

NL Division Series:

Cubs vs Brewers

Friday, October 10, 2025

Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA

American Family Field

Chicago Cubs

Manager Craig Counsell

Workout Day Press Conference

Q. I was just curious, do you guys have a starting pitcher for tomorrow, for Game 5?

CRAIG COUNSELL: No, not yet.

Q. Craig, when you look at how difficult your schedule has been for the last week and your guys have played three elimination games in a row, might that be something that just brings these great players and athletes together, brings out the very best in them? Is that something from your experience, is that what you're looking at right now?

CRAIG COUNSELL: Look, I think we spent some time talking about how you feel in the third game against San Diego, certainly. We've now been through it two other times. So this is game No. 4 under that scenario.

Yeah, so I think we're 3-0 in that scenario, so guys have processed it pretty well. I think. We've gotten some big performances.

But yeah, great athletes do rise to the occasion in moments like this. We've seen a lot of examples of it with this team.

Q. On your starting pitching decision, is Shota's recent struggles factoring in? How much, or do you just look more at the totality of the body of work?

CRAIG COUNSELL: I think this is a game where we're going to have everybody available, maybe with the exception of Matt Boyd. Everyone is going to be available.

It's cliché here, but I'm going to tell you, we've got 11 pitchers to figure out how to get 27 outs. That's how we're treating it.

We're certainly going to need the bullpen formula that



we've used. We're going to have to get half the outs from not those five guys, right? And that's how we're looking at it, and that's what we're going to have to get.

Q. Craig, just as a guy from the Midwest, how great, how special is an elimination game between the Cubs and the Brewers, Chicago and Milwaukee? I know you're all about your team, of course, but is it a little funny to be -- a funny feeling to be going back there potentially to kind of add on to how long it's been there since they've won a series?

CRAIG COUNSELL: I've been thinking about this. I'm just thinking about how do we advance. It's almost like the opponent doesn't matter right now. You're just trying to -- how do we advance.

Because the others, like who you play and all the stories around that, that doesn't matter. How do we advance.

That's been really my focus. The color of the uniform, it doesn't matter. Like let's just figure out how to beat them, figure out how to put together a game plan for their personnel and try to figure out a way to beat them.

It's survive and advance; that's it. Doesn't matter who you're playing.

Q. I realize this is a remote scenario, but is there any way that Cade Horton feels great tomorrow and one of your players is injured and --

CRAIG COUNSELL: No.

Q. What do you think the Brewers will do? Do you think you'll see a lot of Misorowski? Do you think you'll see an opener? What are your thoughts on their side?

CRAIG COUNSELL: I think they're looking at it the same way we are. They may have a couple guys down because they've had a couple guys pitch a little more.

But we're going to see Misorowski -- you know we're going to see Misorowski, you know we're going to see Uribe, you



know we're going to see Koenig, going to see Megill. You kind of plan on seeing those guys. Those are their top guys.

Everybody else is available, I'm sure.

In a scenario like this, it's a bunch of that, and our job is just to make it hard on those guys and to affect the plan and to put them in bad situations.

Q. What has been the impact of Tucker as of late, and how have you seen him slowly become more the real Kyle Tucker version at-bat?

CRAIG COUNSELL: Look, Kyle is such a gifted hitter. With that, I think goes incredible expectations. In a way, the way he started off his tenure with the Cubs probably raised the expectations, right? And since then some things have not gone right.

But my thought in this always has been, like, Kyle is going to impact this thing. He's just too good of a player, too good of a hitter. He's going to impact this thing.

Hopefully it's happening at the best time, right? Definitely the last two games have been some of his best at-bats, and sometimes you just see it by the takes. The takes have been just really solid. I thought the first inning takes, some of the takes against Ashby, that gives you a pretty good idea a lot of times how a hitter of feeling.

Q. Just last night you were able to get the add-on runs that you haven't been able to get after the first inning and other games this series. What did you like or what was the difference in the approach at the plate after the first inning last night that maybe helped and might help you moving forward?

CRAIG COUNSELL: I mean, the difference is -- I don't know how many innings we put the lead-off guy on, but it felt like we had the lead-off guy on maybe five of the nine innings.

I just think as soon as you do that, it's just -- the pitcher is under pressure immediately.

So we didn't cash in every single one. We cashed in on some homers mostly, but we did put them under a lot of pressure, and that pressure, I think, eventually leads to the runs. Could lead to the home run when a guy comes out and he's had pressure the last inning.

So I think we did a much better job throughout the 27 outs last night of just applying pressure.

Q. Did Horton throw his bullpen session today, and if so, how did it go?

CRAIG COUNSELL: He did throw his bullpen. He threw we call it an up-down bullpen, so he threw like an inning, sat, then went out and threw another inning.

Everything went really well. It was really a positive day. Obviously how he feels kind of post and how he feels tomorrow are really important. But the actual throwing session went very well.

Q. You've talked about the first inning and so has Murph to the point of it seems like the first inning has taken over for the ninth inning in these playoff series. Is this the first time that that's felt that way to you during your experience? Is it just more pronounced? Or are we just hearing it more?

CRAIG COUNSELL: Well, it's hard not to be so focused on the first inning with just the way the first four games have gone. Really it's just all of our playoff games have gone, right?

Maybe it's the results. I think the first inning is a big inning in the game, probably underestimated how big the inning is.

But this series has been way past that. It's been, I don't know, 60 percent of the runs scored in the series have come in one inning and it's the first inning. I don't know what the number is.

I think it just makes you focused on it, absolutely, yeah. I told you yesterday, I thought Matt Boyd's first inning was absolutely crucial to the game. Especially after the Yelich walk, he made pitches to kind of lock down that inning, and that's a tremendous confidence builder for sure.

Q. Are you guys packing for LA?

CRAIG COUNSELL: Yeah, I mean, we're going to LA after Milwaukee, so you have to be prepared to do it. That's the plan. Absolutely.

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