

NL Division Series:

Mets vs Phillies

Saturday, October 5, 2024
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA
Citizens Bank Park

New York Mets

Brandon Nimmo

Mark Vientos

Postgame 1 Press Conference

Mets - 6, Phillies - 2

Q. Maybe it's crazy to think this, but the fact that you were hanging with Wheeler and you guys were just down 1-0, inning after inning after inning, did you feel like it was not maybe playing into your hands, but at least it kept you guys going thinking you could get to the bullpen?

BRANDON NIMMO: Yeah, for sure. I mean, our bullpen, I don't know if they've gotten enough credit over the last few games. We wouldn't be in that situation if, you know, big old Peterson doesn't come in, do his thing. Unbelievable, he just closed the game in Milwaukee and now he's coming in to throw multiple innings for us. Something he's never been asked to do. He just comes in and does it perfectly.

And then our whole bullpen, Reed, Stanek, Maton, you know, all those guys, they were doing amazing and gave us a shot. So we're not even in that position if our bullpen doesn't do what they do and keep that at 1-0.

It helped us to be able to still think small, like we don't have to hit home runs, we don't have to do anything like that, we just need to keep wearing on Wheeler. He's an unbelievable pitcher, we all know that. He's a true ace in this game. When he's locating and doing what he was doing tonight, and adding on top the shadows in the first couple of innings, it's unbelievable. He's really, you know, a true ace in our game.

For us to be able to get to him, at least not let him throw a complete game, that's kind of a win in that situation, and to be able to get to the bullpen and see what happens. These guys did an amazing job of that.

Q. Was that eighth inning rally, you've done it a



number of times, is that a product of the contagious confidence that you guys have had for a while now, you think?

MARK VIENTOS: No, for sure, I feel like one of the things we've talked about is just finishing the game all the way to the 9th inning. And the game is never over, like I said, until the 9th. We've kind of been running with that mentality I feel like the past week in Atlanta. Then the last game in Milwaukee we kind of showed that and it's giving us more confidence for that.

BRANDON NIMMO: I think going into this, we try and have a plan going up there, and then just go take your shots. That's kind of been one of our things that we've talked about. It's not going to always work. This is baseball, you know, three out of ten times you're a Hall of Famer. But, over the long run and you keep doing that time and time again, it should work out. And we have enough good hitters that if we all come up with plans and we all take our shots, that we like our chances of breaking through.

So I think Atlanta, Milwaukee, very recent examples that you have in the back of your head to give you confidence that you're never out of it.

Q. You mentioned thinking small. And especially that 8th inning, it's kind of a continuation of what we've seen. You had the opposite field hit, J.D. going up the middle, a couple of sac flies. As a group has your mentality, I don't know if shifting is the right word, but have you all bought in more down the stretch to really passing the baton and keep the line moving that way?

BRANDON NIMMO: Yeah, for sure. I think doing whatever is asked of you by the game at that point. And so, you know, if that's just a sac fly, if that's putting the ball in play, if that's getting a guy over, whatever it is. And all these guys are believing in going up there again with a plan, understanding what the baseball situation is, and not trying to do too much. Now, sometimes that turns out to be a home run or a big double or something like that. Just like in Vientos' case, he puts the barrel on the ball and gets rewarded.



But in playoffs, it's all about winning, and honestly, I don't know about Mark, I feel like we've been playing playoff baseball for three or four weeks now. Our season has depended on it. We've been doing that for a while now, and just trying to focus on whatever gets the job done and whatever gets us a W at the end of the day.

When you're only down one run, you're able to think small and try to push that one run across, and then just keep doing it. I thought what we did, you could put on a highlight reel, this is just good baseball without hitting a home run. Very, very proud of the guys for that.

Q. It seemed like Wheeler's plan involved a lot of trying to get you guys to chase. In the fourth inning both of you reached in different ways off of pitches that were outside the zone, whether it was the single on the pitch off the plate, or Brandon, you drawing a walk. What's the key to staying disciplined and getting what you can out of a pitcher who's kind of teasing you like that?

MARK VIENTOS: My approach today with Wheeler was just trying to be as short as possible. It was tough to see with the shadows. And like we've been talking about how great of a pitcher he is, I was just trying to put barrel to ball, see what happens. And luckily I got a single out of it and it worked out.

Like we've been saying, he's a great pitcher. And you had those shadows that weren't fun. It was very tough.

BRANDON NIMMO: Yeah, I think, you know, like he said, you're not trying to do too much with Wheeler, especially when he's locating like that. That's what separates kind of aces and the others is that stuff on top of the location and their ability to make you chase. So honestly, you're just trying to stay in the zone, and that's what separates great hitters as well is being able to stay in the zone and being able to do damage when they do come in there, but being able to take your walks if that's what the game asks of you right then.

So I think that's kind of what helped us to be able to finally get him out of the game. But, again, like we said, when he's hitting his spots, it's really tough up there.

Q. How difficult was it to pick up the ball in the early innings with the shadows? Mark, you just mentioned it, but what specifically were you seeing and dealing with out there?

MARK VIENTOS: I don't know if I was seeing much. It was hard to see the baseball, for sure. But both teams

were dealing with it and it's not something that we're going to be, man, we can't see, toss our bats to the side. It's just something we have to deal with. Both teams are dealing with it.

Yeah, it was really hard to see.

BRANDON NIMMO: Yeah, I mean, first at-bat obviously you saw, I was trying to figure out sunglasses or no sunglasses, and neither one helped. Couldn't see it out of his hand and then once he did pick it up, it was just a black ball and I couldn't see any laces, I couldn't see anything. So you literally are just swinging at a black ball. You're hoping it's in the middle of the plate when you see it. And then like that last one just disappeared.

It was tough, but like he said, both teams have to deal with it and so it's part of the game.

Q. The Phillies have pitched to you particularly tough in September. I'm wondering how much that impacted your game plan, your approach, and also the discipline you showed late in the game today.

MARK VIENTOS: I feel like I have been noticing, I mean, a different approach towards me this last month, September or early October. But my approach lately, especially these meaningful games we're trying to win, that's the only thing that's in my head is just what can I do to get on base. What can I do to move a run over.

In that situation in the 8th inning, man on first and second, I was just trying to hit a pop fly, and move the runner second, third, and have Nimmo do his thing. I'm just trying to be as simple as possible, and just like we keep saying, pass the baton.

Q. Brandon, most of your hits in the postseason have occurred in the 8th and the 9th innings. What do you make of that?

BRANDON NIMMO: I suppose it's true. I don't know. You never know when they're going to come. You try to make plans and you try and take your shots, like I've been saying, and you just never know when they're going to be over the middle of the plate and it's going to work. But you just keep taking your shot just in case.

So, you know, I guess -- I don't know. I guess I've just been fortunate to have some base hits later in the game. It's not like I'm doing anything different. I'm still coming up with a plan. It's still all the same process, just happens to be a nice coincidence.

Q. Brandon, in a short five-game series, can you



discuss the importance of a Game 1 win.

BRANDON NIMMO: For sure. Philadelphia is an unbelievable team. And we played very, very tough games throughout the regular season, dogfight games. So being able to get the first one is really important, you know, especially for us heading back home with those two, you know, later this week on Tuesday and Wednesday. I think it's very important. It puts pressure on the other side right away.

But also you understand that it's a long series -- again, it's a longer series than we have been playing. In Atlanta it was like a two-game series for our lives, and in Milwaukee it was three. So you still go into it understanding you've got to win three games, and it doesn't matter how you get there, just as long as you get there.

And so definitely winning Game 1 is important. It puts pressure on the other team. But there's a lot of professionals here. That side has very mature players that have been here and done this before. So they understand that losing Game 1 does not put them down and out. And they will come ready to go tomorrow, there is no question about that.

Q. Do you believe in any or all of these things: Magic, mojo, momentum?

BRANDON NIMMO: What do you think?

MARK VIENTOS: No. I believe in us working hard and the results will happen after.

BRANDON NIMMO: Yeah, I believe in momentum. I do believe in momentum. And I believe that, you know, we have confidence right now. We have recent examples of coming back. I believe in the hard work that we've done and I believe in the preparation that these guys do each and every day.

But momentum is a big thing. And having confidence is a big thing. And the guys are showing a lot of that right now.

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