

NL Division Series:

Mets vs Phillies

Wednesday, October 9, 2024

New York, New York, USA

Citi Field

Philadelphia Phillies

Manager Rob Thomson

Pregame 4 Press Conference

Q. Can you just tell us Bryson and Brandon in there against the lefty today not yesterday, the reasoning for that.

ROB THOMSON: Yeah, both those guys, Stott's always been able to hit lefties, and Marsh's numbers against lefties in the last month have been good. I thought in Austin Hays' defense, he hasn't had a whole lot of reps. He looked like his timing was off last night. We're going to do a lot of work. I felt like we need some offense, and I felt like this was the best way to get it.

Q. Is Cristopher Sanchez available tonight? How many pitches could he potentially give you?

ROB THOMSON: Yeah, he's available. He'll be in the pen from the start of the game. One inning, maybe two, if the first one is efficient.

Q. This is his normal side day?

ROB THOMSON: Yes.

Q. How many pitches does he usually throw in a side day?

ROB THOMSON: Usually 30, 35.

Q. I believe the Schwarber home run is the only run you guys have scored in the first five innings of games in this series. Is there anything other than the Mets starters being good behind that, and any adjustments you can make to fix that?

ROB THOMSON: You take last night's game, the first inning all three at-bats were good. All balls hit over 95 miles an hour. Sometimes that's just the way it goes. But I think we need to be patient. We need to hone in the strike zone, be able to use the field, do the little things. Try not to



do too much, just pass the baton.

Q. Bryson and Brandon probably haven't had the offensive years they envisioned for them. How much is today an opportunity for them to sort of change that narrative?

ROB THOMSON: I don't know if one day is going to change the narrative, but I do have a lot of confidence in them. Their at-bats lately have been pretty good. As I said, Marsh's at-bats against lefties the past month have been really, really good. I don't really look at it like they're going to change the narrative in one game. We've just got to go out and play.

Q. Baseball is one of those sports where the harder you try sometimes the worse things can get. When you're trying to fix something like the offense, how do you navigate that as a manager to keep these guys from pressing, but also trying to fix whatever is wrong?

ROB THOMSON: I think it's just between myself and the hitting Coach. I think it's just the constant message of: Pass the baton, take what they give you, try not to do too much, use the field, get strikes to hit. I think that's all you can do. Our hitting coaches do a great job of setting up drill work according to that.

So I think that's all you can do, really, is just keep pushing the message.

Q. You said yesterday it will be all hands on deck. You talked about Sánchez. What kind of situation would you feel good about going to Zack Wheeler in this game, especially with him lined up to pitch a potential Game 5?

ROB THOMSON: In an emergency, meaning we're not really pitching well.

Q. You had mentioned yesterday that the sixth inning at-bat Bryce was probably putting too much pressure on himself to do it alone. Given who he is, what he expects from himself, and what everyone expects from



him, how do you alleviate that?

ROB THOMSON: I think just what I just said, just passing the message. He's a very competitive person and he wants to be the guy. That's part of why he's so great. But there are times when you've got to pass it on to your teammates, too, if they're not going to give it to you.

Q. Has the tendency of the Mets to throw a lot of strikes early in the count been part of the dynamic that's affected the offense?

ROB THOMSON: Yeah, possibly. And then they try and get chase, as well, especially with two strikes. Yeah, we've got to do a better job of being aggressive in the strike zone and being able to lay off out of the strike zone.

Q. In Ranger's first playoff start last year you had a very specific detailed plan on how to go and attack that, you didn't even tell him about it. Is there a very detailed specific plan for today or do you want him to just go as long as he could potentially go?

ROB THOMSON: That was a special situation because we had days off in front and behind his start so we could use the bullpen and that freed up some pitches for him later on in the series. This is a little bit different.

I'm just going to read it today. If the stuff is good and he's efficient and he's getting outs, then he goes, you know. But if for whatever reason it doesn't look good, then we've got to go to the bullpen.

Q. Why did you want to include Wes in the lineup today?

ROB THOMSON: He faced Quintana in London and had real good at-bats, almost hit a home run, DJ Stewart made a heck of a play to take down a potential home run, I believe. And he's right-handed and he's given us good at-bats, especially against left-handed pitching. So that was the reason.

Q. What has it been like going up against Carlos Mendoza in his first season as a manager and now his first postseason as a manager?

ROB THOMSON: I've got so much respect for Mendy because I know him so well. We spent a lot of time together just talking situations. I first met Mendy, I was in the Big Leagues and he was the player development infield coordinator, I believe. And it was right about that time that the shifting was really coming into play. I didn't really know too much about like, okay, what's the percentage of ground balls when you'd shift on a guy and where does everybody

go, and how does everybody rotate. He knew it all. So he taught me a lot.

We got to know each other and we got to talk about situations. I've got a lot of respect for him because he understands the game. He understands how to manage. He understands how to communicate with not only veterans but younger guys. He's a good man. Yeah, so it's fun.

Q. You talked in Spring Training about some of the things you wish you'd done differently in Game 7 last year, things like that, just naturally thought about during the offseason. What have you learned the last two Postseason elimination games about how you might approach today? Anything that you'll take into today?

ROB THOMSON: I think just the experience of the whole thing and understanding that this is it. You've got to win this game or you go home. But I don't think that's anything I learned, I think that's pretty much common sense.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports.