

AL Wild Card Series: Red Sox vs Yankees

Wednesday, October 1, 2025

New York, New York, USA

Yankee Stadium

New York Yankees

Aaron Boone

Postgame Press Conference

Yankees - 4, Red Sox - 3

Q. Aaron, another one down to the wire here. How would you describe the intensity tonight as you are essentially hanging on every pitch?

AARON BOONE: What a game. I mean, it has been two great games. These first two. You know, a lot of big plays on both sides. You know, we turned -- I thought our defense tonight was really, really good. Turned a couple big-time double plays, did some good things on the bases, a homer by Benny to get us rolling.

And then the bullpen closing it down after Rodo gave us enough there, even though he struggled a little bit in the seventh to get us through 6, set us up and able to hang on.

What a game.

Q. What did you think of the way Jazz came out today? He had that play in the 7th, making sure a run didn't score there, and then the seven-pitch walk there in the bottom of the 8th?

AARON BOONE: The double play they turned on Bregman with his left to Volpe was special. Obviously to save a run with the infield hit by Yoshida was excellent, and a really good, patient at-bat, long at-bat where he was able to -- he didn't get the jump to be able to steal a base there, but, you know, obviously moving on the pitch gave him a little bit of head start there. And, you know, his speed comes into play big time there.

Obviously, an exciting big play.

Q. What do you think got Williams back to being Devin Williams over the past weeks and months?

AARON BOONE: It was never that far off, frankly. The



stuff was never not there. You know, he had a couple of loud outings and where the ball didn't really bounce his way. A couple of those outings where it blew up on him, it's a squibber, it's this, before it got away.

He was never that far off at any point when he was struggling. And then I think he just started to stack outings. First time in the middle of the season before he hit a rough patch again, and then now the final month plus, he has just stacked a lot of good outings and just pitching with a lot of confidence, but getting in the zone more and having a presence with both pitches. So he is not real predictable because he's using his fastball enough, and obviously the changeup.

Q. Because the stuff has pretty much always been there, do you think it is the confidence and conviction and willingness to --

AARON BOONE: Yeah, I think there's another level of that when he has been going good. I know him good and I can get after it in the zone. He has been more consistent in his execution.

Q. The mound visit with Cruz, what was said and what convinced you to keep him in to get that last out in the 7th?

AARON BOONE: I didn't go out.

Q. What convinced you to stick with him, though?

AARON BOONE: Just felt like he had it under control. I was giving him one more hitter there. Felt like with Story, you know, was okay, and then I had Devin going in case we did get to Bregman there.

But felt like his stuff was good, knew he wanted it and felt like he could finish it off. Story put a good swing on it. We were fortunate there. Long fly ball. Felt good about him being in there.

Q. Alex said he is going to start Early tomorrow for sure. Has Rice done enough to start for you, and is Jazz definitely starting tomorrow?



AARON BOONE: Yeah, Jazz will be playing. I haven't decided on catcher, first base, all that. Sit on that. Early is pretty neutral. A little different than the first guy we face. We will sit and talk about it, and I will make that decision tonight.

Q. How tough is Rice -- you have had a policy of using Goldschmidt against lefties. How tough has Rice made it for you to do what has been an easy decision for you all year?

AARON BOONE: Benny is playing, swinging the bat so well, especially down the stretch. He makes it tough. You know, again, it's not just it's a lefty. It's what lefty? Is that guy going to be out there for six or seven innings? I want to leverage a spot for whoever my bench guys are to have a good matchup, not three bad matchups that I can guarantee. All of these things factor into it.

Q. After everything that transpired last night with Jazz, did you talk to him last night or today to make sure his mind was good coming into tonight's game?

AARON BOONE: Jazz and I are good. No concerns that he was going to go out there and get it done.

Q. The Yoshida single, did you think that Jazz had any shot off the bat there?

AARON BOONE: Yeah, I did. Obviously his range is pretty special. I got to look back at it, but I don't know how clean he got it, like catch, boom, pop it.

But once he got to it, initially I thought he was going to have a shot. Yoshida got after it good and went head first in there to beat it. But initially I thought he was going to have a shot if he got to it.

Q. Aaron, along the same lines with Jazz, we asked you before the game about the stuff that went on, and you said regardless you expected him to play his butt tonight off for you. What you have seen of him, is it just that competitive part to him that no matter what else is going on when he is on the field, that he can do so many things to help you guys win?

AARON BOONE: Yeah. He loves to play. He feels a responsibility to us, his teammates. And, you know, he and I have always been good. Despite what you may think happened yesterday, like, yeah, he's a gamer, and, you know, he likes the stage.

Q. Cruz is always pretty animated, but tonight pretty next level coming off. How much --

AARON BOONE: Yeah, I almost got out of his way.

(Laughter.)

Q. How much does that jolt the team?

AARON BOONE: For those of you that got to be around Fernando enough this year and got to know him, he is just an incredible human being. From day one, I spoke to him on the phone this winter, I can't tell you how excited he is to put this uniform on every single day and what a privilege it is for him.

He exudes that all of the time. There's a passion that he does his job with, and it spilled over a little bit tonight. I am glad it was the end of his evening at that point.

Q. Obviously, Aaron, any player taken out of the lineup is going to be motivated by that to some degree. Did you sense that Jazz played with a sense of defiance or maybe a little anger? And is that a good thing?

AARON BOONE: It could be. No. I didn't sense that. I didn't sense there was an extra chip, like I don't think it was anything like that. If there was yeah, I think it can be a good thing for a certain person. But I didn't sense that with Jazz today.

Q. Aaron, these first two games have been pretty good. Is it apropos that this little series will get a Game 3 to decide it all?

AARON BOONE: Yeah, I suppose. You know, look, it has been two great games. I think both sides have played really well. Been a lot of impactful plays, whether it is on the bases, in the field. So look forward to tomorrow and, you know, try and move on.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, Aaron.

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