

NL Wildcard Game: Reds vs Dodgers

Monday, September 29, 2025

Los Angeles, California, USA

Dodger Stadium

Los Angeles Dodgers

Manager Dave Roberts

Workout Day Press Conference



Q. Can you go over your pitching decisions? (Indiscernible) Snell. Do you have a Game 2, Game 3?

DAVE ROBERTS: No Game 3, Yamamoto will start Game 2.

Q. What are your plans for Ohtani, pitching-wise, right now?

DAVE ROBERTS: If there's a Game 3 he'll probably start Game 3.

Q. How about Clayton, what's your plans with him?

DAVE ROBERTS: He threw yesterday a full ramp-up. So he's not going to be on this roster.

Q. He'll be back perhaps if you're in the DS?

DAVE ROBERTS: If we're fortunate enough, he'll be on the DS roster, yes.

Q. Was there much consideration of maybe doing Ohtani in Game 1? How much of that (indiscernible) was trying to manage his workload and allow him to focus on hitting these first two games?

DAVE ROBERTS: I think that, you know, the workload, it's the proper rest for Snell, Yamamoto. And obviously we don't know what's going to happen with a Game 3. But also there's an off day after that. So just thinking through everything.

Q. Any update on Will Smith?

DAVE ROBERTS: Will is in the cage taking batting practice. Came out of it well. He's going to take part in the live session outside tonight during our workout. So encouraged.

Q. Is there any consideration maybe keeping him on the roster even if he's not catching as a potential pinch hit option?

DAVE ROBERTS: If he can get through today and feel good, then it's a viable thought, yeah.

Q. With Ohtani, obviously if you guys can wrap this thing up earlier, if you can finish the series in two games, has implications for the next series, how much does that factor into placing Ohtani where you did?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, that played a role as well. Absolutely.

Q. Looking back to last year's postseason run compared to this one, what is the biggest collective difference you see with this team?

DAVE ROBERTS: The starting pitching is considerably better. Is in a much better health state as well. That's probably the biggest difference between last year's team.

Q. As you prepare for the Reds, their style of play, are there trademarks of a Terry Francona team that you've seen in the Reds this year?

DAVE ROBERTS: You know, I think that Tito just kind of lets his guys do their thing. I think that they're a resilient group. They play 27 outs. They play with energy.

Yeah, I think it's a very well-balanced team. Obviously, the starters are very notable. But they put the ball in play. They compete. They play solid defense. He's got some guys he trusts in the pen.

But I think for the most part, Tito just lets guys play and play with energy.

Q. I saw your game (indiscernible) season. Did you see some improvement?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, I did. He looked really good. I thought his at-bats were really good. It was good to get



him some consistent at-bats. And like I've always said, I think Hyeseong, he's been fantastic for us this year. And so going into tomorrow evening, we've got some tough roster decisions that we're continuing to talk through right now, but he's had a heck of a year.

Q. With the whole World Series hangover, how important is it setting the tone in Game 1?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, I don't think the hangover part kind of, I don't think that's relevant anymore. I think that we are locked in and focused on this series. But I do think that being at home, not having to travel, it's important for us to strike early and really not let these guys hang around and gain confidence.

And I've talked about edge, and just keeping our edge and not kind of giving these guys any opportunity of life.

Q. When you look at Sasaki, how good he looks, how do you weigh that against maybe the most pressurized situations, the fact that it was only twice? How do you weigh all that and do you know if he's going to be on the roster?

DAVE ROBERTS: I expect him to be on the roster. I expect -- we haven't finalized anything yet. Yeah, I still think that the way he threw, the big games that he's pitched in before, I think that that's something that I can trust, certainly.

I don't know what role what that would be, but, yeah, I think that what I've seen in the last couple of outings, even the ones in Triple-A are considerably different than the ones he had earlier this year.

Q. How much confidence do you have in the new version of the bullpen?

DAVE ROBERTS: Much more confidence than we had a couple weeks ago. And I think that it's because those guys have shown the confidence in themselves where they're throwing the baseball. I think last week we saw guys more on the attack, setting the tone versus pitching behind or pitching too careful.

So I think that that Seattle series was really impressive from our pen.

Q. You mentioned that you're more confident about the pitching going into this postseason. You've only had one guy throw above 170 innings -- I know a lot of that is due to injury -- but how much does it help to have fresh arms that haven't gone through the wear and tear of the season?

DAVE ROBERTS: I think that's a good thing. I don't think it's everything. But, yeah, Yoshinobu is the only guy that's gone north of that, but I think that he's thrown his best in the second half of the season.

But the other guys, there's a lot left, bullets left in the season. So I think that when the postseason gets more intensified, having those extra bullets could be a benefit. And our guys certainly aren't taxed as far as innings this year.

Q. What are the inherent dangers of facing a six-seed that just clinched and kind of has the momentum because they clinched it yesterday, they're going into the playoffs as it is?

DAVE ROBERTS: I think the dangers are the youthful enthusiasm, the naivete. There's not a lot of experience. I think that sometimes it happens so quick that they're just riding a wave. And I think a way to combat that is we have to not take them lightly because it's a really good ballclub and they played their way into the postseason.

Also we're playing against a team that essentially feels like they have nothing to lose, that kind of mindset.

But we're aware of it. We're focused on playing well and know that these guys are a good ballclub. We've got to play good baseball. But those, just to answer your question.

Q. How are Max and Tommy doing? Do you expect them to have any limitations this week?

DAVE ROBERTS: You know, I don't think so. I think they're both in a good spot right now. I'm glad that we gave Max the weekend. Tommy will now have had two days for that ankle. So I expect them both to be in the lineup tomorrow.

Q. How does a postseason like this compare with coming in after the success of last year, versus the last Octobers couple of objects, when you have the pressure and not having won the year before; does it create a different vibe when you guys started this run?

DAVE ROBERTS: One thing that's different is we have one day off and then we're playing after the regular season. Yeah, I don't know about the pressure. It's hard to answer the pressure thing. I want to win this year as much as I wanted to last year.

I don't know if it's because -- why that is. But I think that the players feel the same way. I don't know if it's easier or



harder that we won last year; but, honestly, all we care about is winning this year. Yeah, winning this year.

Q. Mookie was just in here. He was pretty transparent about his return to full health, embracing playing shortstop and the mental challenges he overcome. I guess, for you, knowing the athlete he is and what he's capable, when did you see him make the turn and really enjoy playing the game and the offense coming to him again?

DAVE ROBERTS: You know, I think the offense, when he kind of said that the year was lost and when he kind of made that admission, that's when I think it sort of flipped for him, just freeing his mind up. But then there was a play -- I don't recall where it was at -- but a play going to his backhand that he made this play, pretty spectacular play, where, for me, it was just being an athlete playing shortstop and not just kind of the mechanical part of it.

Like, he just looked like a natural shortstop right there. I don't remember the backhand play, but then he's been as good as I could have ever expected playing that position.

Q. Over the weekend, you said that with Tanner, specifically that he didn't have the season that he envisioned, (indiscernible) in October. How much of that is true for a lot of the guys, that they didn't have the seasons they were hoping going into this year?

DAVE ROBERTS: I could spit out six or seven names pretty easily, and that's the great thing about the postseasons. You know, moments and opportunities present themselves and how you perform.

People remember those moments. And so we've got guys like that in our clubhouse right now. So, yeah, that's kind of the hope. And the messaging from me that nothing that these guys have done prior matters. It's kind of the next four weeks and how we're prepared mentally, physically, and to go out there and play our best baseball, individually, collectively. So Tanner is certainly in that bucket.

Q. Just want (indiscernible) the feelings over the postseason last year. How much does it help you to navigate the team now that it's over?

DAVE ROBERTS: I think it's easier with the experience. And I say that because in the postseason, the game gets fast, the emotions get high, adrenaline gets going, crowd gets crazy. And so with the experience, you have the ability to kind of slow it down a little bit and control your emotions.

So, for me, having a lot of guys that have that experience

makes my job easier and just sort of watching the game and trying to navigate that.

But as far as the players, I think having the experience is really beneficial.

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