using Kahnle to close, if it were that situation going into the evening, because it looked like you had Luke Weaver then in warming?**

AARON BOONE: Yeah, I was going Kahnle to close tonight. I was staying away from Luke. Then just the way the game unfolded, if it got long for Tommy just because as



much as he's pitched, too, I was like, you know what, let's use Luke for one out if we have to.

I almost brought him in there for Rocchio, but I felt like Tommy had one more in him. So that was going to be his last hitter, and I was going to go to Weave if I had to with Kwan.

**Q. Who are you talking to during the game about your pitching possibilities, and can you take us through some of what you're trying to -- you did say it was going to be tough to get to the finish line. What are you doing -- how many different plans do you feel you had tonight?**

AARON BOONE: I mean, we talked about it before the game, where we like some guys. What was big was Luis getting us four innings. I know that is not like -- but four innings when really I was keeping him at where we were like 75, 80 pitches. I think he ended up throwing 80, probably even more than we really like.

But for him to get us four innings, now we had a chance to kind of do -- I thought Tim Hill was great through his length. But I am cognizant of how much most of these guys have thrown so much too or some that have not been in there, like how much are they going to be able to go.

I tried to steal a couple outs with Cousins going back out. Honestly, it just kind of evolved. I kind of talked through it with Brad and Matt. And as the situation unfolds, as they shoot a pinch-hitter maybe early or in the middle of the game, it kind of changes the landscape of their lineup a little bit. You kind of adjust, but you just kind of have those conversations as you go of who I like in a certain situation with traffic, starting an inning, those kind of things.

**Q. Do you at any point say to them how are we getting 27 outs today?**

AARON BOONE: No, but it was on my mind. (Laughter).

**Q. When you had the conversation with Leiter before both series, you're not on the roster, but stay ready, what is that conversation like?**



AARON BOONE: Kind of like that. Yeah, because there's a case to be made for him to be on both of these times, kind of that last guy left off. He's been through a lot this year. He's having a great year with the Cubs, gets traded at the deadline, a big piece for us, a little up-and-down with us, had some success, had some struggles, and then he's left off. And it's like, you are trying to say, hey, anything can happen. The thing I said to him before the game was you might find yourself in the biggest spot of this game, albeit he was ready for it, and he delivered.

**Q. How much do you think just seeing Clase again and having the success you had against him last night, did that bleed over to tonight at all?**

AARON BOONE: Maybe a little bit. I think there was some confidence there. We've had a little success over the years off him. I mean, not like massive, but we've gotten to him a couple times.

Obviously he's as good as it gets, but I think when you have some success against him, and you know he's throwing a lot, like a lot of our guys, a lot of their guys have thrown in the postseason, I think there's probably a little bit of confidence that we can do this against one of the game's greats.

**Q. What's going through your head on the Stanton home run?**

AARON BOONE: He did it again. I mean, just to get to two strikes there and get to one -- looked like almost a letter high heater maybe and just smooth as -- just special. Just locked in, prepared. His preparation and his ability to just lock in and focus is impressive.

**Q. You said he did it again. Are you in awe at this point as to what he does in the postseason?**

AARON BOONE: A little bit, yeah. Again, that's Cade Smith, too. It ain't easy to do that, two strikes and where he got the pitch to it felt like. I haven't gone and watched it back, but it seemed like it was up above the strike zone a little bit and just an easy swing and no doubter. That's just a big spot, big swing.

**Q. With so many guys being stretched to their limit and you being nine innings away from a World Series, what is at stake for the bullpen tomorrow?**

AARON BOONE: I mean, look, we've got to see what we've got tomorrow. Not necessarily. We've got to protect these guys, too. And as hard as it was, I was kind of going Weave down today. Like how bad do you want to win this

game.

It's tough going into a game saying Weaver is down, but you've also got to have a little bit of that discipline as you kind of go through this. That's the challenge.

So we'll just see what we have when guys come in and their throwing program and I'll talk to Hark and I'll talk to Blake and Desi and try and make the best decision possible.

**Q. You guys talked about resiliency yesterday. What did you think of that resiliency tonight?**

AARON BOONE: Yeah, not surprised with these guys. Obviously last night was a really tough loss. And whatever happened today, win, lose or draw, there's no doubt in my mind we'd come out ready to roll, ready to turn the page, and right out of the gate, Gleyber gets on, Soto, homer, we're off and running. Luis Hill does his job, and I thought we played an excellent game. Not a perfect game, but a gritty, tough, winning game.

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