

AL Wild Card Series: Red Sox vs Yankees

Monday, September 29, 2025

New York, New York, USA

Yankee Stadium

New York Yankees

Aaron Boone

Workout Day Press Conference

Q. Aaron, I know you don't have to have the roster in yet, but do you know what you're going to do?

AARON BOONE: We've met on it and allowed people to weigh in on it. We'll make a decision here shortly. A couple things we're considering but have not finalized it yet.

Q. What's the biggest debate?

AARON BOONE: Just last spots, what makes the most sense.

Q. If there is a Game 3, will it be Cam Schlittler in Game 3?

AARON BOONE: Yes.

Q. You've talked a lot about what makes Fried so deceptive, so unpredictable. If you could just describe what you've thought about his season and why you're so confident about giving him the ball tomorrow?

AARON BOONE: Obviously he's had an outstanding season. He's been a great pitcher in this league now for a while. That being said, you're one of the big free agents out there, you come to New York, that's a challenging -- can be a challenging and daunting thing. He's handled it so well, so seamlessly.

Forget the pitcher for a minute, just his makeup, the person, the teammate he is has been more than I could have ever imagined honestly. He's been outstanding. Between the lines -- start with he's a great athlete. That's, I think, his biggest -- that's the biggest thing he has going for him. It helps in his delivery, his stuff, obviously the way he controls the running game and moves and bounces off the mound and things like that.



It's just I heard he can really hit, he can really run. He's told me, like we get in a pinch, he's the extra outfielder, those kind of things, and I believe him. He is a really phenomenal athlete.

Within that, then you go look at the stuff in the arsenal. It's vast. A lot of different weapons, a lot of different ways to beat you. I would say a lot of really plus pitches. It's not like he's got two pitches that are necessarily bread and butter. He's got four or five weapons that he can on any given night get a lot of different hitters out with.

Q. Would you consider catching Ben Rice tomorrow with Fried?

AARON BOONE: Wells will catch tomorrow.

Q. Would Ben be first base or would you have Goldschmidt?

AARON BOONE: Probably Goldie.

Q. Kind of along the same lines, but since the trade deadline, you've used righty heavy lineups against left-handed pitching. Is that the expectation for --

AARON BOONE: Not as much probably tomorrow, but again, I haven't made any final decisions yet, so I'm kind of working through that still.

Q. Is one of the factors you're weighing that some of these guys -- Rice, Chisholm -- have kind of carried you offensively all year rather than going with a platoon advantage?

AARON BOONE: I mean, not necessarily, no. I'm trying to win the game. Obviously Max being on the mound factors in. So I'm still weighing it. I'll try and do what's best for us.

Q. What's been your impression of Garrett Crochet, considering it's only his second full year as a starter, coming over to a new team, new division, from what you've seen of him this season?

AARON BOONE: Yeah, an ace. He's been one of the



handful of, or even smaller than that, you can probably count on one hand the amount of guys he's in the running with for all of Major League Baseball. In the season he's turned in for them, he's clearly become their ace and their horse, and from what I understand, been phenomenal behind the scenes too. They got themselves a good one.

Q. I guess kind of beyond the obvious, what makes him tough on the mound for when you guys see him?

AARON BOONE: I think it's big stuff. Obviously 100 mile an hour, the cutter/sweeper change. Then the size and deception he creates. If you threw a silhouette up there, there's no confusing who it is.

But I think within also having great stuff, there's really good deception in there that allows that stuff to really play. Then the ability to put the ball where he really wants. Obviously he gets a lot of chase too, but the ability to first and foremost be able to be a strike thrower with that stuff, with that deception puts him in a pretty good place.

Q. Is Jazz a go for tomorrow?

AARON BOONE: Yeah, Jazz should be good.

Q. How have you seen Judge kind of internalize and get better from the past postseasons he's had where he hasn't necessarily carried over regular season results?

AARON BOONE: How has he?

Q. How has he responded to it and tried to get better?

AARON BOONE: Look, Aaron Judge is the greatest player going. He's unbelievable day to day, like he's unbelievable at the grind, he's unbelievable at the routine.

And he has an obsession too with always trying to get a little bit better wherever he can, and he's worked really hard at that year in and year out to where can I make little improvements in my game? That's adjustments at the plate. That's tightening up a routine. That's learning over the years how to do the daily grind a little bit better.

He's always looking to how can I get a little bit better, and I think a lot of the great ones do that.

Q. You've managed a bit over the years against Alex Cora. How would you describe him as a manager in preparing to face one of his teams?

AARON BOONE: A good one. I think he's really good. I think he -- you know, he's -- they play the game within the

game really well. I think he's a really good leader. I think his team kind of embodies who he is, and I think he does a really good job of helping set and define the culture over there that -- and obviously they've gone through a couple of tough years, but he's always been the clear leader of that group.

You started to see it come together a little bit last year, I felt like, and now obviously this year after a little bit of an uneven start, they've really become obviously a very good team and one of the best teams in the league here the second half of the year.

But I think a lot of people saw it coming too, contrary to what -- I think he's played The Little Engine That Could a little bit over there. I think a lot of people knew the Red Sox were coming this year. But I think he's one of the games really good ones.

Q. You did have Rice catch Fried last time out, so how close a call was that for you to have Wells start Game 1?

AARON BOONE: No, I was catching Wells.

Q. Why?

AARON BOONE: Because I think Wells is really good back there and he's been really good with Fried. Wellsy is actually swinging the bat really good here down the stretch as well.

Just because Rice isn't in there doesn't mean he doesn't impact the game in a big way. Like that's a big thing with a lot of these matchups, it's like sometimes you're putting them in a better spot to impact the game. Sometimes when they're coming off the bench in a situation, whatever it may be.

Q. What does the speed of your current roster give you in terms of what you think about options for late in tight games games?

AARON BOONE: It's definitely been -- I've loved having it. We've tried to get more athletic over the last couple of years, especially as kind of the rules have made it a little more athlete friendly, which I think is a great thing. And we finally got to a point, I feel like, especially in the second half at the deadline where, man, we got four or five really good athletes capable of changing the game a little bit on the bases, but then a number of other guys that are also really holding their own out there as well.

I feel like it's been something that's been part of us playing really well is the athleticism we have, and hopefully that

shows up here in the postseason for us here too.

Q. Do you think that shows up more in postseason games that are more likely to be tight in late innings?

AARON BOONE: Not necessarily. I feel like we've done well on the bases the last couple months and really impacted some games. You never know how a game's going to be impacted in the postseason. It's sometimes one pitch -- it's hard to say, but I know we have that -- more of a weapon in that way as we enter this postseason.

Q. Devin finished the season pretty strong. What did you think of the way he ended things, and how high is your confidence level going into postseason?

AARON BOONE: I think he's in a really good place. Kind of proud of him just it's not easy the things he went through this year. You're one of the game's great relievers and you come over here and have some hiccups early. He definitely faced his share of adversity but answered it at every turn too. I feel like could certainly make the case that here the final month or month-plus of the season, he's been at his very best.

Excited where he's at, and obviously he's going to play a big role for us.

Q. Lakers-Celtics, Michigan-Ohio State -- how would you define this rivalry comparing it to all of sports?

AARON BOONE: Right in that conversation. It's Red Sox-Yankees that gets your attention. I would throw it right in those -- the best rivalries in all of sports, and obviously a lot of history there. Excited to be a part of it, and hopefully we get the better of them this go round.

Q. Why Cam in Game 3 over Will, and what role do you envision Will having?

AARON BOONE: We'll see. We're still finalizing the roster. If he's in play, like he'd be in play, and you never know how a game's going to unfold. And just feel like Cam is -- look, feel confident with any of our five starters going out there, but I feel like Cam's the guy to get that ball in Game 3.

Q. And what roles do you envision Caballero and Rosario having with them being righties and obviously Crochet left?

AARON BOONE: They could be in play tomorrow. Yeah, they're going to have lefties in the pen too. They've been really good role players for us here since we got them. I expect them to continue to play an important role.

Q. You faced Bregman obviously this time of year before. What do you think he's brought to their team this year, and how much, especially in October, do you think a guy like that helps them?

AARON BOONE: Obviously a great player, played in a lot of big games. I think watching from afar it just seems like he's had a really positive impact on their team, their clubhouse, their culture. You know he's going to be -- he's going to handle himself at third, and he's going to be a tough out at the plate.

He's a guy that you've really got to execute against, especially a guy like that that really controls the strike zone as well as he does too. He's definitely an impact player for them.

Q. Aaron, you mentioned their bullpen, just between the year that Aroldis is having and some of their setup guys, just what kind of challenge does that group of guys present?

AARON BOONE: They've had a good time shortening the time. Aroldis, with the career he's had, this may be his best season, certainly one of them, and that's saying something. We've gotten to see him a couple times down the stretch. Hopefully that's something that serves us well.

But yeah, their bullpen has, I feel like, done a really good job coming together. They got some different looks down there too. They brought up some people that could play meaningful roles down there as well. So it will be a challenge.

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