

NL Championship Series: Mets vs Dodgers

Friday, October 18, 2024

New York, New York, USA

Citi Field

Los Angeles Dodgers

Manager Dave Roberts

Pregame 5 Press Conference

Q. When Teoscar was talking to the media this afternoon, he shared how going back to that Atlanta series, when the news that Tyler Glasnow was going to be done for the rest of the year, just the conversation you all had as a group, how it changed the mindset of this group. How did you see that play out? And how has that put you all in the situation now to be one win away from the World Series?

DAVE ROBERTS: I just wanted to get the guys together. I'm not a big meeting guy. I just felt that at that point in time, I think we had lost two straight to the Braves. You know, we got news that Tyler was going to be done for the year. And I just got a feeling that there was some kind of a little woe is me, and that's just not who we are.

I knew Walker was throwing that night and felt that for us to win 11 games in October, we need him. So I wanted a little bit to have that meeting with him on the mound that night and challenged him a little bit.

I just kind of -- the message basically was, I can't believe more in them than they believe in each other. They've got to believe in themselves, right? And I just felt we have enough talent in the room to do that.

I just kind of wanted to bring that to light. But it was -- the most important thing was that those guys responded amongst themselves.

Q. Now being one win away from the World Series, what does that mean to you personally?

DAVE ROBERTS: It's been a fun ride. I love how we're going about things collectively. There's a great focus with our guys, a hunger, and a real good compete and fight. So that's been fun.

We've still got some work to do. Their backs are against the walls right now. So we know that. I just think that



we've got to go out there keep playing good baseball.

Q. Teoscar was up here talking about how much it means to him to possibly make it to the World Series because he wasn't part of that 2017 team, actually playing. For you personally, after all so much talk over the offseason, stuff like that, for you to be one win away from getting back there.

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, I mean, I'm excited. I'm excited. I don't want to get too ahead of myself. But I think, personally, I am just fortunate, I have a lot of great people around me, most importantly the players.

But I'm just very grateful to be here. I really am. So it's been a fun road, a tough road. A lot of work to be done.

But there's a part of it, though, that you have to enjoy these moments. I think we all do. I think we all get caught up in the moment right now. But you have to enjoy it because this is part of the fun. So I'm enjoying it as much as I can.

Q. Through all the lineup changes, you guys just continue to find those super big hits. Tommy was huge in that cleanup spot. He said he doesn't get a lot of opportunities like that. With Freddie coming back after a day of rest, what do you want to see from him in that spot?

DAVE ROBERTS: With Freddie, I think, just keep being himself. He's still trying to find his swing. I'm sure the ankle has a lot to do with it. He's in there because I feel the at-bats are going to be quality at-bats and he's going to give us everything he has.

And I think with the rest of the guys, just keep taking good at-bats. I think you see it with Teo and Will, who are not really swinging well, but I think their at-bat quality has been fantastic as far as the fight, which is spoiling pitches and getting to the next guy. So things like that matter. That's what I expect from our guys tonight.

Q. You've been here before, obviously. What is it about closeout games that you have to approach a game like this?



DAVE ROBERTS: I think getting a lead is important. I say that because you put the onus on them to sort of exhaust all resources. The sooner you can do that, the better it is.

I think it's just applying pressure and trying to do that early. And the first step is putting pressure on Peterson and stress him early and make Carlos make a decision.

Q. Is this team playing as well as any team you've had here?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, I think so. I think so. I think if you're talking about collective at-bats, the pitching, all that stuff, yeah, it's hard to remember a team playing better team baseball than we're playing right now, yeah.

Q. Is Blake going to be available tonight?

DAVE ROBERTS: He's available. We'll see how much, but he's available, yeah.

Q. You've talked a lot about how this team, even when things have gone wrong this year, not making excuses. Where do you think that's come from this season? And how much do you think that's been part of, when you talk about playing good team baseball and just the level you guys have been at the last couple of weeks, been underlying all that?

DAVE ROBERTS: I hope it comes from me. I don't like excuses. I don't like to hear them. And so I talk about that a lot. But most importantly, they've got to kind of believe that it's the right way to go about things.

And there's just a lot of unforeseen things that can happen in a long baseball season, and we have a lot of good players. I'm aware of that, and so I think that that's sort of kind of part of it.

But like everyone knows, it's not really what I think, it's what they believe. And they believe that, which is most important.

Q. When you guys won last night and the Mets announced it would be Peterson starting this game, was there any temptation at all to give, against a left-hander, Freddie another day of rest? At least he'd get three straight days off before he played at LA, in the best scenario. If you won tonight, he could get a long stretch off before the World Series. Was there any temptation to rest him again today?

DAVE ROBERTS: Not really. I think the one day, what was good. Yes, another day would probably have been

better, certainly. But I just feel that I want to put our best lineup out there today. I want to win tonight.

Q. Going back to the offseason, when you guys made the investment in Shohei, is this exactly kind of what you guys envisioned him, hitting home runs on this stage and performing in that tandem with Mookie?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yes, I think this is the 100 percent outcome with Shohei. That's just speaking on the field, in the clubhouse. I can't imagine what he's -- I can't imagine what he's doing outside of our game, on the business side.

But as far as on the baseball, between the lines, I just couldn't have imagined any better season. And what a great person and teammate, too.

Q. As someone who has played and managed five different organizations, what about Dodgers history and tradition has had the biggest impacts on you?

DAVE ROBERTS: I've been fortunate because I played for the Red Sox, briefly, and won a championship there. And just the history of the Red Sox and the Red Sox fan base is like no other.

I think the Dodgers, being from Southern California, going to school in Los Angeles, knowing a lot of the Dodger greats -- I had a good conversation with Sandy Koufax a couple of nights ago when he was in town, and that's just crazy to me that he's wishing me well in a season.

So I think that just being a part of this franchise, the history -- the brand is world known. I have a lot of aha, I can't believe I'm driving up Vin Scully Way, when I go to work, things like that. It's overwhelming, but I try not to let my head go there too often; I just try to do my job.

Q. At any point do you look and say your name's next to Tommy, Walt, (indiscernible) and Leo?

DAVE ROBERTS: I don't want to do that. Then I start getting nervous. I just want to try to do my job and get our players to win baseball games and win baseball games for the Dodgers, that's it.

Q. Did Sandy tell you to push your starters deeper in the games?

DAVE ROBERTS: We've had that conversation in years past, but I think right now he gave me a "good job." He gave me a "you're doing all right."

Q. This season in general, how did you think this year was going to go? And how has what's actually



happened been compared to what you forecast back in December, January?

DAVE ROBERTS: So it's gone the way we had expected in terms of where we are at today. How we got there, absolutely not how we envisioned this.

So I will say that, yeah -- but it's interesting. It's like, I didn't know who Edgardo Henriquez was six months ago, but he's chewing up two innings in an NLCS game on the road.

Those are things that -- I didn't know who Ben Casparius was.

I would have expected Tyler Glasnow to pitch in one of these game.

It's different, but it's a credit to the organization and the resiliency that we have. It's really cool.

But at the end of the day we're in the same spot we had hoped. And we just have to keep winning.

Q. As you were heading into an elimination game, how often do you think back to or do you reflect on sort of what you accomplished with the Red Sox, and does that serve as any sort of, not necessarily motivation, but cautionary tale as you go into this opportunity?

DAVE ROBERTS: I think you can see from kind of my demeanor that we're playing with urgency tonight. I think you can see that things can happen when a team starts to build momentum. So, yeah, we want to kind of take our momentum and keep it going, put these guys away.

Because of my past experiences -- and unfortunately I was on the good side of the other thing -- but, yeah, I feel that. I understand that.

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