

NL Wildcard Game: Reds vs Dodgers

Monday, September 29, 2025

Los Angeles, California, USA

Dodger Stadium

Los Angeles Dodgers

Mookie Betts

Workout Day Press Conference

Q. As you guys prepare for this match-up, what do you think poses as the biggest challenge? And what's the (indiscernible) as you guys get ready for the match-up?

MOOKIE BETTS: I think once you get to the postseason, everybody kind of, it's the same. It's a new season and you've got to play good baseball no matter what. These teams didn't make here on accident. It wasn't luck. So every team is going to be really good.

But that's what makes it fun, and I think we just have to play our brand of baseball and don't worry about the rest of it. Just it is what it is. And not really focus on what they bring, but what we can control ourselves and have good at-bats and throwing strikes.

Q. What's your evaluation of the pitching staff, particularly the starters this year going into the postseason as compared to last year?

MOOKIE BETTS: I mean, we have four or five starters now. So we're definitely deeper there. And guys have been pitching well. They feed off of each other.

The front office did an amazing job giving us this type of staff, and the boys have done an amazing job in performing. I'm sure they'll be excited and ready to go and continue their performance, and I think that's going to give us a really good shot.

Q. Where do you think Ohtani fits in, especially in a short series?

MOOKIE BETTS: I think with him probably being the best player in the world, he can fit in wherever he wants to fit in. Whenever he feels like he needs to go in and pitch, I'm pretty positive nobody with a Dodgers uniform will say no.



Q. How do you guys feel collectively as a team going into the playoffs with a target on your back, world champions and all of that?

MOOKIE BETTS: I think we all feel good. We're not really worried about the target on our back. That doesn't have anything to do with the task at hand. We're all focused on what we've got that do to take care of business. And we won't let anything exterior add pressure to it.

Q. After the back-to-back walk-off losses in Baltimore you've won 15 out of 20. What changed?

MOOKIE BETTS: I don't know. I don't know. I mean, you just go through your ups and your downs. That's really it. Just got back to playing good baseball, throwing strikes and timely hitting.

I think for a stretch there that some of us weren't really producing like we needed to. So it was just a collection of us starting to play a little better, pitch a little better, hit a little better, better base running, better defense, just playing better baseball. I think that's really us. And we just have to keep doing it.

Q. Is there such a thing as flipping the switch and playing that way?

MOOKIE BETTS: No, there's no -- I don't think that exists. I think you play a game how you play the game and it doesn't matter the situation going on around you. You don't really rise to the occasion.

You kind of fall to your training. We train properly. We train hard every day. So there shouldn't be much of a change when the game comes.

Q. You mentioned pitchers feeding off each other. I guess in the notion of timely hits, do you feel like in your lineup you guys feed off of each other as well?

MOOKIE BETTS: Yeah, I would definitely say so. I definitely would say so. But at any given -- the beauty of this is that anybody can start. It doesn't just start from Shohei or Freddie or myself. It starts with Pages and



Tommy Edman and guys down their sometimes (indiscernible) work.

You can start a new era, and that's why we're so good. And you've got to play a nine full innings to beat us. Just keep applying pressure like that.

Q. You've obviously done this before and reached the pinnacle a couple times. This season, every playoff run usually tells a different story. Yes, there can be some similarities. For you personally, what feels different heading into this one?

MOOKIE BETTS: It's a new year. Different challenges. I think I just try and stay present. So I don't really know, to answer the question, just because we'll find out as we go.

Like I said, this postseason will definitely pose different challenges, different things, different teams. It will be fun. I'm ready for whatever it brings.

Q. I know this is just like who you are now, but the fact that the game's better now more than ever and you're going to be the shortstop in this stage, what kind of pride do you take in that? And what does that say to you about just the progress you've made there the last 11 months or so?

MOOKIE BETTS: I take a lot of pride of it because the start of the season I wasn't sure I would end the season there. I thought there may have to be adjustment at some point because from lack of trust or whatever. I just didn't know. I didn't know.

I've got to give Woody a shout-out, my boy Brian (phonetic), Brian Goins (phonetic), who I would call all the time, go over situations and what he would do, just been best friends for a long time. He definitely helped me through this process.

I'm just proud of myself for making it all the way through the year and actually achieving a goal that I kind of set out to do, and that's being a major league shortstop, and say I did it and I'm good at it. Now it's just a matter of going out and doing it on the big stage.

It was just like everybody else, that's my first time playing short in the postseason when it really matters. I'm sure there will be butterflies, but it's all in the love of the game.

Q. Looking back, now that you've had some space from it, what do you think is the biggest reason why you got right offensively these last few weeks, months?

MOOKIE BETTS: I think I was just able to finally get my strength back and sustained strength. It's just hard to gain your weight and sustain strength in the middle of a season, when you've been traveling and doing all these things.

I think I finally got all that back and was able to fix a couple of mechanics and didn't really have to try and add on power anymore. I could just swing and let it do its thing.

Q. You just said when you started the season you weren't sure you would end the season at short. At what point did you think, okay, I got this?

MOOKIE BETTS: When I started playing short and I didn't have to think about it. I could just go out there and play. And now when I go out and play shortstop, it's like I'm going out to right field. I don't even think about it.

My training is good. I believe in myself. I believe in what I can do. And now it's just like go have fun. When the ball comes, have fun. So that's when I knew I could finish the season.

I don't know when it happened, but there was just a point -- I think it was probably after three or four errors, probably after three or four errors. I was making errors I never made before. I have never been in these situations. So once I got into the situation and understood how to do what I did wrong and understand how to do it, just have fun.

Q. Is there anything about that transition to shortstop that you learned about yourself in that process that allowed you to help with the offensive circles in the course of the season -- how you handled that adversity, how you handled dealing with something you never dealt with before?

MOOKIE BETTS: Yeah, I think probably when that moment I had where I could just go have fun, play short, then I could kind of flip my brain back to hitting. It's hard to go back and forth. It's a learned (indiscernible) going back between offense and defense. And when I was in right I didn't have to do that. I was just playing right. I didn't have to think about playing right.

So, at first, I was playing short and had to think about everything with short, what came with that. And then had to flip it back to offense. Once short became where I didn't have to think about it anymore, I could really think about offense. Think it slowly but surely started to get better and better.

Q. There was also a point when you guys were playing Blue Jays, where you said in front of your locker, my season is over; I just want to do what I can to help the



team. Was that a relief, a turning point for you as well?

MOOKIE BETTS: Yes, because I think I just accepted failing and so my thought process on failing changed. And it was instead of looking at the things as failures, I looked at it as, okay, well, I know that's not it. Now I can move to the next thing. I know that's not it, move to the next thing, instead of sulking in -- well, I tried this and it failed, now I don't know where to go. I just used it as positive things and eventually turned.

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