

NL Championship Series: Dodgers vs Brewers

Friday, October 17, 2025

Los Angeles, California, USA

Dodger Stadium

Los Angeles Dodgers

Manager Dave Roberts

Pregame 4 Press Conference

Q. Coming into this season, you guys set the goal of getting back to the World Series. You now find yourselves in a situation in which you're one win away from doing that. When you reflect on kind of this postseason in specific and how you've seen this group come together, how does that prepare you all for this game to hopefully close out the series tonight?

DAVE ROBERTS: I think it all started certainly in Spring Training with this year's club being prepared for this moment. I think it's kind of what we kind of see the season is it doesn't matter the circumstances, the situation, we have a certain way of approaching each day.

So from the first game of the series, first game of the postseason versus being up 3-0, it doesn't change our outlook on today. We're trying to play good baseball and win a game.

When you're winning, you're trailing, we sort of have that same mindset. And so I think that consistency of kind of thinking and preparation put us in this position. But, yeah, we realize there's a lot of work to do.

And those guys aren't going to lay down. And we need to have Shohei pitch well today and get some timely hitting and put these guys away.

Q. Justin Dean has had a very defined role in this postseason. In fact you pinch-hit for him the other day, he didn't get a plate appearance. Why was that? Would you like to see him get a plate appearance? Do you reflect back to your experience in 2004, where you played three games and didn't get a plate appearance?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, I had a defined role. He has a defined role. He has a very plus skill set to play center field. And I feel that having him in center field makes our overall outfield defense better.



If there's a chance to have him bat, it's probably unlikely, but it's not impossible. It's a defined role and he just kind of raises the floor for our defense.

Q. When you go back to the pressure of repeating, what's more pressurized, actually winning last year or trying to repeat this year, or is it all the same?

DAVE ROBERTS: I would say winning last year. I think this is something that can't win the second one until you win the first one. But, yeah, we're very focused on winning this year.

I do think that it's still a different ballclub. We're trying to win this year and in totality for the Dodgers, just back to back, we're trying to win this year. So our only concern is winning this year.

Q. When you go back to Spring Training and all the injuries, where you didn't know what was going to happen with Kershaw and Ohtani and Sasaki, everybody was kind of in flux and you had guys in different stages of rehab, for it to all come together at this point late in the season and into the playoffs, how much of that was by design and how much was it by luck or was it both?

DAVE ROBERTS: I would say it's more by design -- luck in the sense that none of the injuries you referenced were season-ending. Some were, whether it's Graterol, whether it's Phillips, other guys that we've had that are season -- but I think to those guys specifically, I think it was a situation we had to be cautious, and you have to be willing to take a chance on having guys come back to full health and not pushing them to kind of use them in the regular season more.

So, I credit the entire organization for having the depth to overcome it and the players and the staff and the training staff and all that stuff to kind of allow those players to get healthy at the right time.

Q. What do you say to critics who say you're buying a championship?



DAVE ROBERTS: There's always critics. Yeah, I think that we're in a big market, we're expected to win. Our fans expect us to win. I can't speak to what revenue we're bringing in, but our ownership puts it back into players, a big chunk of it, which I know that's the way it should be with all ownership groups.

I would argue -- I don't want to get too philosophical on ownership -- but I do think that trying to be a competitor as Mark Walter and our ownership group is, that's what you would want. I think that that's what sports fans would want from everyone, to get the best of their team. And I think we do as good a job as anyone.

Q. Acknowledging that winning this year is of utmost importance, if you guys do win, how much thought have you sort of put into what the historic nature of what you guys have been able to do here, and especially to potentially win three titles in six seasons, where that would stand all time for what this organization has accomplished?

DAVE ROBERTS: Honestly, I don't get too far ahead. But pose the question, it's remarkable, could be remarkable. It's a great organization to kind of be looked at in that vein is amazing. But, like I said, we're focused on '25 and let the reflection happen later, because that's what it is once it happens, reflection.

Right now we're in the mode of getting the job done. But, yeah, it's pretty cool.

Q. Is it Roki available tonight?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yes.

Q. Is he ready?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yes.

Q. In the scenario that you end the series tonight, how would you take almost a week of rest for the next step?

DAVE ROBERTS: You know, we've had experience with that. I don't know yet. I think that right now we're just focused on tonight. And nothing is guaranteed. We've got to play well.

If that happens, I'll get with the coaching staff and we'll figure out the best way to prepare. But right now I truthfully am just thinking about winning tonight.

Q. 21 years ago today, you made that famous stolen base.

DAVE ROBERTS: A long time ago.

Q. You guys were down 0-3. Now you're up 3-0. How much do you have to be careful on those one-play, one moment and things flip?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah. Yeah, I mean, it's certainly better to be up 3-0 than down 3-0. Anything is possible. You've still got to play out the series. I do think that we have the mind to put these guys away tonight, play our best baseball, don't give them any hope.

And 21 years ago, we found some hope and kept going. But I definitely don't want history to repeat itself.

Q. Kiké said as a teammate, you can kind of take Mookie Betts for granted because he's so good at everything, so to speak. But now we're in a situation where Derek Jeter is critiquing his jump throws. From a strict baseball standpoint, talk about the development of when it was, okay, we have to do this, versus definitely this guy's the option we want?

DAVE ROBERTS: There's the "we needed it." We flipped Gavin Lux from shortstop to second base, and Mookie was open and willing to help the ballclub. And seeing where he's at now, trusting him in any spot, making that play in the 6 hole, yeah, I marvel at it.

And it is easy to take that play for granted. And you see the way he started the season offensively and to never make an excuse, to continue to play defense, to grind and to kind of ride his season offensively, remarkable.

But it's a lot of talent. It's a high-character person. There's a reason why he's got three rings already and a bunch of hardware.

Q. You've talked about learning Shohei Ohtani, the pitcher, this season and just the compete that he has on the mound. With a guy like him taking the mound tonight in a situation in which you could all close it out and move on to the World Series, how special is that for him? And how much confidence do you have in him being that guy to take the ball today?

DAVE ROBERTS: Very confident. I think this is his opportunity to make his mark on this series. And, so, we're going to see his best effort. So, I feel good that he's pitching for us. And there's going to be some series focused and compete tonight.

Q. Was there an event, a game, a bus ride, something, that really, truly locked this team in with its sense of



urgency this season?

DAVE ROBERTS: I don't know. I do think that Baltimore series was a point, I think, that we started playing better baseball. But whether it's me talking to players, them talking amongst themselves, understanding where the schedule is at, we needed to kind of tighten some things up.

And I think the last -- from that point in time, I think that overall I think the win-loss has been really good, and just the quality has been really good, playing baseball. But I don't know if there was any bus ride or team flight or anything.

Q. Given that Ohtani hasn't pitched since 13 days ago and I think two starts in the last 30 days, are there any limitations on him at all pitching-wise?

DAVE ROBERTS: No limitations. I expect him to be good. He's built up to, he can throw seven innings. I think that I feel comfortable if it looks right to getting him to 100 pitches. I think that's kind of parameters, soft parameters, probably.

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