

NL Championship Series:

Mets vs Dodgers

Sunday, October 20, 2024

Los Angeles, California, USA

Dodger Stadium

New York Mets

Manager Carlos Mendoza

Pregame 6 Press Conference



Q. I'm not going to ask you if you watched the Yankees game last night because I know the answer to that question. But just your feelings of your old team making it to the World Series? It's been a long climb for them, obviously, so I'm sure you had contact with some of those guys and got a sense of what it was like for them.

CARLOS MENDOZA: Yes, congratulations to the Yankees, Brian Cashman, Steinbrenner and obviously Boone. It's not easy. It's not easy to get to the World Series and they've been through a lot.

There's a lot of people that I have a lot of respect for, and hopefully I get to see them. We've got to take care of business here. We're facing a really good team in the Dodgers. But what a great year for them.

Q. I know you guys are hungry and focused on getting to the World Series. When you see a team just across town celebrating like that, does it bring it closer to your mind as far as not about you guys getting there but just in general, the feelings it must be like?

CARLOS MENDOZA: Yeah, you're watching it on TV. And it's like, man, we still have a chance. We know we have to face a really good team here with the Dodgers and we've got to win today because there's no tomorrow for us.

Yeah, you're watching them celebrate. And it makes you think because we still have an opportunity. Yeah.

Q. Do you have Severino starting tomorrow?

CARLOS MENDOZA: We've got to get there first. He's in line. He's on regular rest, but we've got to win today.

Q. But barring that, you're not considering any alternatives?

CARLOS MENDOZA: For tomorrow?

Q. Yeah.

CARLOS MENDOZA: We've got to get there first. And hopefully we're having that discussion after the game and then we'll go from there.

Q. Regarding today, how is your bullpen looking after a heavy few days?

CARLOS MENDOZA: They're doing okay. They're doing all right. I'm waiting to see some of the guys after they play catch and see who's available. And we'll find a way to piece it together.

Q. I know you said you'd be comfortable using Senga in a variety of situations, but are there some more ideal ones you guys might be eyeing for him?

CARLOS MENDOZA: Look, it's hard to -- you kind of have an idea or a plan who you're going to use in certain situations. And obviously Senga is part of the conversation. But the game is always going to tell you. You're going to have to make some adjustments.

He's available if the situation presents where we feel like that's a good spot for him, and he's going to help us, giving us a chance to win a baseball game, then we'll shoot him. But like I said, he's part of those guys available and we'll go from there.

Q. About how much pitches would he be good for?

CARLOS MENDOZA: He should be good for a few, multiple innings. He threw 30-some that inning here, the first game, and then he threw more inside. He's good for multiple.

Q. Back to the Yankees, did you text with Boone last night?

CARLOS MENDOZA: I did.

Q. Anything you can share there between the two of



you?

CARLOS MENDOZA: No, just congratulations. I know it's not easy to get there. I know how hard it's been for them. So it was a quick text and congratulations.

Q. We've seen some very good relievers have a hard time during this postseason. We saw it in the Cleveland-Yankees series, Clase was untouchable. Does the fatigue, people underestimate just on the outside, how much fatigue is a factor for these guys and how much it changes the equation once you get this deep in October?

CARLOS MENDOZA: Yeah, you definitely see it. And when hitters are facing the same guys, especially in a seven-game series, you know that plays into it, too, not only the fatigue and they could be tired, but also the hitters become a lot more familiar with them once they see them once or twice.

So it plays into it. But, look, I think everybody's dealing with the same thing. Everybody's on the same boat. You've got to find a way to get the job done, whether it's from your end with your bullpen guys or offensively when you're facing a bullpen from the other team, you have to find a way. Nobody is going to feel sorry for you.

Q. Edwin was asked the same question -- how do you combat, is there any way to combat the familiarity thing? Do you try to mix up the approaches with how they pitch guys, or you just have to give your best --

CARLOS MENDOZA: You've got to stick to your strengths, that's number one. But I always say, this is a game of adjustments and hitters will make adjustments, pitchers will make adjustments. And you have to do this at the big league level in order to have success.

Yeah, it makes it tricky, but they're elite players and there's a reason why they're here. So good hitters make adjustments. Good pitchers make adjustments. We'll see what happens today.

Q. What about Jose Quintana, could he be available out of the bullpen?

CARLOS MENDOZA: I don't think tonight he's in play. Tomorrow might be a different story.

Q. In the last couple of games, 24 hits, lots of traffic. Forgetting the runs scored, what's been impressive maybe just in these last two games with all that traffic on the bases?

CARLOS MENDOZA: I think we're doing a good job controlling the strike zone. And we are on time for fastballs when we are getting them. Especially early in counts, we're not missing them.

So we're going to have to do that today and then worry about tomorrow.

But I mean we're facing a bullpen day today and that's an elite pitching staff there. We'll have to do a really good job of executing and being on our A game today.

Q. What were your thoughts or were you surprised about Kopech starting tonight since he's usually a late-inning guy?

CARLOS MENDOZA: I was not. I was not. The way I look at it is they're treating this game just like we do. There's probably no tomorrow. Even though there's tomorrow for them, not the case for us. But I think we're going to see a lot of their high-leverage relievers early in games. So I wasn't surprised at all.

Q. Was it a tough call between McNeil and Iglesias today?

CARLOS MENDOZA: No, especially knowing that we were facing a bullpen day with all the righties they've got there. I wanted the lefties in there.

Q. Is it an advantage or disadvantage for you guys, these bullpen games?

CARLOS MENDOZA: It's hard to tell. But this is nothing new for us. I feel like, I'm going to go back to the last -- when we played the Brewers before, the last week of the season, it was pretty much a bullpen game.

And when we faced them in the Wild Card it was pretty much a bullpen day every day. We're familiar with situations like this.

This is a really good bullpen, like I said. We're going to be facing a lot of the high-leverage relievers early in games. So we've got to be ready. The guys will be ready and we've got to go out there and execute our game plan.

Q. So I guess in Game 2, Roberts didn't use a lot of his high-leverage guys because guys weren't available, basically kind of just let it go?

CARLOS MENDOZA: Yeah, but we knew who was going to be -- we had an idea that they needed to use a bulk guy. It was Game 2. Now it's Game 6; it's different.

So I'm anticipating them being a little bit more aggressive and going -- the game will tell, but we'll be ready.

Q. Do you have any way globally of solving this where starters can pitch deeper into games and everybody has four or five starters so you're not in these situations?

CARLOS MENDOZA: I mean, that's hard for me to tell. Everybody builds their team accordingly. They're dealing with a lot of injuries. It's not like they don't have starters; they're hurt. So that's something that you can't predict. It's hard to control those. So here we are in Game 6, and it will be a good game.

Q. Sort of a big picture forward-looking question on Tylor Megill. Do you look at the changes he made late in the year and the performance he gave you guys down the stretch as real and sustainable looking to 2025 and beyond?

CARLOS MENDOZA: Yeah, and he's been through a lot this year. Been on the big league roster, got sent down as a starter, pitching out of a bullpen, but I feel like he's made a lot of progress, especially with his sinker. It's becoming a weapon for him. This is a guy that has three, four plus pitches, but the sinker is becoming a real one for him.

There's a lot of progress made for him, and, yeah, he's a big part of this team moving forward.

Q. With him and Peterson seemingly both making some strides, how do you feel about sort of that pair in the future?

CARLOS MENDOZA: Really good. I mean, obviously health is going to be the key. We see it nowadays where keeping starters and arms healthy is the key, but they made huge strides for us.

And you look at Peterson, what he's done for us, one of our better starters during the regular season. And once we got to the playoff, adjusting to a bullpen role because we needed a lefty like that. And then we asked him to pitch an elimination game, gave us a chance, and he's been huge for us. So I'm proud of him.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports