

NL Division Series: Dodgers vs Phillies

Monday, October 6, 2025

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

Citizens Bank Park

Philadelphia Phillies

Manager Rob Thomson

Pregame 2 Press Conference

Q. How difficult is it to balance, you need to win tonight, but even with the off day tomorrow, you don't want to gut your pitching and have nothing for Game 3, I guess?

ROB THOMSON: This is a big game tonight. We talked about all year long winning series and how the first game is important. Well, the second game is pretty important, when you get to a five-game series or a seven-game series, because it's a swing game.

We'll use Ranger out of the bullpen tonight in leverage. Nola would still be an emergency, meaning extra inning game, long extra-inning game. And we'll figure out Game 3.

Q. You expect to use Ranger or he's available?

ROB THOMSON: He's available. I could use him at any point.

Q. With Ranger pitching one tonight, that wouldn't necessarily exclude him from starting Game 3 after an off day would it?

ROB THOMSON: Not necessarily. Might be a little shorter. But, again, you could use him out of the bullpen, too.

Q. With Bader, I know he's not in the lineup whether he's able to pinch-hit, how much does that affect your flexibility, late-game outfielder, defensive replacement, pinch-hitting, all that?

ROB THOMSON: We still have Kepler there. And we've play him in center field. I feel comfortable with where we're at there.

I think -- he's going to test it out -- but the only thing that is



hindering Bader right now is just being able to run 100 percent. We think he can hit and run at 75, 80 percent. So it really affects his defense more than anything.

Q. Was there anything specific for starting Otto over Weston Wilson there?

ROB THOMSON: He's just a little bit better against left-hand pitching. Both those guys faced Snell in LA. Neither one had a whole lot of success. Kemp struck out twice in three at-bats. Willie struck out twice in two at-bats. But I just like Kemp's bats a little bit better.

Q. It's been mentioned many times about how this is four hours of hell for a visiting team. Is there any challenges with this crowd when they can go silent for the home team?

ROB THOMSON: I don't think so. We've dealt with that before. We've dealt with negative response before, too. That's just the passion of the fans. And I thought they were great the other night. I really did. I thought they were boisterous pretty much throughout.

Q. Game 1, the Dodgers threw a lot of pitches at you guys in zone. Conversely Blake Snell is a guy who likes to induce a lot of chase. How do you tell the lineup to be cognizant of both without really getting caught in between?

ROB THOMSON: Just what you said. Just gotta be aware of what's going on. Our focus is controlling the strike zone, and that's it. If we do that, we'll be fine.

Q. You've been confident in Otto pretty much since day one. How has he been able to handle all that adversity -- coming up, going down, the injuries he's battled, all that?

ROB THOMSON: He's been great. He struggled a little bit before we sent him down. And I think he understood that there's a whole bunch of things you can't control. And the second time he came up, he was really good and really consistent, too.



He's a gamer. He's an even-keel guy. Nothing really affects him too much. He's pretty good in this environment.

Q. How would you assess Jesus Luzardo's first season here with you guys? And what do you expect to see out of him here tonight?

ROB THOMSON: I think he's been tremendous. He got off to a really good hot start. He went cold there for a bit. But it showed me how good he is by getting beyond that and coming back and finishing the year strong. It showed me how tough he is mentally.

He's been great. This was a great pickup for us in the offseason. And he's been throwing as well as anybody in the last eight, nine starts. I expect the same thing out of him tonight.

Q. You ended up using Duran in Game 1 but not until you were already trailing. Could there be more of an incentive to use him earlier than you've typically used him if you have a lead today?

ROB THOMSON: Yes.

Q. Left field is obviously not Otto's natural position. What have you seen from him this year defensively that gives you the confidence to start him there in a postseason game?

ROB THOMSON: He's really improved. His routes were off a little bit when he first came up. And him and Paco did a lot of work. He takes power shags during batting practice a lot.

He's really improved. And he runs a lot better than people think he runs. But I think he's improved tremendously.

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