

MLB World Series: Yankees vs Dodgers

Tuesday, October 29, 2024
New York, New York, USA
Yankee Stadium

New York Yankees

Anthony Rizzo

Pregame 4 Press Conference

Q. Anthony, you spoke with the team pregame yesterday. Can you just share what your message was and what you're trying to get across?

ANTHONY RIZZO: Yeah, we had a meeting yesterday. It was pretty quick, pretty brief. To the point. Just to tell the guys how much I love them and whatnot. But try to keep that in house.

It was great. We all came out ready to play, and we just didn't come up with the win last night.

Q. And facing 3-0 today, do you expect you guys to do anything similar today, or do you try to treat it like it's a regular day despite the circumstances?

ANTHONY RIZZO: I mean, we've got to win obviously, right? We've just got to win today. There's no tomorrow anymore. There really isn't. Today could be our last drive to the ballpark. Today could be the last time this team's ever together -- this could be the last time we're ever together.

So being down 3-0, you just want to force another game. If we force another game, hopefully that lifts a lot of weight off our shoulders, and we'll see, but it starts tonight.

Q. For Jasson Dominguez, super young guy, highly regarded as a prospect on the roster but hasn't had a huge role this month, what do you think he can take from this experience overall heading into his career?

ANTHONY RIZZO: I think the experience of being up here is amazing. You can't replicate this by watching. He's in the trenches with us and all the meetings. Last year he came up and was hot when he came up. This year is a little different. He had an injury and coming back from that.

The league will always make adjustments. I think his



future, his ceiling is so high and he's such a good person, and he works hard. His moment might come tonight, and he'll be ready.

A. Just in general, as cups of coffee like you mentioned the last couple of years, what have you thought of him as a person, as a worker, as somebody who's around, not just as a player?

ANTHONY RIZZO: I think he asks all the right questions. He's worked really hard on his English. He speaks really good English. That doesn't go overlooked. It's not easy being a foreign player and coming here and learning the language. He cares about his teammates. He cares about his work. I'm excited to see his future develop.

Q. Having been part of a 3-1 comeback, do you draw anything from that, or is it a little daunting to look back knowing that all the things had to line up as they did for you guys to pull that off back in '16?

ANTHONY RIZZO: You've just got to win one, right? The one you win is the hardest. For us Game 5, I would say, was the hardest at the time. Just winning one sets it up.

We've got Gerrit Cole lurking tomorrow if we can get there. We've got a pissed off Rodón for Game 6 if we can get out there. And Game 7 is always a crap shoot. There's a documentary out right now on Game 7, right? But that's a long ways away. Luis Gil will come out firing, and we've got to have his back.

They're going bullpen today. They have a really good bullpen. Hopefully we can throw up a couple of big numbers early, and everyone can relax a little bit.

Q. You mentioned earlier that a win tonight could kind of lift the weight off the shoulders a bit. Could you just talk a little bit more about what that weight is specifically, what you mean by that?

ANTHONY RIZZO: Man, how do I do that? That's a good question. The weight -- I mean, it's just -- I don't know. Sometimes in this game, in life, you put a little pressure on yourself for something. You worry about probably 90 percent of things that never actually happen, and when that



time comes and it happens, you're like why did I worry so much about that? Maybe that I can relate to it a little bit.

As far as trying to win, we started this year winning four games in a row. We know we're very capable of winning four games in a row. So hopefully we can end this year winning four games in a row. That's what we have to do to be champions. The Dodgers will not lay down by any means. They're a really good team. But we win tonight, we get to play tomorrow.

Q. Last night Judge said that he feels like he's let the team down with how he's performed. You're obviously super tight with him. How do you think he's handled just the lack of results that he's gotten so far?

ANTHONY RIZZO: He's never let this team down. He's there, his presence, who he is in the clubhouse, what he brings to all of us. He's never let us down.

He comes in every day, he's Aaron Judge. He's the same guy as, I would say, most of the beat reporters know in here every single day. He's been such a joy to play with, and hopefully his biggest hits of his career are coming up tonight and onward.

Q. Kind of on a related note, we've seen and heard so many examples of how Aaron lifts his teammates up. When he's going through the struggles that he's having right now, how do you kind of lift him up in this scenario? What's your sort of way of supporting him?

ANTHONY RIZZO: Perspective. That's what life is all about is perspective. This is for us one of the most important things in our life right now, and we know that. But at the end of the day, being a good person, having good character, being there when times are tough, how you show up is what defines you.

When guys come back in this game, any former player comes back, no one is asking how good of a player he is. Everyone's asking what kind of a guy, what kind of player he is. You want to be remembered as a good person, a good leader, in my experience. To lift him up, just be his friend.

We're friends. We've created a lifelong friendship these last few years. My wife Emily, his wife Sam are really good friends, and we just talk. It's a brotherhood.

Q. In your experience, this being a veteran group, have you found that team meetings are something you guys respond well to? Is there anything in particular that kind of compelled you guys to hold this one?

ANTHONY RIZZO: I mean, it didn't work last night. I guess it only works if we win, right? Again, I think it's just a matter of us being together, and we are together.

We have hitters meetings every day where it's basically like a little -- it is a meeting every day where guys say stuff. Our pitchers have done such a good job for us. I think if you ask any guy on this team how close we are, you'll pretty much get the same answer from any of the relievers to the starting pitchers to all the position players to the bench guys.

Everyone feels part of this, and there's not a lot of teams that every guy can say that.

Q. With the bullpen being such a big strength of the Dodgers, they haven't been shy of using both a lot of guys but also giving opposing hitters various looks just from inning to inning. As a hitter, for the lineup, how much of a challenge is that to you, and is there a benefit at all to it?

ANTHONY RIZZO: I think the more you see a reliever, obviously the more comfortable you are. You see these guys on a nightly basis now. You pretty much know the guys you're going to face at this point kind of in the ebbs and flows of the series.

I feel like seeing the starting pitcher now is a little bit more difficult than seeing the relievers because you know how the relievers are going to attack you. You know their game plan more than the starting pitchers. In the game today, you're really are seeing a starter twice, and you're seeing the relievers more. You've just got to capitalize on their mistakes whether it's a starter or a reliever.

Q. Years from now, what do you think you'll remember most from this year's group in your mind? What makes it distinct from some of the other Yankee teams you were on?

ANTHONY RIZZO: I don't know. You'll have to ask me that question at the end of the season. Today we have a big game to try to force another game and that's our main focus.

It's a great group. Love all the guys. It's a lot of fun, but we're hoping it doesn't end tonight.

Q. Does each year have a different personality?

ANTHONY RIZZO: Oh, yeah, every year is different, every single year. This team will never be the same after this year, and that's how it goes for every single team, good, bad, or indifferent.

When you come together as a group like this, it's always memorable because, like I said, not every team -- not the most talented team always wins. I think always the best team wins, and we have been a very good team. We do have a lot of talent, but the way we've come together has been very special to me actually.

Q. Anthony, you said a few minutes ago that driving in this could be the last time you guys are together as a team, last time driving to the stadium, et cetera. Have you considered this possibly could be your last game in a Yankee uniform?

ANTHONY RIZZO: Yeah, obviously there's an option. I love playing here. I love being a Yankee. I love what comes with it. I love the standard that has been set here from all the generations, the great Yankees in the past. Yeah, this could very well be. I'm a realist. I'm not naive to it.

But I think all that will shape out when the time is right. It's more just driving to the field and being with this group that means the most to me.

Q. Luis Gil has had an unbelievable rookie season, but this is a huge spot for him. What is it about his mentality, the way he approaches things, that leads you to believe he should be able to handle tonight?

ANTHONY RIZZO: I think first off he has an electric fastball, so believing in that. Our back's against the wall, but at the same time, just got to let it all go. If we can let it all go and just relax and be ourselves, hopefully everything turns around.

It's not going to turn around in one pitch or one swing, but just a little bit of momentum is all we need. That's the only way that we're going to attempt this historic comeback, right? We're down 3-0. There's no secret. Luis Gil is on the bump tonight, and he has a great opportunity to set the tone for us.

Q. You've competed against the Dodgers for a long time, with the Cubs, in the postseason now. Whether it's in this series or throughout, what is it that's made them such a sustainable winner with really no letdown year to year?

ANTHONY RIZZO: I think they're just a factory of success. They've had really good starting pitching. Clayton Kershaw has been amazing for them for 10, 12, 15 years, and they brought in guys around him always, so you know he was an ace for so long. And then all the hitters and position players that have gone through there, they just

seem to breed that winning culture.

Then again, they have a pretty nice bankroll behind them. They have a great fan base. Dave Roberts did an amazing job. Don Mattingly did an amazing job. I don't think I was in the league when Joe Torre was there, but it's been a franchise that models a lot of success my entire Big League career.

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