

NL Championship Series: Mets vs Dodgers

Tuesday, October 15, 2024

New York, New York, USA

Citi Field

Los Angeles Dodgers

Walker Buehler

Workout Day Press Conference

Q. When you look at the first two games, what were you seeing from the Mets? And has that had an impact on your game planning for your outing tomorrow?

WALKER BUEHLER: Not necessarily. Obviously Jack kind of put the blueprint out there in a way and kind of put on a clinic in Game 1. And obviously we were kind of hodgepodging it together in Game 2. So some different stuff to look at, but doesn't change a whole lot for me.

Q. I know before your NLDS start we were talking about how when you looked at the regular season it's about the building blocks, but that goes away come October. What is the approach for you going into this start? And do you feel like you have just personally kind of reached another level as to where you like to be especially in October?

WALKER BUEHLER: Hard to say yes to that question coming off six earned runs. But, yeah, I feel good. I feel confident. So I think that probably was one of my biggest strengths for a long time was my confidence, I guess.

At times this year that's kind of wavered somewhat. The past six or eight, I've kind of felt like I've been building blocks of some kind. And hoping to keep that going.

Q. When you talk about your confidence wavering and stuff and during the regular season there were periods where the results didn't come, where would you go to, I guess, mentally to kind of convince yourself, you know what, this is still in there; I can do this?

WALKER BUEHLER: I mean, there's not a whole lot of easy ways to kind of sum that up or answer that question, I guess. I think the biggest thing is just that at some point the health was kind of part of it. My hip didn't help.

I think for me kind of, honestly, going away for a few weeks



and coming back, I think things have started -- kind of started trending a little bit different then. And I threw a bullpen in St. Louis that kind of started getting everything really rolling -- not that I've been setting the world on fire since then. But at least my body feels like it's in the right position a lot of the time and kind of have an idea where the ball's headed.

Kind of credit Mark and Connor, and Jack was a part of that bullpen as well. So that was a big day for me. And if I had to pick one thing, that day was probably it.

Q. Luis Severino, who will pitch tomorrow as well, similar to you -- was excellent when he first came up. Had Tommy John, dealt with some other injuries. Had a rough year last year before free agency. This year seems to have really rebounded. I wondered if you've looked at his arc or career or no?

WALKER BUEHLER: [Shakes head].

Q. How much of a charge do you get pitching National League Championship Series in New York City?

WALKER BUEHLER: Every playoff game is huge. I think the round is less important. I think it being the second series for us, meaning that we advanced, makes it bigger. I don't think it being the NLCS is kind of the thing for me; it's another game I get to pitch with our team.

Obviously, the East Coast/West Coast, LA/New York thing is pretty cool. I imagine it's going to be rocking here tomorrow. That's what excites me more than anything is the noise and the excitement. And the kind of live-or-die feeling on every pitch is something I've really grown to love.

Q. Tomorrow it's a 8:00 start and 50-ish degrees. How will the temperature affect your warm-up and pitching?

WALKER BUEHLER: I love pitching in the cold personally. I don't know why or how. When I was in college, I think I had the first 10 starts that were under 30 degrees one year. So something I'm used to or at least used to be used to. Pitching in LA makes it a little bit difficult.



But the cold is something that I've always kind of liked.

Q. A lot of guys talked about the three innings you had after the second inning last week, how important that was in the overall arc of the series. To you, especially to the confidence point, how much did those three innings mean and how you felt in the last week since then leading up to this one?

WALKER BUEHLER: If you look at my year I've had a lot of lot struggles having kind of clean innings. And that second inning was a little squirrely, but I had four pretty clean ones outside of that.

It definitely helps mentally. But at the end of the day I've got to go pitch good tomorrow no matter what three innings I limped at the end of the game the other day.

Q. You talked about how you thrive in these rowdy type of atmospheres. Is that something that you've grown to love, or have you always been like that?

WALKER BUEHLER: I don't know if "thrive" is the right word. Obviously I've given up some big homers over the years. But I certainly enjoy it, and I know our team likes playing in environments like that. It just makes the game a little bit different and a little bit more fun. So I'm looking forward to it.

Q. Dave said he really trusts you on the road as well. How much do you like that he has that confidence in you?

WALKER BUEHLER: We talked about it before my last start, but the big game thing or pitching in kind of moments like this or on the road, or whatever you want to call it I think is -- for me, the most important thing about being a teammate or a starting pitcher is that your team trusts you in tough spots, and it's humbling and a really big compliment for me to hear that from some of the guys.

Q. I know the Mets have a deep lineup with plenty of dangerous hitters. I'm sure you're also well aware of what a charge Francisco Lindor, in particular, has provided for them, especially lately. How do you balance the importance of that first at-bat of the game against him and other at-bats, key situations with him, leading off an inning versus not spending, I guess, too much emphasis on that knowing that you need to get through an entire lineup and not get so wrapped up in getting one particular hitter out to slow them down?

WALKER BUEHLER: I mean, I wouldn't say I'm too wrapped up in anybody particularly. Obviously the first out

of a game is a big out and every out after that is kind of equally as important.

We've seen the momentum in the playoffs, and scoring first is obviously a huge thing. We'll do our best to make sure we score first.

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