

NL Championship Series: Dodgers vs Brewers

Sunday, October 12, 2025

Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA

American Family Field

Los Angeles Dodgers

Manager Dave Roberts

Workout Day Press Conference

Q. Dave, obviously you guys saw this team in the regular season. Just from what you saw from them in the NLDS how different are the Brewers today? And how different are the Dodgers as you prepare for this now NLCS?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, I think that they're similar to what we saw earlier this year in the sense of, I think they're playing really good baseball. Towards the end of the year, they kind of scuffled a little bit, but they're back to playing the way they play.

I think we're in a much better spot just as far as on the health side, on the position player side, on the pitching side. And we're playing better. Yeah, it should be a great series.

Q. What went into going with Blake for Game 1? And is Shohei going to start Game 2?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yama is going to start Game 2. It's going to be Blake, then -- those are the guys that could potentially pitch on regular rest.

Q. What went into sort of -- is Shohei going to pitch towards the middle of the series --

DAVE ROBERTS: He'll pitch at some point, but we just don't know which day. But, yeah, he'll pitch at some point, yes.

Q. With the way Will is feeling now do you still see a need to carry three catchers? Or is that somewhere you can remove a position player, add a pitcher?

DAVE ROBERTS: Great question. And I have a couple of conversations to have shortly. But yeah, that's a good thought.

Q. Is the idea of pitching Shohei in front of an off day



still something that the team will want to do this series, or does that not matter as much?

DAVE ROBERTS: Not as important. I think that just kind of, appreciating having four starters in a potential seven-game series and who can pitch potentially twice, and that's kind of the impetus, versus Shohei having that day off after a game, yeah.

Q. I assume you watched last night or just the Brewers in general lately. The Padres get a lot of pub for their bullpen and velocity. Seeing especially when Misorowski comes out of the pen and Ashby and these guys throwing 100, what do you think about how they've developed the velocity in the back-end here in Milwaukee?

DAVE ROBERTS: They've done a great job with drafting, scouting player development, roster construction. They do a fantastic job. And then you take Murph and his staff, they've dominated it.

The bullpen, they get you with the velocity from the right side, the left side. They've got balls that -- sinkers, heavy sinkers. So they've got all the kind of different mixes. And they're very talented and they're not afraid to run those guys out there.

We've got our work cut out. But as far as organization-wise, they've done a fantastic job.

Q. Going back to Will Smith a minute, the Brewers like to run an awful lot. When Will is healthy, he's as good as anyone at slowing down the running game. There's other stuff that goes into it, but how confident are you in your team's ability to slow down the Brewers a little bit?

DAVE ROBERTS: I think, feel good. We're definitely mindful of those guys being aggressive on the bases. We like our guy back there, the catch-and-throw. But a lot of it is the pitchers have got to vary looks and hold and you've got to be mindful. But that's certainly something that we know they're very opportunistic on the bases, for sure.



Q. When you look at the Brewers, it's clear, they're very athletic team, they're relentless, they don't make a lot of mistakes. When you think about how you combat their style of play, what do you need to do to execute that?

DAVE ROBERTS: I think the main thing, which obviously you've got to play to put yourself in this position, is get a lead. When you have a lead, their aggression is more tempered. And when the wind's at their back, they're very aggressive.

So I think the thing is, if you can get a lead, put a little bit of pressure on them, they're a little bit more conservative.

But if not, you know, Murph is going to be aggressive. And the hit and runs, the first to thirds, and stolen bases, all that kind of stuff.

Q. Maybe a little similar to what you were saying about Misorowski and those guys, but what is having Roki, as effective as he's been for you, done for you and your management of your bullpen? And in a perfect world, do you like him in that one-inning thing or more of what we saw in his last appearance?

DAVE ROBERTS: Perfect world, one inning, because there's a cost to two innings or certainly three innings as far as on the backside of that, right? But it's certainly, you know, helped stabilize the pen with leverage. Obviously, our guys have been going through it.

But I do think in the last week our guys, we've seen some good things out of the guys out of the pen, but certainly Roki has been a big part of it.

Q. It's been suggested in a few places that Blake was slow-played for just these kind of occasions. Is it fair to say that you used him cautiously in the regular season?

DAVE ROBERTS: I think that's fair. Could he have probably pitched earlier? Possibly. But when you're talking about kind of the arm, the term of the contract, the shorter term, the season, making sure that he is raring to go for the postseason, through the postseason. So that was certainly part of the math.

That's why guys like what Clayton did and Emmet Sheehan and other guys did throughout the season to kind of get us to this point, to now be able to turn guys like Tyler loose and Blake Snell loose as well, yeah.

Q. Did Shohei's slump figure into the pitching choice at all, taking pitching off of his plate for a couple of

days, let him recalibrate, to use your word, on hitting?

DAVE ROBERTS: No, not at all. I think it was just kind of Shohei's going to pitch one game this series. So it's one game and then you have two other guys that potentially can pitch on regular rest. So how do you get sort of your best pitchers the most innings in a potential seven-game series.

So I expect a different output from Shohei on the offensive side this series. But, yeah, pushing him back was no bearing on the offensive performance.

Q. Credit to you guys for being back at this stage. The other three finalists, final four, if you will, haven't been in the World Series in this century. As you travel around the country and get out of LA, do you sense that fans are happy to see you guys at the top, or do you think fans might want to see some fresh blood?

DAVE ROBERTS: I think they're happy to see us. I think they're happy to see us. People love for fresh blood until you potentially see TV ratings. But I think they like seeing the Dodgers. Whether they like rooting against us or for us.

But we've got a lot of good players. I think we do things the right way as far as how we play the game. So I think they like seeing us, even here in Milwaukee.

Q. When you look at the Brewers lineup that doesn't chase a lot, makes a lot of contact, what kind of challenges does that pose, and how do you guys kind of balance maybe trying to get them to chase versus pitch them aggressively in the zone, put the ball in play a lot more than some teams you see?

DAVE ROBERTS: I think it's attacking them. I think a team that doesn't punch much. You know, you try to be too fine, you're going to see yourself six, eight, nine pitches and ultimately not get a strikeout.

So I think the way to attack these guys is to attack them and then sort of deal with the fallout, the result, earlier in the count versus trying to nibble and chase that punch.

But, yeah, when you get count leverage, obviously you're going to go for the punch-out in the right time. But I think, for the most part, sort of how I felt we did a good job with the Phillies and going after those guys, especially the big three, kind of that same approach. It's truly a different profile of hitter, but I think that's the same approach.

Q. Back to Roki, have you talked to him about throwing back-to-back games, and are you still



DAVE ROBERTS: He is ready for whatever we need of him. So I haven't talked to him. I talked to him -- I talk to him quite frequently -- but whatever is needed of him, he'll be ready to go. So I'm not worried about the back-to-back.

Q. Platoon advantage and matching up isn't something that's new to managing, but I think for the general public, they're starting to understand the idea of pockets more and hearing about pockets. What's changed about how you have to deploy or combat against another manager trying to attack those pockets in your lineup or maybe what you do later in games?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, I think it's lineup to lineup, roster to roster. I think platoon advantage in a vacuum always, long view, makes sense. But in a postseason setting, when you're baking in off days, you know, it's just not always something you see managers do all the time, certainly in the last few years, couple years. Specifically this year.

You're just not as aggressive as hitting for guys because the cost of the eighth inning, the ninth inning, as opposed to a line shift or change.

So I think it's sort of philosophical manager to manager, organization to organization; but for me, yeah, I'll hit for guys, potentially, but there's certain guys I trust.

And then you're talking about lineup construction and how best to essentially attack the starter to combat the potential pen and those kind of things. So that's kind of philosophical, but that's kind of overarching how I look at it.

Q. When you saw the Brewers in Spring Training, and, of course, you saw them again in July, even in spring did you think to yourself, these guys are better than people think; they have a chance to be playing deep in the season?

DAVE ROBERTS: Absolutely. They're just gritty. They're tough. And they take on Murph's personality. They've got some guys that can slug. They've got some athleticism. They really defend well. They can pitch well. So it's like they're going to be in every game. They've got complete buy-in, and so they're hungry. So those things are components that are scary. So I definitely felt they were a very good ballclub.

So anything Murph speaks to, in the Lou Holtz vein, we're not buying, because that's a very good ballclub.