

AL Wild Card Series: Red Sox vs Yankees

Monday, September 29, 2025

New York, New York, USA

Yankee Stadium

Boston Red Sox

Alex Cora

Workout Day Press Conference

Q. Last time you guys faced Fried, I think there was eight righties and one switch hitter. Will you go that deep into the platoon tomorrow? How much have you thought about?

ALEX CORA: No, J.D. is playing left tomorrow.

Q. Alex, how important did you feel getting Garrett Crochet was to you guys to have that ace at the top of the rotation and a guy who could kind of tie it together?

ALEX CORA: I mean, it's very important, right? Having an ace -- and we had aces before, right, with Chris and, well, we had plenty of aces in '19. Nate became an ace after that.

Like I said during the season, he was a guy that he continued the winning streak, and he stopped the losing streak. The other guys did an amazing job too throughout the season. They were really good. Bello, Giolito, right? They got the ball every five days, and they pitched well, but having that guy at the top of the rotation just sets the tempo for the rest of the week, and that's what he does.

Q. Some of your guys were saying within the clubhouse he's become a pretty big voice. Was that something you expected or when you heard --

ALEX CORA: He has such a big voice that he changed the -- we were traveling comfortable here, and he decided to go business casual. He sent the text, so he overruled the manager.

No, since Spring Training, I noticed it. I remember one day, you know, Weissert, he threw a bullpen, didn't like it. They were in the video room for, like, two hours afterwards. It's a guy that just got to the organization. He was trying to connect with players in the beginning, but right away he



knew what he wanted to do.

Similar to Alex. Hey, if we're going to play in October, we have to help, right? He's been great. His preparation impresses me. Just has a good outing. Next day, he's working on the next one. He struggled twice. The next day he was there getting ready for the next one. That's what the good ones do.

I know he's excited about tomorrow, and we are excited too. So it should be fun.

Q. This text to you was about the trip last night?

ALEX CORA: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, because we've been traveling comfortable for a while now because of the schedule and where we're going and all that. I think they were together in the clubhouse when Mark sent the text that it's going to be comfortable, and he told the guys, no, no, no, we're going to make it a business trip. Yeah, they dressed up yesterday.

Q. I think Bregman is about to play in his 100th postseason game of his career. You talked a lot about him all year long. Now this next stage, how important is that experience? What can he do to kind of pass along what he knows to the rest of the group?

ALEX CORA: He's been talking about the postseason for a while now to the guys. This is what he's done throughout his career, played meaningful games in October. Well, he's played meaningful games since 2017, right? He got called up in '16. They didn't make it. Then in '17... that's all he knows.

Excited for the kid. This is a stage that he's been here since '17 battling with them, and happy that he's playing third base for us.

Q. I was going to ask about Bregman, but Dan did such a good job, I guess I'll inquire about the roster and whether you guys have decided on anything there that had been up in the air?

ALEX CORA: Yeah, we haven't talked about it. Lucas,

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he's not going to be on the roster. He's been battling with his elbow the last few days, and today he went to see Dr. Dugas. Hopefully it's nothing major, but he won't be ready for this one.

Q. What does that mean for you guys in Game 3?

ALEX CORA: We'll go the first two games and then we'll decide. Obviously we got some kids over there that they have started lately, but first thing is first, crochet, Bello, and if we have to make a decision for Game 3, we'll go from there.

Q. Just to clarify on Giolito, where is he geographically, did you say?

ALEX CORA: Seeing Dr. Dugas.

Q. Alex, you shared your choice for left field with two lefties coming up. Would you like to further inform us about first, second, right, and DH?

ALEX CORA: I haven't talked to most of them about how we're going to do it, but it's probably going to be kind of like the similar lineup that we have. I just want to make sure J.D. knew. I think defense here in left field matters a lot, and he's done it before.

They're good against lefties and righties, Fried and Rondon. So go out there, battle, and hopefully we get the line moving, and we get them out of the game early.

Q. Alex, 17-8 in the postseason is your record. What makes you most comfortable in October when the games get tight and the stakes get raised?

ALEX CORA: Good players. Good players, they play well in October, especially -- I mean, most of them are one year, right, but I think we did a good job in '21, the Wild Card game, the Rays. Then we were up 2-1 against Houston and just didn't happen after that.

But, you know, good players, at the end they decide the games. We'll make decisions based on what we see as a group. We will be aggressive pitching-wise, and hopefully it works out again.

Q. Through all the years you've been involved with this rivalry, is there one memory that stands out more than any others or any --

ALEX CORA: Xander's homer in '21. That was the loudest it's been in Fenway Park. That was electric. Just that ball went out, and the place went nuts. That's the one that really gets my attention.

Q. Of the Yankees-Red Sox rivalry, in '18 much was made with Judge and the boombox and "New York, New York" and the media and the fans. Was it an issue, or did it come in up rallying the theme at all?

ALEX CORA: No, not at all.

Q. What do you make of the fan interplay between the two cities?

ALEX CORA: It is where we're at with social media and so many platforms and so many shows. That's what they get, and they enjoy it.

Q. Just the whole trajectory of Narváez this season... coming to Spring Training, probably the backup catcher, hadn't had much Major League experience. Just to see where he's gotten from then to now to be a cornerstone of the team going into the playoffs?

ALEX CORA: Just a good player. A guy that he understands who he is. Was really good for a while there offensively. Regressed a little bit. Connor started playing well, and we were able to take care of Carlos. I know he was 0 for whatever before the double or the homer, whatever, but he's been swinging the bat a lot better.

Defensively he's really good. What they do here, the Yankees, behind the plate is something that everybody knows. They're great at that, you know? They had some good defensive catchers throughout the years, and Carlos is a product of their system, right? It just happened that they had so many that they needed to trade somebody, and it was him. We got him.

Carlos, he's been able to slow it down too the last week. He was a little frustrated offensively. He was able to breathe after those two big swings, but behind the plate, you know, that's what we were looking for from him. Connor has been better too, but what he's done throughout the season is eye-opening.

Q. When it comes to Lucas, was this something he was fighting through or really...

ALEX CORA: I believe so. I believe he was fighting it. He was going to throw a bullpen during the week, and we had to cut it short. Was he in play for the last game? Probably he was pushing that way, but after Saturday, Sunday, he didn't look too good. Especially yesterday.

That's the reason we sent him to see the doctor. Like I said, hopefully it's nothing major.

Q. Is May here, or is he...

ALEX CORA: He's in Fort Myers.

Q. So he's not going at all be in this series?

ALEX CORA: No, no, no, no. I think for us there's no changes. You know, no De León, no Giolito.

Q. Who would be the candidates for that third game?

ALEX CORA: Like I say, we have some kids that started this week, and we'll see how the first two games go. Then we'll decide, if needed, for Game 3.

Q. Alex, as somebody who played, coached, managed this game, what about Judge's season impresses you the most?

ALEX CORA: That everybody thought he wasn't going to be able to do it because he didn't have Soto in the lineup, and he was the best hitter in the league.

I mean, think about batting average. I know people, you know, they don't value it, quote, unquote, but he hit, like, .330-whatever when guys are hitting .240, right? That's special.

Then he hits the ball out of the ballpark, and he's a good base runner. Obviously a little bit banged up defensively, but he's really good out there. Just impressive, you know?

Early in the season before we faced him, I was watching him, like, Man, this is tremendous. You know, this is eye-opening. Just because of the fact that Juan went to the Mets, and people are, like, Well, you know, they're going to pitch around him. He's not going to get pitches to hit, whatever. No, he's that good.

Q. Alex, you've seen the Yankees a lot this year obviously, including just a couple of weeks ago. That said, both teams also have had advanced scouts on each other. What can that find? How can that influence the postseason series?

ALEX CORA: It's funny that you said that. I don't know. I really don't know, because we -- I mean, we don't know who we're getting tomorrow, which lineup, right? They're probably going to match up with Garrett with the righties, but who is going to play where, right?

The last version of them at Fenway, it was very athletic-wise. They ran the bases well. They played good defense. They put some tough at-bats from the right-hand side. So we'll see.

Yeah, there's always something that might come up the last two weeks. You know, teams especially they were pushing to win the division, so they had to play all the way to yesterday, right? There was no hiding or avoid this, because we're making it to October, right?

Their goal was to win the division, so yeah, I mean, we had guys following them for a while. You can pick something here and there, but we played the whole season. We just played a few weeks ago, so we know each other.

Q. You've had a bunch of postseasons with the Red Sox. Do you remember an instance of something from the advanced scouts, Dana LeVangie, anyone, that really influenced the course of postseason?

ALEX CORA: There was the one that got my attention was in '07. Lackey pitched against us, right, in Anaheim? David took him deep, 3-2 breaking ball.

So T.C. is walking through it, this and that, this and that, sequences. When the meeting was over, he goes to David, By the way, 3-2 count against Lackey, you're going to get a breaking ball, and he did, and he crushed it. I was, like, Oh, shoot, that was cool. That's a cool moment, yeah.

Q. You guys are really good on the road the last month of the season. 14 wins out of the last 20. What do you attribute that success to away from home?

ALEX CORA: I don't know. I think we were up and down early in the season, and then at the end we needed to win games. The guys played well. That road trip, the last one going to Tampa against a tough pitching staff, we played well. We were really good offensively. We won the first two. Then we lost a third one.

Toronto, same thing, played well. We didn't win the third one, but we felt good about it. It was 4-2 going into Fenway.

Overall I think we have played good baseball. When we didn't play good baseball, we stayed playing .500 ball, which is what you want to do. There's nothing that... you know, we played in Sacramento. We played in Tampa. I don't know. There's nothing that gets my attention that we were better because of. We played better defense. We just played good baseball.

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