

NL Championship Series: Mets vs Dodgers

Monday, October 14, 2024

Los Angeles, California, USA

Dodger Stadium

New York Mets

Manager Carlos Mendoza

Postgame 2 Press Conference

Mets - 7, Dodgers - 3

Q. When we were talking to Lindor on the field afterwards he said he didn't think it was so much the home run that really set the tone but the at-bat. For you, just how much did the way that he approached that first at-bat set the tone for the rest of the group today?

CARLOS MENDOZA: I think I said it in the middle of the game, that not just because of the homer but the way he attacked him, fouled off a couple of pitches, laid off a couple of breaking balls and got a pitch and drove it to set the tone.

But I thought overall we had really good at-bats up and down. And obviously Vientos with a big one.

But especially with the pitching staff what they've done the past few games, it's been hard. And a bullpen day where you don't know what you're going to be facing, for us to get the first one across the board was important.

Q. At this point, with Vientos, does it surprise you at all the way that he's able to come through consistently in his first postseason?

CARLOS MENDOZA: Not really. His ability to slow the game down. You could see it calm, under control. He took pretty good breaking balls down and away.

And then just having the awareness of the situation and what the pitchers are trying to do to him. And 3-2, not trying to do too much, staying on the big part of the field and got a fastball that he was able to -- the power's real.

You didn't see a big swing. It was, let me put it in play, let me stay in the big part of the ballpark, and he was able to drive that one.



You see the next at-bat against a lefty, just going the other way with ease and just shoot the ball the other way.

That's a sign of not only a good hitter but someone that is mature and is under control, it doesn't matter the situation.

Q. Just like what you said with Lindor's at-bat and Vientos went to nine pitches with his, do you feel as those pitch counts get deeper that Lindor and Vientos are going to wind up doing something big?

CARLOS MENDOZA: Yeah, and I think the way they were taking the pitches, it was with ease. It was on time, ready for a pitch in your zone. But if it wasn't there, the way they took it, it was pretty telling.

So regardless of the outcome, they put themselves in a good position there and fouled off a couple tough one, laid off a couple of tough ones. And when they finally got one, they were able to drive it.

Q. What impressed you the most about Manaea today? And how important was it for him to get through at least five after using a lot of relief pitchers early last night?

CARLOS MENDOZA: I thought he was really good. The one thing he was not only getting ahead but staying on the attack. Like perfect example, the way he went after Ohtani the first couple of at-bats.

I thought everything was working, whether it was the fastball, the change-up, the sweeper. But he made pitches in the zone. He stayed on the attack.

They control the strike zone. As a team they don't chase. So not only do you have to get ahead but you have to execute in the zone to be able to get them.

Yeah, it was important for him to go to the sixth even though after the first couple of walks, gets a ground ball and we don't make a play. But it was really good for Manaea today.

Q. You could see how you wanted to map things out



in that game obviously after Sean, you had to accelerate your plans a little bit, probably, sooner than ideal. How did you feel going through that, just the way you mapped it out from going to Phil to Stanek to --

CARLOS MENDOZA: I think the key was after we scored and we got up 6-0, the key was for Sean to continue to shut down their offense, continue to just give us zeros. He gave that homer to Muncy. But for him to go out there for the sixth -- like I said after a couple of walks he got a ground ball and we couldn't make a play.

At that point obviously going to the bullpen. But they did a hell of a job, Phil, got that pop-up, ground ball gets through Pete. And he gets that ground ball with Kiké and we turn the double play. He goes back out there and gives us an out.

And for Stanek, for him to not only get the last two in the seventh but two more in the eighth, to be able to give the ball to Díaz today, it was how I envisioned it going in the game today.

It doesn't always work out that way. I'm just glad they came out big time today and especially for Díaz, the last four outs.

Q. When you talk about Manaea needing to execute in the zone against this team, the first at-bat you don't see Shohei Ohtani that late on a fastball basically right down the middle that often. What did that one swing tell you about how Sean's stuff was coming out and looking today?

CARLOS MENDOZA: It's a tough at-bat. It's a different look. He's across his body, especially left on left, low arm slot and it's hard to pick it up.

And when you see one of the best hitters in the game take pitches like that and then the way he swung for strike three the second at-bat, I think it was, like, man, he's having a hard time seeing him.

I don't think you've seen Ohtani look that way too often.

But that's what Sean does. It's a tough look, and I'm just glad he was able to give us a chance to win a game today.

Q. You had a little bit of it last week, but what's it mean now to you to be going home for these next three?

CARLOS MENDOZA: It was an important game today, especially after the way we played last night. And they

outplayed us pretty much yesterday. They came out aggressive and they kept putting it on us.

It was a quick turnaround but we've done that the whole year. We get punched in the face and we continue to find ways to get back up. And it will continue to be that way.

It was good to get this one here. Now we get an opportunity to go home and play three there in front of our fan base. Expect it to be packed and electric and loud, but it's going to be fun.

Q. When you have a team that throws a bullpen game against you you'll get different looks. Do you feel like with your team's offensive profile and using the big part of the field does it allow you guys to do more damage than if you had a team that just tries to slug?

CARLOS MENDOZA: Yeah, 100 percent. We did it against the Brewers, one of the best bullpens in the league. And we're facing one of the best bullpens in the league, too.

But because there's a lot of different ways we could create and we can attack, whether it's not only by hitting the ball out of the ballpark, but taking a walk, putting the ball in play, going the other way when we need to just make things happen.

It's what makes this lineup a deep lineup. When you're facing a bullpen day, I think it's hard to game plan but you've got to go out there make adjustments take what the game is giving you, whether it's putting the ball in play, moving a guy over, getting a guy in, those are the little things that you have to do to win games in the playoffs when you're facing an elite pitching staff.

Q. You mentioned Díaz before. You went to get him for the four-out save. How do you feel he finished as strong as he finished today? I know we've gone outing to outing with him sometimes. He's admitted to maybe having some difficulty at some point. I think his finish today was the strongest he's done.

CARLOS MENDOZA: 100 percent right. I think he was under control. He was able to slow the game down, made pitches to get Kiké in the eighth. After the double steel he got that last out. And then the first two guys get on, and you could tell once he got Mookie, especially using his fastball, he was throwing strikes. It was a good sign.

I've been saying it, we're going to need him. In order for us to get where we want to get we're going to need Edwin Díaz. And he's going to continue to step up.

