

# NL Championship Series: Mets vs Dodgers

Monday, October 14, 2024

Los Angeles, California, USA

Dodger Stadium

## Los Angeles Dodgers

## Ben Casparius

## Daniel Hudson

### Pregame 2 Press Conference



were sponsoring it or they were kind of running it.

**Q. What did you grow up as a fan?**

**BEN CASPARIUS:** I was a Red Sox fan growing up.

**Q. Daniel, when you made your debut, I think it was '09, if somebody had come to you from the future and said, bullpen games are going to be a thing and in the playoffs bullpen games are going to be a thing, even when you have options for starters, what would your 2009 self have told you?**

**DANIEL HUDSON:** I would definitely be surprised. I was talking to someone yesterday, we were thinking on whether or not we were going to do a bullpen game today -- or yesterday thinking about for today's game.

My immediate thought was if we push Walker back, how does that affect his usage the rest of the series. And then now it's like kind of almost seems like the opposite. They're trying to do a bullpen game today to make sure that we all are available for the next three games in a row in New York.

It's definitely different obviously from when I came up in the big leagues for the first time. But it's pretty cool to see bullpen guys kind of get used like this.

**Q. As a fan, do you like it? Or is it more aesthetically pleasing to have Clayton throw nine innings?**

**DANIEL HUDSON:** Obviously you want your studs out there as much as possible. But I'm just a fan of well-pitched baseball in general. I grew up watching the '90s Braves and those guys freaking winning 1-0, 2-0 playoff games all the time.

So I just love the intensity of a low-scoring playoff game where all the little things matter -- taking an extra 90 feet here and there and throwing strikes and be aggressive in the strike zone. I just love watching those types of games.

**Q. Daniel, how much have you enjoyed, knock on wood, a relatively healthy season all the way through?**

**Q. For both of you guys, what is your reaction to seeing the success that this bullpen has had as of late? And what's been the conversation amongst you all in the bullpen that's preparing you for just the performance that everyone's been having on the mound?**

**BEN CASPARIUS:** I think everybody is super prepared. We have an opponent every single day. Whether it's top of the lineup, bottom of the lineup, everybody planning for what they do how they want to execute and it just keeps on going that way.

**DANIEL HUDSON:** I think we're all kind of taking a little bit of extra pride in this, this little bit of run here. We were leaned on pretty heavily in the regular season and to see it carry over and have success in the playoffs is really cool for all of us, and we're really proud down there.

**Q. This is your first postseason. What advice have you received from some of the guys in the bullpen? And how did you feel that just getting -- yesterday that can allow you for other opportunities in this series moving forward?**

**BEN CASPARIUS:** I think the biggest message was just to be myself, again, like it's just another day in baseball, nothing needs to change or, like, reinvent the wheel or try anything new. And really just to soak it all in and just take in every moment, enjoy it.

**Q. Ben, there's a picture on your Instagram of you in a tournament in Puerto Rico where it really looks like a Mets jersey. Did you grow up a Mets fan?**

**BEN CASPARIUS:** I didn't, no. I think -- that was a long time ago -- I think it was a travel, like, a travel team thing. They had a small event in Puerto Rico. I think the Mets



DANIEL HUDSON: It's been a couple of years since I've had one of those. Relatively, knock on wood, is probably the word to use there.

You have your good days and bad days. Thankfully I've had more good than bad this season. To get to this point, definitely, like I said, a little bit of a sense of pride in myself showing that I could do it again.

**Q. What's your thought process about doing it again next year?**

DANIEL HUDSON: I'm just trying to get through this -- get through today. We'll worry about that when -- we'll cross that bridge when we get there. I'm just trying to get through today and help this team get another win.

**Q. Curious about when each of you became aware of the scoreless-inning streak and the fact that you were close to tying and perhaps breaking a record?**

DANIEL HUDSON: I wasn't really aware of the record thing until yesterday. Somebody brought it up before the game. Obviously we knew the last six innings of Game 3 were scoreless, and then we threw back-to-back shutouts. So obviously the scoreless-inning streak was in the forefront of everybody's mind. But I didn't know there was a record for that until yesterday. So to throw up nine more goose eggs yesterday, that was pretty cool.

BEN CASPARIUS: I found out after the game. I'm honestly glad it was after the game, it wasn't prior to it. (Laughter).

DANIEL HUDSON: I had the thought, too. (Laughter).

BEN CASPARIUS: I'm glad it was after. But, yeah.

**Q. Daniel, I'm wondering, given what you were just saying, you were asked about the bullpen games and the evolution, could you contrast what the Nationals did in 2019 when you were part of it, and the innings were really concentrated in the rotation, and maybe some of the challenges on both ends of being so starter-dependent versus being a bit more creative in usage like you guys are?**

DANIEL HUDSON: I think it's just -- I don't know what's the correct way to say what's right about that, but I think it's just all how the roster's constructed at that point in time.

Obviously, we've had some catastrophic injuries in the rotation this year. So our young guys that have been in the minor leagues have come up and really played a big part in

our season -- out of the bullpen, in the starting rotation, up and down -- and now we've got some young guys that are stretched out in the bullpen helping us win games.

I think it's just all a matter of how the roster is constructed, in that current time. Obviously, in 2019, with the Nats, we had five horses in the rotation that remained relatively healthy throughout the season and playoffs. You're going to ride those guys if you have them.

In my opinion, you have to ride your studs. We're going to do that to the guys we have available, and at this point, if the bullpen is the fourth starter, so be it. Let's ride ourselves and get out there and get another W.

**Q. Daniel, how was Will Smith figured in the current run for the pitchers and really the whole season with so many moving pieces and so many changes in the starting rotation, how has he specifically impacted?**

DANIEL HUDSON: I think that's the underrated part of what Will's done this year, honestly. I don't know how much pitchers it is. You probably know how many it is, but to have that many bodies come in and contribute to a team that won 98 ball games, it takes a big contribution from the catchers. And Austin and Will have done a great job of being able to navigate everybody's strengths, knowing what everybody does well throughout a ball game, how many relievers come into a game these days, just knowing what we all do best and to try to navigate that part of the lineup.

Will's done a tremendous job, obviously, and this scoreless streak has a lot to do with him as well.

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