

# NL Wild Card Series: Braves vs Padres

Wednesday, October 2, 2024  
San Diego, California, USA  
Petco Park

## San Diego Padres Manager Mike Shildt Postgame Press Conference

Padres - 5, Braves - 4

### **Q. Can you sum up how you're feeling now and what it feels like to take this first step, really?**

MIKE SHILDT: Yeah, you can't move on unless you get through this one. A good series. Short and sweet. Obviously feel good about it.

We piggybacked off of King's seven innings yesterday, was really big because it set us up for today with our bullpen. Fortunately we had the lead. I'm sure we'll get to that in a moment.

But of course Joe, even in the fourth, two outs in the fourth was a challenge. But winners find the solutions and the bullpen was rested and did their part to bring it home. Very satisfying win. I'm looking forward to moving forward to LA.

### **Q. Any update on Joe?**

MIKE SHILDT: Nothing necessarily. Preliminary, I'd be responsible to get too deep into this. He said he would do everything he can, which I wouldn't put anything past Joe Musgrove to come back.

But something didn't feel right in his elbow. Structurally they feel like he's okay but we'll get more evaluation as we go.

### **Q. Do they think it's the same ailment as earlier?**

MIKE SHILDT: In the same area, but I haven't got the diagnosis yet.

### **Q. The way the first inning went, for you to respond the way you did with that six straight hits, I think it was, in the second, all with two outs, what did you make of the way your team responded right away?**



MIKE SHILDT: You know what? We had them on the ropes early. They punched first and we looked to punch back. Bases loaded, give Fried credit. He didn't give in and made some tough pitches and got the meat of our order retired.

And we go back out, like you said, two outs, nobody on. We're really good at that. It's a big part of our identity with our club, our offense, with the mantra of we're going to compete regardless of circumstances, nobody on, we'll figure it out get it going.

The one thing that I appreciate that needs to get out there is Manny came in, he didn't have the at-bat he wanted to in the first. And he came in and immediately was, get me back up there, get me back up there, get me back up there.

It means a lot to the group. He kept saying it. He's six guys away, seven guys away, I haven't looked at it. And sure enough, he shows up with two outs and the bases loaded again and doubles down the line. That's leadership on a lot of levels. Of course Jackson with the big blow to get it to five.

### **Q. There's a lot of reasons this team has guys that can succeed in October, but we talked about Higashioka being stoic and his demeanor and his calm presence, how big is that at the plate and also what he's done with the pitching staff?**

MIKE SHILDT: He did a good job with the staff. I thought he navigated the staff very well tonight.

The postseason is about being able to just -- and I'm pleased with the way our guys are going about this postseason. You're just playing baseball, man. They're not making it any bigger than it is. They're just going out and playing and balling out.

And Higgy is part of that. He's an even-keeled guy, does what the game calls for and takes a good at-bat, does what he needs to do behind the plate and stays even keel and contributes when he's called upon.



**Q. Now you've got the Dodgers. Talk about the last couple of series have been really competitive, good baseball. What do you need to do well to advance?**

MIKE SHILDT: We're going to play our game. It's about what we do. Clearly going to respect them; they've got a really nice club. We fought tooth and nail to get to the end of the season, for the division.

But now we're in the part of the season where winner moves on and we wouldn't want it any other way. It's going to be a wonderful series. We're super excited about it. Can't wait.

Wished we played tomorrow. But we'll be ready to show up get after it Saturday. It's going to be two wonderful venues and high-stakes baseball, and that's what we play for.

**Q. The way you guys have been able to bounce back from whatever has come your way this season, how key could that be here and the fact you've built as much pitching depth as you have? I know you don't know the specifics of what's going to happen, but having guys like Darvish and Perez available?**

MIKE SHILDT: It's important. Listen, pitching is going to win this time of year. Clearly we like to hope to get Joe back. We'll evaluate that.

But to your point, we've got pitching depth. We've got Cease ready to go and Darvish right there.

And Martin's done nothing but good stuff for us and by the time rolls around King will be ready again. We've got pitching depth in the bullpen, obviously it was on display tonight and did their part today.

**Q. Is the plan Cease on Game 1?**

MIKE SHILDT: We'll sit down. We'll have our Is dotted and Ts crossed, but, yeah, probably safe for that.

Also, the Braves, congratulations to them. What a season. A lot of respect for the way they go about things. It's a first-class organization. They got dealt a tough hand. A lot of respect for that organization and the Braves.

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