

NL Division Series: Dodgers vs Phillies

Saturday, October 4, 2025
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA
Citizens Bank Park

Philadelphia Phillies Manager Rob Thomson Pregame 1 Press Conference

Q. Why did you come to the determination you wanted to go with Jesus Luzardo in Game 2?

ROB THOMSON: He's just pitched so well the last month. He had pitched prior to Ranger during the regular season. It just made the most sense to me. We'll have Ranger available out of the pen tonight. We'll have Nola available if there's an emergency.

Q. Obviously based off of what Ranger did a few years ago, he can pitch out of that role. But what do you see, what pocket would you imagine using him in this game?

ROB THOMSON: Really comfortable with our leverage guys at the end, starting in the sixth inning, so it probably will be early, it could be an extra-inning game, that type of thing, for tonight.

Q. For Nola, what do you see overall as kind of his role in this series?

ROB THOMSON: Well, he could be length. He could be starting. Because I'm not announcing a Game 3 starter until after Monday's game, just to see how it all plays out.

Q. In terms of Harrison Bader and what he's brought for this team, I know at the time of the deadline in your mind there was -- you needed to see an outfielder kind of grab on to roles if you were going to give them regular time. He became essentially your day-to-day center fielder. What's allowed him to do that? What have you seen in him to be that value-add against righties and lefties?

ROB THOMSON: His numbers this year anyway are better, a little bit better against righties than lefties. But from day one we knew we were getting good defense, plus defense, and he got hotter than a pistol for a while. He's



cooled off a little bit, but he's looked good in the past couple of days.

But he's just played himself into the everyday center fielder in my mind because of the defense, and I trust that he's going to swing the bat and he's going to get on base. And hitting him in the 8 slot today, it's more about turning the lineup over with him and Stott at the end, and we get to Trea and Schwarber and Harper. Yeah, he's played great for us. I love the energy, and I love the confidence that he brings to the team.

Q. With Otto Kemp, two-part question. What do you see as a role for him? Where do you trust him right now in the field? And just overall a guy who was an undrafted free agent, came up and really made a big impact few different times this year. How cool is that to see for him and now he's part of a postseason roster?

ROB THOMSON: It's a great story, being undrafted. I think part of the reason he was undrafted, he had some injury issues in his draft year. But that's great story. He's worked hard. He can play all over the diamond. Swings a bat. He's got a great approach.

I see either him or Wilson probably playing left field against left-handed pitching. Possibly pinch-hit. Wilson's more of a pinch-run type guy than Kemp is. But I really like his ability, and I think he's got a great future.

Q. So Trea Turner yesterday said he had yet to go a hundred percent. What gives you confidence that he can lead off today, and what have you seen from him over the last few days and in the scrimmage that makes you feel like he cannot miss a beat when he's out there?

ROB THOMSON: Yeah, maybe he said he didn't go 100 percent, but I think he thinks he can go 100 percent.

He played seven innings in that intrasquad game the other night. Moved around well. Ran balls out. Probably at 90 percent. So I think he's ready to go, and I'm glad he's ready to go. He did a great job. We kept him back here



when we went to LA and Arizona, and Turner's kept telling us that we're back here that he's doing great, he's getting better. He's, ehh. But we got back and we saw it firsthand. And they were correct; they did a great job.

Q. The ballclub released its postseason hype video this morning. And Zack Wheeler had an appearance at the end of it where he basically said October is why you guys do this. How much is Zack around the club right now? And if he's around a lot, how much does that help the team?

ROB THOMSON: Yeah, he gives a lot of confidence even if he's not playing or pitching. He's here today. I can tell you that. How much he's going to be with us I'm not 100 percent sure. But he wanted to be here today. And I'm glad he's here. He's just a great person to have around. He just has that aura about him.

Q. You guys added Walker Buehler not too long ago. What does he add to the clubhouse, not only when it comes to the success and being a competitor but also as a guy who has been a teammate of the team that you're going to face off here?

ROB THOMSON: I think he's given some information to our pitching coaches. He's a winner. It's like having Wheels around. He's a winner. He has that aura about him.

We're going to use him out of the pen in this series. Whether it's for length or for one inning, that's to be seen. Yeah, he's a great teammate. He's in the middle of everything in that clubhouse. And he's a good guy to have around. And he's got a lot of talent.

Q. Bader was good for you no matter where you put him in the lineup the last two months. What do you like about the construction of the lineup today with him hitting eighth that makes you feel it could be successful?

ROB THOMSON: As I said before, I like him there because I think he can get on base in a number of different ways. He can turn the line-up over for Turner and Schwarber and Harp. Plus, with all their lefties in their bullpen, we had to go right, left, right, left, right, left all the way down, other than the Schwarber-Harper tandem. He gives us a lot of length swinging the bat.

Q. What do you like about Stott in that final spot? Does that speak to the depth of this lineup. You've seen Bryce turn around and swing, find his swing? What do you think about when you fill out that lineup card, having Bader and Stott there at the end?

ROB THOMSON: Yeah, two guys that potentially get on base for the guys at the top. Stotty has been swinging the bat great. As I said they made that adjustment earlier in the year, and since then, he's taken off. He looks like the guy that we think he is, is that line-drive, gap guy, occasional power, really controls the strike zone, and he's done it. Hopefully he keeps doing that.

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