

NL Championship Series: Mets vs Dodgers

Saturday, October 12, 2024

Los Angeles, California, USA

Dodger Stadium

Los Angeles Dodgers

Manager Dave Roberts

Workout Day Press Conference

Q. What went into finalizing Jack as Game 1 starter and do you have a Game 2 starter yet?

DAVE ROBERTS: I think it was easy in the sense of when he was lined up, his start days and all that stuff. And I didn't feel good about him pitching out of the pen. So not by default but it just made the most sense.

We're still talking about Game 2, Game 3, trying to figure out -- we have a lot of good options, but right now anything's on the table for Game 2.

Q. Is there anything new on Vesia?

DAVE ROBERTS: It's a side intercostal situation. He feels good. I don't know what he's going to do today. So I would say that it's highly unlikely that he's active for this next series, but we'll see.

Q. Are there any other changes you're kind of anticipating along with that?

DAVE ROBERTS: I want to kind of see how the guys -- mainly Rojas, how he moves around today. I think on the pitching side, if Alex is not on the roster, we'll have to make a decision, but I think that's about it right now.

Q. Is Tony somebody who is an option for you guys, especially if you need more length in a longer series like this?

DAVE ROBERTS: I don't think Tony is an option. He possibly could be. He's here. He's on the table. I will kind of digress. He's an option.

We've got some other guys, obviously, that we've had. But Tony is an option. He's in there.

Q. If you stick with Yama's schedule I think that means he could only go one time in the series. Is that what



you guys are anticipating as you build the schedule?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, it's one of those things for Yamamoto versus any other starter, their regular routine is their regular routine. And any deviation would be short rest. So he hasn't done that. So I think, to your point, we'll probably keep him on track.

Q. With Freddie, has the ankle progressed at all over the last week? Or going into this series is it the same thing where you guys have to read it out every day? And is it a spot where you might look for another day to give him a break if you can stack a couple of off days or something like that?

DAVE ROBERTS: My goal is, and I think Freddie would say the same thing, would be to play every game. Certainly we have a day after night game. He feels better today than he did yesterday. So I think that's encouraging.

So I think my message to him is let's not get too far ahead of things and let's worry about the day at hand. So right now I feel very confident that he'll be in there tomorrow and we'll kind of see where that goes.

Q. How much relief was there when he came in your office yesterday and said he was good to go?

DAVE ROBERTS: I had a little smile on my face because certainly with where he's been, it's been dicy. So for him to give me the final thumbs up an hour before game time was very nice to see.

Q. What have you thought of or what have you seen from Shohei's at-bats since Game 1?

DAVE ROBERTS: Well, I'll tell you this. I don't know what it's like facing my childhood hero/idol. Obviously that's a better question for Shohei as far as the emotions behind that. I'm sure something might have bled into kind of -- because he did chase more than he has. So I don't know if it was the Darvish factor.

So suffice to say, I'm happy that we've rid ourselves of Yu Darvish and we can sort of move forward.



But I think that kind of to your question, I think he's just been more outside the hitting zone than he has in the last, call it, six to eight weeks.

Q. Kiké after the game, I don't know his exact words, he basically described it as a group of fellows who don't give a hoot about things. And I'm wondering, with a team, how do you strike the balance between, in games like this, providing having necessary preparation, being sort of locked in and also playing free within the moment and embracing that?

DAVE ROBERTS: Well, I think the one part of it is -- I did see the quote -- so I think the one part of it is I do feel that our guys kind of can feel everyone picking everyone against us and us being sort of an afterthought.

I think we have a pretty good ballclub. So guys took it, rightfully so, personally. So certainly Max and Kiké voiced their thoughts. So that's one part of it.

And I think for us it's like right now it's continue to have that edge that we had because these guys are playing really good baseball. They've got a good thing going as well and we can't let off the gas.

So I think we have a very talented team. But I still don't mind that kind of underdog, fighter mentality.

Q. What would it take for Gonsolin to be on the NLCS roster?

DAVE ROBERTS: Well, Tony, if you look at kind of Tony's pitch-mix experience, he makes sense. I think that it's a heavy right-handed team. But, again, his pitch makes sense. He's a balanced pitcher.

I think we have to organizationally decide if it's worth putting him in stress and protect against downside, his future, next year. So I think that's sort of weighing that with alternatives.

So like I said, he's in the mix. But we've got to be very kind of convicted that he's the right decision if we are going to activate him.

Q. Have Joe Kelly or Graterol recovered enough that they're going to be options?

A. They're not going to be options. Those two are not options.

Q. Do you anticipate asking as much of your this round as you did last round -- we're going to see a

bullpen game or two?

DAVE ROBERTS: There's certainly a possibility of a bullpen game or two. But with that we're going to have to ask innings from other guys. That's just the reality.

I don't think that in a seven-game series we have the luxury to max out guys like we did from the pen in a five-game series.

Q. The other person on the injured list eligible now Brent Honeywell, how is he doing, is he an option?

DAVE ROBERTS: Brent is an option. He's been staying sharp in the sense he's been pitching to our hitters on off days. He's still got this finger thing, but he certainly is in the mix, too.

Q. He kind of serves, whoever it is could serve a length role due to the longer series, the middle three, all that kind of stuff?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, absolutely. So the length, the two, three innings, neutral, keep you in a ball game sort of thing makes sense. And that kind of fits what he's done for us.

Q. With Rojas, I guess playing through what you're looking for from him, what would be the other options you have if he's not able to go?

DAVE ROBERTS: I think the other options would be probably be Kiermaier, James Outman, something like that.

Q. A lot is made about the decisions, buttons pressed, guys being put in certain places between staff and so forth. But the number of scoreless innings you guys got in the last series -- I don't want to ask this in a certain way -- but did that go about as well as you thought, better? From a self-assessment standpoint it was probably as good as it was going to get for the decisions made?

DAVE ROBERTS: It couldn't have went any better. Those guys really stepped up and just did everything and more than we could have hoped for. To shut that team out for 24 straight innings is near impossible. And we did it in really fine fashion.

But to the question earlier, I just don't see that playing out again in a seven-game series. I've got to lean on other guys to cover some innings, and/or expecting a little bit more out of the starters. But what they did, I couldn't have hoped for anything more.

Q. You and Carlos Mendoza have a lot of parallels in the first year in the big leagues. As managers you both got to the NLCS. But I'm curious, when you manage in the postseason for the first time, is there something that you don't expect that doesn't affect you in the regular season that when you get to the postseason it's like, oh, this is something that you don't plan for?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, I think in the postseason, looking back, things happen quickly. Every game is obviously of the highest importance. The roles are different just trying to figure out what you can ask of a player, whether it's multiples, stress, leverage. It's different in a regular season versus the postseason.

I remember obviously in my first year, I remember bringing Clayton Kershaw in a game in relief. He was sort of ailing and feeling good but not feeling good. So that was nerve-racking for me.

I remember walking the bases loaded to get to Montero who hadn't taken an at-bat in eight days, hits an 0-2 slider for homer and we got beat.

To your question, just trying to think about a lot of different scenarios and the game speeds up and really having a lot of people around you to kind of help slow the game down and kind of think through a lot of different scenarios.

Q. What do you know about Kodai Senga?

DAVE ROBERTS: I don't know Kodai very much. I do know his last outings was two innings, 31 pitches. My assumption is they're going to try to get him through three innings. Obviously he was probably was their ace coming into the season. It's going to be a lot of fun. But I don't know him very well. I'm learning him right now.

Q. Do you have any more details on Gavin Stone's shoulder surgery?

DAVE ROBERTS: I don't. He had his shoulder surgery, successful. Identified a lot of stuff that was going on in the shoulder. Don't see him coming back in '25.

Q. With Vesia maybe out, how much more important does Anthony Banda become? And do you want another left-hander in the pen. Is there some other option there?

DAVE ROBERTS: We have a couple of options that we've had, that are on the roster, that are viable. It's really not a left-handed kind of heavy hitting team. But still we've got to

talk through it.

And obviously losing Alex potentially is brutal. It sucks. He's a big part of what we do. But we're just going to have to find somebody else to step up.

Q. Coming off an emotional series with the Padres who you've seen often, how do you make the adjustment to now just try to lock in on the Mets who you haven't really seen much of all year and in a while?

DAVE ROBERTS: I'll tell you this: We saw these guys earlier. They're a completely different team than we saw. They're playing considerably better. Lindor is back to being Frankie. They've just got a lot of confidence.

So we've got to play good baseball. So for me, I just don't see it much different outside of the fact that they're two different ball clubs, but we have to come with the same intensity, focus and energy that we had this last series.

Q. Do you think that the nature of the series, the nature of the way that the Padres series kind of, like, transpired created that energy, and it's going to have to be recreated again?

DAVE ROBERTS: I think we actually created it before the series. I really do. I don't think that that was the result of winning the series. I think that we had that from pitch one, Game 1, and I expect it to kind of build from here.

Q. Finally, on Yamamoto, would you be more comfortable running him out a little longer now? Last night, obviously, 68 pitches, he was pitching well. You just said last night it was time to turn it over to your bullpen, if they're pitching well. But would you see going a sixth inning with him if he's pitching that well?

DAVE ROBERTS: I would. Yoshi just hasn't been into the fifth inning in quite some time. Then you're layering on postseason high-intensity pitches, and you've got guys behind him.

All that stuff played a factor in my decision-making. But going forward, and now he's going to check that box. If he continues to throw the ball the way he did, certainly I would keep extending him.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports