

NL Division Series:

Cubs vs Brewers

Wednesday, October 8, 2025

Chicago, Illinois, USA

Wrigley Field

Chicago Cubs

Craig Counsell

Pregame 3 Press Conference

Q. How did Cade's session yesterday go, and how is he feeling today?

CRAIG COUNSELL: All good news from yesterday. Everything went really well. The plan is to throw another bullpen on Friday.

Q. Guaranteed first dumb question, and that is will the way the wind is blowing impact any of your moves today, in particular pitchers, while you look at them?

CRAIG COUNSELL: The answer is yes. I don't know about the pitchers. Will it affect a decision in the game today? I think probably yes. That's a yes.

But where, I don't know if I could tell you exactly. This is conditions that we've seen a lot this year for sure, and it looks like it's going to be tough to -- the big part of the park certainly is going to be tough today.

Q. Jumping on the weather bandwagon there, obviously in April you guys did a really good job scoring runs in these conditions. Do you hope your team or do you believe your team can pull upon that experience and use it to their advantage, the offense in particular?

CRAIG COUNSELL: Yeah, I mean, I don't know -- we have scored runs in these conditions, no question. There's been games where lots of runs have been scored in these conditions.

It's not a rule, it's not a guarantee, but it just makes -- there's some balls it's going to knock them down. That's just the way it is.

As a hitter, it's still just -- it's swing decisions still and get the right pitches to hit, and maybe there's some effect in some certain counts or something like that. That's still the



most important thing.

You can think about things a little differently. You can't dramatically overhaul your hitting approach on a day like this, and that's important. That's important. But know the conditions, and that's what we've tried to stress all year. Embrace the conditions, know the conditions. That's what we've tried to stress.

Q. One more related to the wind blowing in. In Jameson in particular, he seems to have been very good this year when these conditions have been here. I know you were asked yesterday about letting maybe your starter go longer. Is it possible you view it almost as a regular season start? When he gets into trouble, instead of doing something in advance; does that make sense?

CRAIG COUNSELL: Yeah, I think -- I know what you're asking. I think this is a win-or-go-home game for us. I think that changes the calculus, absolutely.

It's win or go home. We also have to win three here. We have to win two after today. At some point we're going to need someone to give us some length in terms of getting outs.

Q. Any changes to your lineup other than maybe Michael Busch back?

CRAIG COUNSELL: Yeah, so the same lineup as Game 1.

Q. Does leaving Javier out of the roster a decision you'll look back to?

CRAIG COUNSELL: Assad?

Q. Yeah.

CRAIG COUNSELL: Well, look, our choice really, frankly, what we got down to was Assad or Ben Brown. We ended up choosing Ben Brown. Ben delivered a really good scouting. From that perspective, no.



Javy is still under consideration certainly for future rosters.

Q. Such a successful pitching year with the profile of your staff and so many good elite defenders. When the playoffs come, does the pitching profile change? Do you ever find yourself thinking you have guys that are more built for the regular season than the playoffs?

CRAIG COUNSELL: I mean, look, good pitchers, that plays throughout the season. I think that's what you're going to need.

We haven't pitched well in two games. I wish I could tell you more than that. We haven't pitched well in a couple of games, and that's hurt us.

I think maybe what you're asking is do you want strikeouts, do you want strikeouts? I love strikeouts. Every pitching coach and every pitching guy loves strikeouts. They're also hard to get. It's hard to strike out 30 percent of the guys that you face. Those are pretty good numbers.

So I think it's always something you have your eye on because it is the thing about pitchers that shows stuff and dominance. But in the end, you've also got to get people out. So there's kind of a graph to that stuff, right?

We've had successful, successful pitching this year and guys that have got outs through a lot of sample, through some really big sample. They've had kind of two bad starts in a row here.

Q. This might be kind of an obvious question given it's an elimination game for you guys, but given how the first innings have gone pitching-wise through the last two games, how important from a momentum standpoint, vibe standpoint, is getting a zero from Taillon in the first inning?

CRAIG COUNSELL: I think that's a good question. There's only one answer I can give, too: Yes. Zero would really help.

Yeah, look, I think a zero would help for sure. We put ourselves in a great spot back to even in Game 2, put ourselves in a huge hole Game 1. Really played with a lead in one of these games in the playoffs so far. Game 3 was really the only game we played with a lead for more than half the game.

I think playing with a lead obviously is going to make pitching decisions a little -- always a little different. So part of that is putting up a zero in the first inning.

Q. Pretty show I know the answer but I'll ask anyway, and that's any Knute Rockne or Vince Lombardi speeches to any of your players? Individually I know collectively you probably wouldn't do anything like that. Just positive reinforcement on the day of?

CRAIG COUNSELL: Yeah, more of just conversation for sure. Whether you want to consider those that caliber of speech, it's up to you. But absolutely conversations, yeah.

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