

MLB World Series: Yankees vs Dodgers

Friday, October 25, 2024
Los Angeles, California, USA
Dodger Stadium

New York Yankees

Carlos Rodón

Pregame 1 Press Conference

Q. Carlos, obviously this team has a few homegrown guys, but the majority of the club, yourself included, came from other places. How would you say you guys as a unit have come together, and what has that dynamic been like with so many guys coming from outside the org and coming together?

CARLOS RODÓN: There's a few similar faces of guys that have played together on this team. I came in last year. Obviously we had a rough year, but I was welcomed with open arms. Then we added the likes of Juan Soto and a few other bullpen arms.

It's pretty easy to mesh with this group. I think the Yankees are very good at knowing who they want to go get and the kind of players they want to get, so yeah.

Q. Carlos, what have you learned from your postseason starts so far, and how do you apply that when you're approaching a lineup that has as much fire power as the Dodgers do?

CARLOS RODÓN: This lineup's pretty potent. They can definitely swing it, and they have a good idea what the strike zone is. Just kind of carrying that demeanor coming into tomorrow, just trying to stay focused on pitch by pitch, and giving my team the best chance to win.

Yeah, just keeping it under control and just going out there and competing.

Q. What are those challenges in facing a potent lineup like this where you have the superstars up at the top and then depth throughout?

CARLOS RODÓN: I think a lot of it has to do with -- it's what in front of you, and you go and you compete. We're all pretty good. I know they have good hitters, but we're here for a reason, I'm here for a reason. I think our lineup



is just as good.

Honestly, I think we're better, but I'm biased. Yeah, I'm here, I'm a Big Leaguer too. I'm supposed to get those guys out. That's what I'm paid for.

Q. There's a lot of talk around here obviously about Fernando Valenzuela, who 40 years ago threw 147 pitches in a World Series game. Does part of you wish you kind of were around in that era to try stuff like that, or do you kind of like it better the way it is now?

CARLOS RODÓN: I definitely like the old-school way of baseball, and I also enjoy the analytics of baseball and understand the moves within the game, third time through and all this whatnot and technology.

But I enjoyed when pitchers would go out there and throw 130 pitches, and you let them go out and get through seven innings. Because if you didn't get through six or seven innings, it was kind of like a bad start, it seemed like, pre-2010, I would say, if there was a starter that didn't give you depth.

Now you get two times through the order, and the bullpen is so good nowadays, and these guys throw so hard, it's easy to go and rely on them as well.

It's tough with the news of Fernando. He was so great. He had a big impact with the Dodgers, and what a tremendous pitcher.

Q. When you look at the success the Yankees bullpen has had, what is the level of confidence that you all have? How impressed are you by just the resilience you've seen from them over the last couple weeks and months?

CARLOS RODÓN: Yeah, in the ALCS, they were so great. I think they came out of Game 4 or 5 -- I'm not sure. I think it was Game 5 -- they came out in the fifth, and they come in and shut the door. I think Mark Leiter come in in a big spot and got out of a jam there. They didn't give up a run the rest of the game. We were fortunate we won the game that day.

If we look back, throughout that whole series, they were pretty much nails. Had a tough go. What was it, Game 3, back and forth. What a great game Game 3 was, if you remember, with the Fry walkoff and then Jhonkensy Noel with the two-run homer to tie it.

That was probably the first -- I don't know if they gave up any runs before that. They might have, maybe one or two. But throughout the postseason our bullpen has been something we've been really leaning on.

Q. Carlos, do you feel you guys are better?

CARLOS RODÓN: Yeah, we wouldn't be in this position if we didn't think that way. I'm sure they think they're better than us too. That's how we have to approach this.

Q. When you think of the big picture about your season and coming off last year, what was the biggest reason that you were able to get back to being Carlos Rodón? How hard was that to go through?

CARLOS RODÓN: I think a lot of it has to do with just confidence, confidence in my ability and in myself. Just finding it and going out there and competing and proving to myself that I'm able to still play this game because last year was hard. I mean, it wasn't easy.

Obviously I wish I'd performed better, but last year's last year. And I had a goal coming into this year that I just wanted to be confident and go out there and try to make every start I can. I think it has worked out thus far, but there's one more thing that I know me and my teammates want to do.

Q. How many pitches into a start does it take you to decide or have a feel for what's working that night?

CARLOS RODÓN: It's hard. In the postseason, you're not really thinking about this is working, this is not working. These postseason starts for me, it's just like what's the pitch called? And I'm going to try to go execute it. I'm not really thinking, hey, my slider's not working or my fastball's not working.

My mind doesn't wander those spaces. In a regular season it's a little different. The game feels -- not that in the postseason it's faster, but the blinders have to be up when you're in these postseason starts, and you're just focused on whoever's calling the game that night that you just want to make that pitch.

Yeah, I don't know if there's much time to think about, hey, this is working or this is not working.

Q. The first start against Cleveland, at what point did you realize you had your best swing-and-miss stuff that night?

CARLOS RODÓN: I don't know. I just -- I'm trying to think back to that start. I think after -- it was a fastball I threw to Fry, I think, up in the zone, and he swung through it. The fastball starting to work, and there was some slider -- chase and slider miss. I can't remember. I can't really put a finger on an exact pitch in that game.

The one I remember the most was the fastball up, and it was in the first inning that I struck him out on. If we go back to Cleveland, there's not much miss in that lineup. They're a contact-driven lineup. Yeah, I just can't remember.

Q. Carlos, with the playoffs I assume there's extra adrenaline working. Do you have to consciously tell yourself to -- you know?

CARLOS RODÓN: Yeah, there's times where you've got to slow down and back off because I'm notorious for overcooking pitches and trying to throw the ball too hard or trying to make the slider as unhittable as I can. So I try to do too much, and it just kind of loses the profile and loses the effectiveness of the pitch.

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