

NL Championship Series: Mets vs Dodgers

Thursday, October 17, 2024

New York, New York, USA

Citi Field

New York Mets

Manager Carlos Mendoza

Pregame 4 Press Conference

Q. You've dealt with adversity during the year. You bounced back after losses in key situations multiple times. Why do you believe you'll do it again tonight?

CARLOS MENDOZA: That's who we are. We've got great players. We've got great people. We know that we got punched yesterday. We'll come back today and we're going to go prepare, compete and try to get the job done.

A lot of confidence in our guys. And we've shown the whole year, this is a group that is resilient. They have that grit. They fight and they're not going to give up. They're going to continue to play. That will be the same mentality, the same approach today, and we're going to go out there and have fun.

Q. You talked about Nimmo yesterday and what he was playing through. When you see Freddie not in the lineup today because of what he's playing through, how much respect do you have for these guys for what they're putting up with at this time to just play at their max of what they have left in the playoffs?

CARLOS MENDOZA: A lot of respect for guys that you are seeing on the field. I'm pretty sure they have a lot of guys on their team that are dealing with something and they're still able to push. We've got a lot of them here too.

It's not easy. When you get to this point in the year, it's a privilege, right?

But you said it, you watch Freddie, the way he takes the field and comes off of the field, he hurts. You watch Nimmo, same thing. But they're professionals and they're doing everything they can to be available and continue to help their teams get some wins.

In our case, with Nimmo, he's doing everything he can. Not only is he available, he's playing in the outfield. Yesterday I checked with him in the seventh, I wanted to



take him out. He was, like, no, I want to finish the game.

That tells you right there the professionalism, how much they want it, and they know they have to be there for the team. So a lot of respect for them.

Q. Was using Tylor to close out the game yesterday a matter of setting up your bullpen for the next couple of games?

CARLOS MENDOZA: Yeah, once we got down like that, instead of using two more guys with Megill having all his pitches -- he could have thrown 90, 100 pitches if we needed to.

And he did that. He went out there and was able to finish a game. Saved some of the other guys from coming in that game and now they're available.

Q. What's impressed you the most about what Quintana has been able to do since mid to late August for you?

CARLOS MENDOZA: I think a lot. The way he's using all of his pitches in the strike zone. When he was in trouble, when it was hard for him, when he was struggling it seemed like he was nibbling and getting behind in counts. And when he came in the zone they made him pay.

But I think the way he's using all his pitches, whether it's the breaking ball, not only to get ahead but to get chases; the change-up or the two-seam to get ground balls when he needs to.

I think it's a combination of the pitch package and how he's using it. But, again, he has to be in the strike zone with all of them.

Q. How much of sticking with Alvarez has to do with his power, and however he looks at the plate he can always connect with one and potentially change a game?

CARLOS MENDOZA: Yeah, this is a guy that can change the outcome of a game with one swing. Couple of guys on



-- and because of the power. He just has to relax here a little bit.

But we know the potential there offensively. The other thing with Alvie, he's 22 years old. He's got a lot on his plate, especially when it comes down to preparing and game planning for a game.

Nowadays there's so much information, and he has to lead a pitching staff. And then on top of that, he's got to be a hitter as well. But he's one swing away.

Q. He's said in the past that sometimes in big moments he tries too hard. Do you think that's happening now?

CARLOS MENDOZA: Yeah. I had a conversation with him yesterday about it. He's got to keep it simple. It's easy for me to sit here and say it. He's 22 years old, playing for the first time in a postseason where everything is magnified.

But that's part of the development. That's part of the learning process. This is a guy who is high energy. He's intense. And he needs to learn and he's got to go through those experiences where he needs to find a way to slow the game down. He's got to breathe. He's got to let the game come to him, especially when he's in those situations.

He's got to keep it simple. I know there's a lot where he's working mechanically. Keeping it simple, see the ball, hit the ball. Again, for me, it's easy to say it here. He's got to go out there and do it, and he will.

Q. Have you guys decided who is starting tomorrow?

CARLOS MENDOZA: No. We haven't decided that. We've got to get through today's game and see where we're at.

Q. Is Senga still in the mix?

CARLOS MENDOZA: He is.

Q. How much tougher is it on your offense with the amount of pitchers the Dodgers have used in the series, where, I think, Lindor has seen nine different pitchers in three games so he's not seeing anyone repeatedly? Just how much tougher is that for the guys?

CARLOS MENDOZA: It's a challenge, but I think this is nothing new for us. I'm going to go back to the series we played against the Brewers. It was a bullpen. It was a

different guy coming out of that bullpen all the time.

There's no difference here. They've got a lot of arms. They've got quality arms, and that's part of what they do. That's what makes them a tough team because when you look at they've got five, six guys that they could use at any point in the game, high-leverage situations.

It's a challenge, but we'll game plan, we'll continue to game plan and be ready for those guys. We've got good hitters. And I like the fact that we're creating traffic. We're just one swing away, one big hit away. That's what they do, and we'll adjust and we'll be ready.

Q. What has Senga been doing the last few days to get his mechanics back on track?

CARLOS MENDOZA: Yeah, he's going through his normal routine, catch play. He gets on the mound, watching film with Hef, having conversations. And Hef will provide some feedback. And then he'll ask Senga, what are you seeing and what are you feeling. I think he's in a good spot. So yeah, he's ready to go tomorrow.

Q. How do you evaluate, short of being in the game, whether the mechanics are right?

CARLOS MENDOZA: How do I evaluate that?

Q. In between starts.

CARLOS MENDOZA: I rely on my coaches. I rely on Hef and the feedback that we're getting from Senga. And we're having those conversations. We're having those discussions. It was positive yesterday what I got from Hef. So, yeah, he's good.

Q. A lot of the players have mentioned that you're sort of a stabilizing presence, not really overreacting whether things are going really well or really poorly. Has this always been part of your personality? Is it more difficult to do right now in the postseason?

CARLOS MENDOZA: Not really. It's going to be magnified because every game is very important. Today's important. Yesterday was important.

Yeah, the confidence is there. You have to be steady. You've got to be able to make some adjustments. I've done that the whole year, whether it's with lineup construction, the way I use the bullpen.

I said it, when I go to the bullpen, guys will be struggling, I will continue to give them the ball. Lineup-wise, lineup construction, guys that are in the lineup, moving guys up

and down, when somebody is hitting fifth or seventh, a guy hitting second -- like, I'm always looking for ways to put our guys in a position to have success but also trusting them.

And we've got good players. There's a reason why we got to this point. We've got a good team. And I'll continue to be myself, I'll continue to rely on the coaches, and have the conversation with the players as well.

Q. What went into Bader instead of Taylor today? And also staying with J.D. over Winker against this particular right-hander?

CARLOS MENDOZA: We know Yamamoto's splits. He's a lot better against lefties, I knew coming in I wanted the righties in their spots as much as possible.

And with Bader, Taylor is a pretty good defender. Bader is an elite defender. Small sample when we faced Yamamoto, Bader had three really good at-bats. Again, just three at-bats, but I don't think anybody had that much of a sample size against Yamamoto. We only faced him once. So I just decided to go with him.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports