

NL Wild Card Series: Reds vs Dodgers

Tuesday, September 30, 2025

Los Angeles, California, USA

Dodger Stadium

Los Angeles Dodgers

Andrew Friedman

Pregame Press Conference

Q. Dave just talked about some of the roster construction in this one, going with more position players. When you look at just some of those challenging conversations you had to have with guys like Michael Conforto and Anthony Banda, what led to going with this group and kind of seeing what they can do in this short series?

ANDREW FRIEDMAN: Obviously opponent factors in, the fact that there's three games in this series, the fact that we have some starters who are in the bullpen that provide some length, all factors that weigh in. The health of certain guys, where they're at, another factor that factors in.

And inevitably you have tough conversations. No matter what direction we were going we were going to have tough conversations. For us, it's about as soon as the decision is made, having that conversation, being as honest and empathetic as we can. But ultimately we have to do whatever we feel like gives us the best chance to win.

Q. How much of the decision making for the roster construction had to do with making sure Kiké's getting every day playing time in the lineup more?

ANDREW FRIEDMAN: I think we've all seen the level of focus and energy that Kiké brings, especially in October big factor in wanting to bring him back this offseason. That being said, you never know how a season is going to play out and what things are going to look like.

But he's had a good little run here lately and feels like his swing's in a better spot. And his ability to kind of slow things down and take what the pitcher gives and then also add really good defense on top of it is something we felt really comfortable betting on.

Q. What did you see from Will the last few days that gave you the clarity that he could be in the lineup?



And what is the realistic timeline for him to be able to be behind the plate?

ANDREW FRIEDMAN: I think as far as being an option off the bench to hit, it all came down to very simple, has the bone in his hand healed or not. And last week he had a hard time gripping things and that progressively got better. It got to a good place where the bone had healed.

Now it's about getting strength back. Once you do that, then it's about throwing. And we were able to keep his legs going, but he hasn't had that throwing volume in a little while.

So now we have to continue to kind of progressively layer that on, but as far as him in the batter's box, if there's a big spot, we all felt really good about betting on Will.

Q. Tommy Edman's back and he's playing second base today. How is his ankle in relation to potentially playing in the outfield?

ANDREW FRIEDMAN: He kind of aggravated it last week in Arizona playing the outfield. He'll do whatever. But I think the best chance for us to keep him growing strong right now is limit the amount of movement in the outfield. And so at least for right now that's our thought and hopefully we get some days and keep going and it progressively gets better and better and kind of opens that up. But right now we're erring on the side of caution.

Q. How difficult were just the bullpen problems this year to find answers to, and how are you guys feeling about that group now as you begin this month?

ANDREW FRIEDMAN: I mean, we've talked about this. They've had stretches of good. They've had some stretches where it's been really tough and challenging.

At the end of the day, as we're working through it the last couple of weeks, it's not a talent issue. We've talked about this a lot. Relievers, kind of like place kickers, are tightrope walkers. It's what they do for a living. They do well, people forget about them. They don't do well and they're in the ire of everything. So it's tough.



And when the confidence is wavering, the execution is off. When the execution is off, you get behind and you come in zone and you're just more likely to take on damage. So it's kind of that imperfect storm in a lot of ways.

As far as stuff and quality of pitches, that hadn't necessarily backed up. It was more just execution and falling behind way too much.

And we've seen it a lot over the years, bullpen pieces are volatile. You see it year to year, but you also see it week-to-week or in a two-week span. All it needs is a little something to ignite it and to spark it.

And we've seen it time and time again with guys who have scuffled and all of a sudden found it and they roll off a heater.

So we still have a lot of confidence in a lot of those arms. Now it's about figuring out the right game opportunity, score, situations to get him in and kind of keep building on that. But at the same time we're also fortunate to have the starting depth we have.

And for Emmet Sheehan and Glas to be able to be options in this -- and I think the biggest downside of playing in a Wild Card Series, obviously if you're able to advance, is what your pitching looks like after that. That's the cost. And I think with our depth, that's really mitigated.

And depending on if we're fortunate enough to get out of this round, how many arms we've used and when, but to have Clayton Kershaw standing there ready, no matter how we deploy our pitching this week, gets that just the cost not being as great in terms of that.

So obviously three-game series against a really good team, there's a lot of risk to that. But if you could say, hey, you definitely get out of this round, then I would argue it's a good thing that we played these games, but obviously you can't guarantee me that.

Q. Do you think that the time off at the end of the season was enough for Max Muncy to kind of reset and get into a good place health-wise? Or will you need to manage him going forward?

ANDREW FRIEDMAN: He's in a good spot. I think it was helpful. He took live at-bats yesterday and felt really good. It's obviously not the same as a game situation, but I feel pretty good about where he's at, the swings he took yesterday.

You could see in the first at-bat just a little apprehensive,

and he was like, okay, feels good, I can trust it. Then he started getting way more aggressive with his swings. We feel good about where he's at.

Q. How do you find Hyeseong Kim's first year in your organization, and what do you expect from him in this October?

ANDREW FRIEDMAN: I think Kim had a very good year. It's tough transitioning and meeting teammates and a whole new culture. And his personality, his work ethic, his desire to be really good really stood out all year.

And I think for the first year in experiencing all of that, I thought he did a great job. And it will be something that hopefully we win 13 games, celebrate, and then it will be good this offseason to kind of take everything that he learned this year and have a really good offseason to put him in position to come in and compete for a lot more playing time next year.

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