

# NL Division Series:

## Mets vs Phillies

Tuesday, October 8, 2024

New York, New York, USA

Citi Field

### Philadelphia Phillies

## Manager Rob Thomson

Pregame 3 Press Conference



**Q. Was it a difficult decision not to put Stott in there today?**

ROB THOMSON: Yeah, it was. He's had some numbers against Manaea. Manaea has been really tough against righties. He's been tough against everybody, he's really throwing the ball well. But Sosa is 4-8 with a homer. Just outweigh it a little bit. But it was tough.

**Q. Being that it was tough, what was that conversation like with Stott? At the same time he's probably going to come in in a big point at some point tonight, possibility?**

ROB THOMSON: Yeah, I think everybody in that clubhouse is all in. So the conversation is not that difficult. They're backing each other, and we're here to win, whatever it takes.

**Q. What are you hoping to see out of Bohm today?**

ROB THOMSON: Get good pitches to hit, use the field. If he does that, he's usually pretty good.

**Q. There's a school of thought that when relievers don't pitch for a while it takes them a while to get their mojo, mechanics or whatever back. Are you part of that school? Will you change your approach with your bullpen tonight?**

ROB THOMSON: I don't think we'll change our approach. But in that school, I think everybody is a little bit, it's kind of a personalized thing as far as having time off. Some guys, they get rusty quick; other guys, it doesn't bother them. Mariano Rivera never wanted to pitch unless it was a save situation, and he didn't care whether it was seven or eight days without pitching, he felt fine. But I think for the most part guys need consistent work.

**Q. Are the scouting and analytics you get for these postseason series any different than the regular season?**

ROB THOMSON: No, they're the same.

**Q. Before each game how long does it take you to go through them and prep?**

ROB THOMSON: I meet with the pitching coaches an hour before game time every day; the pitching coaches, bullpen coach, Dusty Wathan, and Mike Calitri, our bench coach. We have a meeting, it probably takes 20 minutes, to look at, okay, who's down, who's up, who needs to pitch, what areas of the lineup are we looking at. What area of the game are we looking at. So probably about 20 minutes.

**Q. Your team and your ballpark and your fans have gotten a lot of attention over the past several postseasons about the environment there, some of the great games you've played at home. Maybe lost in that a little bit is how well you've played on the road in some huge spots in the postseason. What are the keys to handling environments like you're going to face today? Do you think your environment at home has helped you when you go on the road and face similar thing?**

ROB THOMSON: Maybe a little bit. I think it's more about the experience of the players, how they can slow the game down and slow their heartbeat down. But I'm sure we're going to hear it tonight. So they'll be ready for it.

**Q. What is it about Ranger Suarez specifically that gives you confidence that he can bounce back?**

ROB THOMSON: The game he pitched, the intrasquad game, he was really good for two innings. The velocity was back up. The command was really good. I haven't seen the command like that since he's come back from the injury. I know it's just an intrasquad game.

Plus, the fact that I think his calmness helps him out a great deal, and that's what gives me confidence, really.



**Q. You talked about Ranger, he'll go up against Jose Quintana, and he's spoken here before about that playoff start that he had against you two years ago. What do you remember about that start, just what you might be going up against?**

ROB THOMSON: If I recall correctly, I thought he was really good. And I think we -- was that the game that Harper hit the home run or was that Game 1 of that series? Game 1 of that series. Yeah. We came back late and won the game. Yeah, he pitched very well.

**Q. What are some of the challenges going up against him?**

ROB THOMSON: Well, he's a command guy, too. And he can really keep you off balance. He'll add, he'll subtract, he'll pitch north and south and east and west. He can really pitch.

**Q. You mentioned after Sunday's game the Mets' success against the bullpen. Have you looked back at those first two games and seen maybe why the relievers have gotten up on guys, 0-2, 1-2 and the Mets have come back to get hits and you guys haven't been able to put the Mets hitters away in those spots?**

ROB THOMSON: Yeah, their hitters are fighting hard. They're putting good at-bats against us. I think they're waiting for a miss on our part. And unfortunately, we haven't executed on some pitches and they've taken advantage of it.

**Q. You've been around Aaron Nola pretty much almost his whole career. What do you like about him in this spot knowing how big this Game 3 in a five-game series generally is, especially on the road?**

ROB THOMSON: Yeah, he's a guy -- and I've said it many times -- it doesn't matter whether it's a Spring Training game, regular season game, playoff game, a bullpen midweek in June, he's the same guy, really. And he's so consistent with his process and his preparation that he really just puts his body on autopilot and goes up there and pitches. He's got such great poise. Because the process is consistent, he doesn't really think about it, he just goes out and pitches. So the moment never gets to him.

**Q. Austin called the at-bat the other night a big step for him, to get back. In the context of what he's gone through, how big was it for you to see that and what was that conversation like to get him back into the starting lineup?**

ROB THOMSON: Well, I told him at the start of the series that he's going to start against left-hand pitching. But it was good to get him an at-bat, get him in that environment. I think that it probably speeds up on a guy the first time you get an at-bat in that environment. Now as he's had it, I think it will relax him moving forward.

I'm looking forward to seeing what he does tonight.

**Q. The Mets have followed a similar path as you did in 2022. Do you see similarities between the Mets and you guys maybe two years ago in 2022?**

ROB THOMSON: Yeah, I think it's the momentum part of it. It is certainly that. But they've got really good starting pitching, which we had. They've got a really hungry group, which you can see later in games where they don't quit. I think that's very similar to what we had the last couple of years, especially in '22.

And then coming home to this environment was exactly the same. So like I said before, I think this place is going to be jumping tonight, and our guys need to be ready for it.

**Q. Going back to the bullpen, you talk about how you guys were waiting for a miss. Your bullpen likes to attack the strike zone, that's how they get ahead. Is it almost a situation where you maybe need to get a little bit away from attacking at that point?**

ROB THOMSON: Sure.

**Q. Maybe throw a ball here and there.**

ROB THOMSON: Especially 0-2, 1-2, you want to get chase. You give the illusion the pitch is in the zone and then it leaves the zone. That's what you want to have.

But I think they are fighting hard and they're following some of those pitches off until we make a mistake. The pitch that starts out of the zone and ends up in the zone, they do some damage on it.

So we have some corrections to make, but they will, they'll adjust.

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