

AL Wild Card Series: Red Sox vs Yankees

Tuesday, September 30, 2025

New York, New York, USA

Yankee Stadium

Boston Red Sox

Alex Cora

Pregame Press Conference



It's not that intense during the regular season, but it has toned down throughout the years. We played in '18, it was intense. '21, that one is crazy. I bet this one will be the same way.

Q. Any update on Lucas Giolito?

ALEX CORA: He is on his way back. I am not 100% sure where we are at. From everything I am hearing, there's no structural damage -- which is great. There's a slight chance he can pitch. Rule him out probably.

I think from a personal standpoint, those are good news for him, right? Kind of like hard to have surgery going into the offseason, all of that. Hopefully that's right. I will talk with B and talk to him later, but that's the last I heard.

Q. Alex, you are obviously loaded up on right-handers against Fried. The fact that he had a little bit of reverse splits, the OPS is a little higher for lefties, does that mitigate the decision at all?

ALEX CORA: He had one bad game against lefties. It was against the Cardinals. They hit him hard. Besides that, he has been dominating against lefties and righties.

We've been doing this the whole season. We are not going to change. Playing J.D. makes sense because of left field and having Garrett on the mound. So we bet on the defense, and the last swing against his sinker in Tampa was a good one. Hopefully we can get one of those and see what happens.

Q. Alex, we know how much rivalries have changed over the years with the way guys move around, whatever it might be. Do you feel like this one is different in any sense? Is it as intense as it always was in your experience, or has it changed at all?

ALEX CORA: I think it is intense in October during the regular season. There's others that are more intense. The one in the West Coast is stupid, you know, the Padres and the Dodgers. That's intense from the get-go.

Q. This team in particular, what do you like about it as far as a postseason gear, you talked about getting into that next level, about this particular group?

ALEX CORA: Our group, I think when we are going well offensively, we can put pressure on the opposition. We are using the whole field. We run the bases well. We have been able to pitch well this season.

But I think offensively, that is kind of like our game. We don't rely on the home run. You know, it has changed throughout the season, right? Casas is out for the season. Raffy traded. Romano, hurt. It's a different unit than a month ago or two months ago.

We have to hit the ball, take our walks. When we do that, we are good. We are in a good place offensively. We did it against Tampa. Toronto was good. At home we finished the job. It was a good weekend.

Q. There have been times when the Yankees have had a slump and people said Aaron is not tough on the team publicly. You've probably heard that too. When you manage a team like the Yankees or Red Sox, how much of it is trying to control the message of the day and keep consistent with that?

ALEX CORA: In the markets that we play, that's very important. Cancel the noise, stay the course, one pitch at a time. That's what we try. Is it easy? It is not easy. But you know, you try to do it.

Q. Are there times you are more angry than you let on about how things are going?

ALEX CORA: Especially lately.

(Laughter.)

Q. Alex, how will familiarity help this group playing in



a spot they've been before against a team they are used to for a group that is mostly unfamiliar in the postseason?

ALEX CORA: That helps. They get the last at-bat. They earned that right. Come here, we love the clubhouse. Louie is amazing. Yelly (phonetic) is the best cook in the league.

There's a lot of good things that they do here to accommodate the visiting team. We got our families here. We know it's going to be tough. But it is a great place. I was telling earlier to the ESPN guys, it is not that I am complacent, but I am happy to be here.

It's a great baseball environment. We have lived it had in the past. We have had good seasons, bad seasons, good playoffs. But today is different, right? It starts with Fried throwing that first pitch to Ref.

From my perspective in the baseball side of it, I love this game. I am blessed to do this for a living. Should be a fun series.

Q. You mentioned tune out the noise. Do you read the stories, listen to the radio, watch TV?

ALEX CORA: Nah. I have no idea what is going on out there.

Q. And do you embrace the challenge of stacking a lineup with right-handers and playing out in your mind all --

ALEX CORA: We have been doing this since '18. A lot of people think that that team was nine guys and that's it. We platoon behind the plate. We platoon at first. We platoon at second. We platoon at third. Shortstop plays every day. Left field plays every day. Outfield plays every day. We mix and match.

Q. Do you embrace the challenge?

ALEX CORA: I would love to have nine horses and roll with them. That's not the case. We have to manage the team. Like I said before, we have a good team. We will mix and match. We will be doing the things we have been doing throughout the season. Let's see where we are at the end of the night.

Q. Alex, any update on Roman? We have talked about power walking and bike riding.

ALEX CORA: I haven't talked to Bregman about him. Marcelo is doing well. Roman is feeling better about no

baseball activities.

Q. With the two really good lefties on the mound, a lot of unproven playoff bats in both lineups. With that in mind, how much comfort you take in knowing Bregman is going to be out there for you, knowing his playoff track record and what he has done for you guys?

ALEX CORA: That's the reason we wanted him. That's the reason he picked us. And today is his 100th game in October, or in the playoffs. A great career. He has been a game-changer in the postseason, and we expect the same thing.

Q. You know, we hear a lot especially with Alex about his leadership qualities. What does that actually mean from your perspective? How does that manifest in areas we don't get to see?

ALEX CORA: Like I told everybody, well, our beat writers in February, I love the game. I talk the game. I live the game. That's times ten. Like he beats me by a lot. He is very intense. He is going to question -- he is going to ask questions about positioning, game planning, offensive approach.

It is nonstop, man. It is actually refreshing. It is fun. I love it. I don't mind that. He will text you out of nowhere: Hey, what do you got on this?

I'm like, What are you talking about?

This game -- I'm like, I am not watching this game. I got my family.

He's locked in. He knows everything that is going on. He embraces this part of the season. It is the reality of it. He has been talking about it for a while. But just kind of like baseball when we were kids, right? We enjoyed it. That's all we talk about, and that's all we do. That's how he is. He loves his family first and then baseball, which is awesome.

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