

# NL Division Series:

## Mets vs Phillies

Wednesday, October 9, 2024

New York, New York, USA

Citi Field

### New York Mets

## Manager Carlos Mendoza

Pregame 4 Press Conference

**Q. Alonso is obviously going the opposite way with his power lately. Where do you see the differences in his swing and the types of pitches he's hitting than from the regular season?**

CARLOS MENDOZA: I think it's the timing, that's where it starts. When he's on time, it allows him to make some better swing decisions. We saw yesterday not only in that homer but the 3-2 walk against Nola, that was a huge at-bat.

That tells you when he's on time it allows him, like I said, to make better swing decisions, and it's going to allow him to get the barrel on the ball. When he does that, we know he's one of the best power hitters in the game. It doesn't matter what they pitch him because he's got that ability.

Yesterday he took that ball and went the other way, and like I said, out of the bat, that ball was gone. He's a dangerous hitter, but it starts with his timing.

**Q. What has impressed you the most about Tyrone Taylor?**

CARLOS MENDOZA: The steadiness. He's a professional, he's a ballplayer. It doesn't matter if he's not in the lineup for ten days or if he's playing every day, which is the case as of late.

But elite defender. Not only in center but anywhere you put him; right, left. And then elite baserunner. He's the type of player that makes winning plays and helps you win a baseball game. We saw it yesterday, that ball off the wall and throws a strike to second base.

Yeah, I think he's a professional. He's always ready. He knows his role. His personality is off the chart. He's one of those guys that keeps those guys loose in there, too. He's a good player.



**Q. This would be the first time the Mets are able to clinch a playoff series at Citi Field since they opened in 2009. What would it mean to you to be the manager to get them there?**

CARLOS MENDOZA: It means a lot to all of us that we have this opportunity. But we're facing a really good team. We've got to go out there, execute, and play well. Hopefully that's the case.

For me as a manager, I've got to give credit to the players, I've got to give credit to the coaches, to the training staff, everyone in here. Like I said, it's not about me. I have really good people here. This is a product of the organization doing things the right way and having quality people here in the building. Credit to all of them.

**Q. Yesterday Lindor said that he's not really thinking about his back. What have you seen from him and how much of a sigh of relief have you had that he's held up playing every day?**

CARLOS MENDOZA: I feel the same. I don't have any concerns or anything like that. He's still going to feel it at times, but that's not going to prevent him from being the type of player he is.

I will continue to check with him but we feel really good. The training staff feels really good about where he's at physically. And obviously Francisco, he's done an unbelievable job to get to this point. It wasn't easy for him at the beginning when he was feeling it big time. Credit to him. Credit to the training staff. It's a good feeling when you know you have a healthy Francisco Lindor.

**Q. How much did the arrival of Vientos and Iglesias contribute or alter or slightly modify the personality of the team?**

CARLOS MENDOZA: Yeah, huge impact on our team. Vientos, after what he went through early in the year, came back, went back down, and then finally just ran away with the position. The impact, this is a guy that not only hit for average, hit for power, his ability to make adjustments.



The way he's playing defense at third base.

And then Iglesias, a ballplayer. The numbers speak for itself, but what he brings not only on the field but off the field, keeps it loose, keeps pushing guys. The way he sees the game, he's unbelievable. And just the communication between those guys. And like you said, those two, since they joined this team, they've been huge for us.

**Q. What did they effect in the clubhouse? How did the clubhouse change at all?**

CARLOS MENDOZA: Yeah, I think they both bring different perspectives. Iglesias is a guy that's been in this game for a long time, through ups and downs. Pretty good career, but he was out of baseball. And finally gets another opportunity and he decides to go to Triple-A. You've got to give him credit. He didn't have to do that. After ten years in the Big Leagues and we're asking him to go to the minors. He did it.

Then I think it was a different way for him to put everything in perspective, like I said, and don't take anything for granted. Every day at the Big League level is a special day. Every time you get an opportunity to put on a Big League uniform is a privilege. He's brought that to the table here, like don't take anything for granted.

Then Vientos, he's a kid that had to work to get this opportunity. He earned it. And I'm just proud of both guys.

**Q. We ask the players a lot about playoff pressure and performing under that. I'm wondering how it manifests for you. This is your first playoff as a manager. Do you feel pressure with the decision-making process? Do you feel the adrenaline same as the players do almost just because of the stakes of what's riding on your decisions now?**

CARLOS MENDOZA: I'm prepared. Coaches are prepared. Players are prepared. When you prepare, there's a good feeling. Then you've got to go out there and just trust your process, trust your instincts, and then enjoy. You have to embrace it.

I'm having a really good time. When you're prepared, it's easier to slow things down. Because the game will get fast and you can get caught up on the crowd and everything that goes on in the game. As long as you're prepared, you feel good going into it.

So for me it's a privilege that I get an opportunity to manage a team in a playoff game and manage the New York Mets, manage the quality people we have in here. I'm

going to go back to what I was saying about Iglesias. It's a privilege that you get to put a Big League uniform, as a manager in my case, and no better way to do it than for the New York Mets.

**Q. All these little rituals that the team has sort of developed, the starting pitchers together, and OMG sign, the playoff pumpkins, some of the good luck charms, I want to ask you a couple of things about all that. No. 1, have you ever been around a team with so many of those? No. 2, you've talked about how you love seeing the guys having fun and the camaraderie that develops. But how does that translate to what's really important on the field, those kind of things, the group getting together for things like that?**

CARLOS MENDOZA: I think it's hard to explain. We got a lot going on. But we've got to keep the main thing the main thing, which is you got to go out there and play baseball. You've got to go out there and execute. You've got to prepare. If they continue to find ways to keep it loose, to keep it fun in the locker room, I'm all for it.

But, again, you have to prepare. You have to get ready. You have to do your homework, and then just put everything else aside. When it's time to do that, we'll do that. But when it's time to go out there and take care of business, we've done that. The expectations are that we will continue to do so.

It's fun to be a part of it. But again, our main goal and our main job is to go out there and execute and get the job done.

**Q. In your introductory press conference back in November, most of the questions were about first-year manager, New York, no experience. There hasn't been a huge track record of guys making playoffs. This year if you include Murph with San Diego, there's four guys. But you pointed to your time with the Yankees, the six years being in this market that you were ready and prepared. What was it that you learned there that got you to this point and on top of that, seeing Aaron Judge go through his walk year as a free agent, how were you able to take some of those points during the season and help Pete Alonso through his journey this year?**

CARLOS MENDOZA: Yeah, I think the biggest thing that I learned was knowing how to navigate those tough times, especially in a market like this, when it's going to get loud, there's going to be a lot of noise, and you have to protect your house. You can't get caught up in -- and that's what makes this city such a special city. You have to embrace it. You have to enjoy it.

But I think that was one of the biggest things, going through the ups and downs, and watching a lot of the guys there, how they handle it kind of helped me prepare. Six years there at the Big League level, but then I'm going to go back to the Minor Leagues when I was with them, and I think every step along the way helped me prepare to be in this position.

There was my playing career, especially towards the end of my career, where I was pretty much a coach, and I was just observing and asking questions. I feel like I was preparing for this position for a long time.

Grateful for the opportunity, obviously. But, yeah, I think every year, every situation is unique, and here we are. I knew I was ready. I'm not going to be perfect. I still have a long ways to go, I will continue to learn. And that's what makes this such a beautiful opportunity for all of us, and especially for me.

Then watching Judge and how every individual is different, you know? But there's a reason why they are some of the best players in the League. With Judge and Pete Alonso, in this case we're talking about them, and they're really good at what they do. They're really good. They believe in themselves. And they don't let noise affect who they are as a person and as a player.

It's been a privilege to watch those two, especially here in New York, doing it. And looking forward to continue to watch Pete doing his thing for a few weeks here and see what happens.

**Q. When you were on the other side of town you obviously learned quite a bit about that fan base and that culture. It's safe to say it's been decidedly different here over the last 35 years or so. What have you absorbed or learned or what has surprised you the most about the Mets fan, the culture, the entirety of the experience of being a Met, and how could you possibly compare it?**

CARLOS MENDOZA: I love it. They're intense. They live and die on every pitch, every play, every game. I think they feel it as much as we do, and they want it as much as we want it. It's a privilege, man.

When you watch this building the way it was not only last night but for the past month or so, it comes from their heart, you know. It feels like it's a family, not only inside the building but outside. Like the way Francisco Lindor calls them, Mets Nation. They're amazing.

It is a privilege, man, to be able to not only manage this

team but connect with the fan base. It's hard for me to describe. I couldn't ask for a better fan base, to be honest with you.

**Q. You talk about being prepared. Just when are you finding the time to do it? Has it involved staying at the ballpark later in the playoffs or showing up earlier?**

CARLOS MENDOZA: You create a routine. You do it as soon as the game's over, you start preparing and start making out your lineup and checking with trainers and things like that. You go home and maybe a little bit more film. Then you wake up the next morning and you continue to just kind of put different scenarios, who's available for you out of the pen, who's available for them, potential pinch-hit matchups. There's a lot that goes into it.

Then once you get to the ballpark, you get with your coaches and you continue to just put yourself in different scenarios. Again, the game is probably going to tell you probably different. It's never going to go perfect.

But you do feel good when you put in the work and you feel like not only myself as a manager but your coaches and your players are prepared, and that's all you could ask for, that you're going to go to battle. You know that the guy right next to you, the guy in front of you, behind you, they're ready, and that's a good feeling.

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