

MLB World Series: Dodgers vs Blue Jays

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Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Rogers Centre

Los Angeles Dodgers Dave Roberts

Pregame 2 Press Conference

Q. Will Smith was in here and he was talking about some of the offense and some of the at-bats that he's either been having or been seeing from this team. What's got to be the key just to kind of having some of those pivotal moments and the timely hitting that you want to see from this group since the quality of at-bats has been there thus far?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, you know what? First time through, I thought we were fantastic. I really did. Tonight's going to be a similar test as far as pitcher. Then I felt the second time around we fell off as far as quality of at-bats.

I think it's just sort of being aggressive early, but then the ability to win pitches as we get deeper in the count. I think if you look at early-count hitting, they were better last night, and then as far as with two strikes, winning pitches late, fouling pitches off, they were better. That's sort of, you know, the tale of the two offenses last night.

So today's a different day. The psyche, the mentality, the mindset is good from our guys. But, yeah, I do feel good in the sense that similar type of profile with Gausman versus Yesavage last night.

Q. What are your memories of managing Max Scherzer?

DAVE ROBERTS: (Laughing.) Max. He's one of one. Great competitor. Don't want to touch him during outings, don't want to pat him on the back side. Wants to be the guy. I really enjoyed managing a future Hall of Famer. He's very smart. He's a baseball player first, then a pitcher. Yeah, it's going to be a good test for us Game 3.

Q. What is unique about his preparation compared to other starters?

DAVE ROBERTS: Not unique, but it's very focused. It's



very intentional. He does a lot of his own homework. He's very prepared. He asks a lot of questions, a lot of it from the hitter's perspective, which is really smart. And not just kind of going at it from the pitcher's side, he kind of wants to know what hitters think. So very unique in that way.

Q. Shohei was booed and there were chants at him yesterday. From what you've learned from Shohei, how does he receive that and go on to do what Shohei normally does?

DAVE ROBERTS: Well, I don't think he understood the chants. So that's one part of it. As far as being booed, I think that he understands why he was booed. I don't think he minds it. I don't think it necessarily fuels his fire. I've used this word with Shohei a lot. He's just a really good compartmentalizer, so I don't think it really affects him, and he's just there to just do his job.

Q. You're sticking with Pages again tonight. He struggled this postseason. We know what you want out of that 9 spot. Was there any consideration about maybe giving Call a start tonight because of the quality of at-bats that he's shown you? What are you seeing with Pages and what does he have to show you to continue to get opportunities on this stage?

DAVE ROBERTS: Very fair. He has struggled this postseason. What I need from him is to have quality at-bats, to be able to get on base, to win 3-2 pitches. He's playing very sound defense, which is a big part of why he's in there.

Being in the 9 hole, I'm not expecting him to carry the offense, but still be a contributor. I have contemplated other decisions. I'm keeping a close eye on it. But yeah, I mean, I still need to see some kind of uptick in consistency of performance. So when and if I decide to change -- I haven't decided that, but I'm being mindful.

Q. With the offense overall, how have you evaluated the quality of at-bats, especially in those leverage situational spots when you guys have built innings, but maybe have not been able to turn 'em into bigger opportunities?



DAVE ROBERTS: You know, I'm not going to just look at last night. I think just in totality in the postseason, I think that we can be better. I think that we have done a nice job at times of building innings, but when it comes down to winning a pitch, getting a base hit, hitting the ball the other way, whatever it might be -- taking a walk, we haven't been great with situationally. We really haven't in the postseason.

So my hope is that once we create stress, then we can sort of finish off innings. Yeah, I think we're doing a good job of getting there, but we got to do a better job of finishing, which I think that we're certainly capable of doing that.

Q. Can a game like last night serve almost as, like, a reality check for the offense or a reset of just knowing, like, for as good as the pitching staff has been up to this point of the postseason, knowing the kind of lineup you guys are facing, just kind of what they're going to need to produce in this series to put you guys where you want to be?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, I think so. These guys aren't going to go away. They're very confident. It's a very talented team. So, yeah, whether you get a two-run lead, you got to continue to tack on, you got to get to the pen, and you got to beat those guys up and keep kind of building on innings. So certainly seeing what those guys can do offensively is noted, yeah.

Q. Quickly, when you say Shohei didn't understand the chants, do you mean he couldn't hear them clearly?

DAVE ROBERTS: I think that it was more -- I think he was hitting and it was muddled, until I heard it, but I wasn't hitting. So my point being is that I understand he understands the language, but he's still hitting in the box. I don't think his focus was on a chant.

Q. What are those center field options? Is Tommy Edman an option or is that just off the table?

DAVE ROBERTS: You know, it's been off the table because of potential injury risk, and I'm not quite sure -- he hasn't taken a fly ball out there in a month, so I'm just not sure where he's at.

Q. Then Kiké, too much of a drop-off defensively to move him?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, that's kind of the thought of just kind of he hasn't played -- he's probably played a handful of innings in center field all year, and Andy's been plus in center field. So when you're in the middle of the diamond,

the defense certainly matters. But so does the offense. So I think for me it's trying to weigh it all and sum it up, but it's not Andy's sole responsibility as far as the offensive inconsistencies. I just refuse to put that on a 9 hitter.

Q. Obviously keeping Tommy on the field and playable is kind of the most important thing, but how is not having him available to play the outfield kind of limited some of your lineup construction?

DAVE ROBERTS: It really has. Part of Tommy's value is his versatility and his willingness to do anything on the diamond. With the ankle, it was made clear to me that at second base is the best way to keep him on the field and healthy. So we've done that, he's been healthy, he's performed. But, yeah, to not have the ability to kick him out to the outfield has certainly minimized some of that versatility, absolutely.

Q. Have you set your starters for Games 3 and 4 yet?

DAVE ROBERTS: Tyler will throw Game 3 and then Shohei will go Game 4.

Q. Back to their offense a little bit, Schneider said last night that it's important for them to keep you guys in the strike zone, but I would think the counter to that is to have a guy like Yamamoto who can pick apart the strike zone, put it in places in the strike zone where they're not anticipating it. How much of a game plan do you have to counter what they do?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, it's a cat and mouse. That's an aggressive hitting team, certainly early in the count. So if you can -- you have -- it's a risk-reward to be able to get quick outs versus potential taking on early count damage.

So Yamamoto has a lot of ways to access the hitting zone, the counts, and so how he does that is going to be hitter to hitter. But I know that those guys are going to be aggressive early. That's just kind of who they are.

Q. Also, he's got so many pitches to rely on too and to mix them up kind of in a counterbalance to what they expect.

DAVE ROBERTS: That's the game within the game, absolutely.

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