

# NL Wild Card Series:

## Padres vs Cubs

Monday, September 29, 2025

Chicago, Illinois, USA

Wrigley Field

**San Diego Padres**

**Manager Mike Shildt**

Workout Day Press Conference

**Q. Mike, I know you've been asked some variation of this question for a while, but can you point to anything in particular when you look at the discrepancy in the way your team has played on the road versus the home record you guys have?**

MIKE SHILDT: It's probably a lot of different things, but in general terms, and we have a great home environment that we play in, so we enjoy playing at home.

I don't really read too much into the road. I mean, it's not -- the fact that we've been so good at home creates more differential for the road record. It's like, the road record is atrocious.

We've been more than competitive on the road, last year, this year. It's more about how we've played at home. But we've been able to take care of business on the road as well.

**Q. You've known that you're going to play the Cubs for a while. What type of advantages does it give you and the Cubs as well to prepare over this last week or 10 days?**

MIKE SHILDT: We've had our feet in two different places, finishing the season, which we did strongly. I was really pleased how we competed at the end of the season -- how we competed all year, quite frankly -- but we were able to keep our focus and attention on taking care of business at the end of the season, but also internally, more for the staff.

Want the players to just go play; now it's time to go prepare. But more from a front office, scouting, field staff, we've been able to spend some real time over the last five days or so to look at it.

It's a team we're very familiar with. A team I've got some



history with, familiar with. And seen a lot of these guys over the last several years. We've taken advantage of the time knowing who we're going to play.

**Q. How is Elias, and what will be the process of determining his fitness?**

MIKE SHILDT: Elias, we're in the process of figuring that out. He felt good today, did some pool work today and moved around a little bit. I'll have a better answer for you here next couple of hours. They're going to put him through some light paces.

It's a double-edged sword, right? You want to find out, you want to rest him, but can he go? Should we test him? We have a great medical staff that will figure that out. We'll have a little more clarity later today. And may not have absolute clarity until tomorrow.

**Q. With the uncertainty then, if he were to be on the roster would you carry three catchers in that scenario?**

MIKE SHILDT: That's something, again, once we get the intel from Elias today and have a discussion with A.J., we'll land on the roster later tonight or potentially tomorrow. I think they have to be announced formally at 10:00. It's still up for discuss internally.

**Q. Having a guy like Mason in your bullpen, who is not your closer, whom you can kind of deploy him where you need him in the late innings, not giving away too much, how do you expect to use him this postseason? And what kind of weapon is that?**

MIKE SHILDT: I think that goes for all of our bullpen guys. Morejon has been used more in multiple places. We're going to trust our starters and see what that looks like. Obviously we've got Nicky going tomorrow. And we trust Nicky completely.

But specifically the bullpen and roles and usage, we've got Morejon. We've got Estrada and, to your point, Miller who can be deployed. In some cases it can be a one-inning situation. But these guys are rested and have done multiple innings. And we'll use them appropriately for



whatever role it calls for. But multiple innings will be on the table for all of them.

**Q. One of the great clichés this time of year is that everything resets. What happened in the regular season doesn't matter in the postseason. I guess from your experience as a manager in this game, where do you land on that, and how much what happens in the regular season matters now?**

MIKE SHILDT: You create an identity with your club for what took place to get you here. So what took place in the regular season is real. And we're going to rely on those experiences.

To A.J.'s question about the bullpen, our bullpen's been used in multiple different ways. So, there's not going to be a scenario really where it's going to be, they haven't seen it before.

We've done a lot of different things to compete that sometimes teams can wait to do in the postseason as far as bunting or moving runners or just different style of play. We've normalized that during the regular season and we're going to draw upon it.

The last thing is it's a battle-tested club. This hasn't been a straight line. And I think that's going to be the case for any playoff team. No one's had an easy road to get to the playoffs. So we're not unique in that.

But specific to the Padres, we've had our challenges. We've had our challenges with our starting pitching. We've clearly, our bullpen has been a strength. We've had our challenges with injuries. We've had a lot of different lineups. We've had a lot of different ways to compete. And we've been able to hold it together and win games and get here.

So that battle-tested, individual collectiveness that we have is going to serve us well.

**Q. Wrigley's played pretty volatile this year defensively -- sun, wind. Was it by coincidence you're working out about the same time as the first pitch tomorrow? Or did you really want it at this time?**

MIKE SHILDT: I think it was open so we took it. Yeah, and to your point, we know it's -- I'm sure there's a metric or somebody's got an absolute to it. But there's not many more -- not another ballpark, we could say, that can be any trickier than Wrigley.

We're aware of it. We've spent some time. We created our workout time around it. It's really just about continued

awareness of the environment and making sure we're communicating consistently as the game goes -- and know that in the second it could be different than the fourth and could be different than the seventh. And the time of game, we're going to see shadows and sun balls.

We're aware of all of that. And just a matter of being present with what the game's presenting us, including the elements.

**Q. Your counterpart, Counsell, came here with a big reputation, big contract, good bit of pressure to deliver. What's your view of him in the pantheon of managers right now?**

MIKE SHILDT: Oh, man, that's a hard question, man. I mean, I'll just leave it at this: I've gone and had the privilege to managing against Craig for a number of years now, going back to the Milwaukee days and clearly now in Chicago.

Every team, we were in the same division, our teams went to the wire every year, back and forth. And there's no surprise he's come over here and Chicago's going back to the playoffs under his guidance.

He's a very good manager. He's a really sharp guy. And we know we've had some good series over the years. And he does a nice job.

**Q. Which starter will you trust in Game 2?**

MIKE SHILDT: Dylan Cease is going to start Game 2.

**Q. And the decision behind that?**

MIKE SHILDT: Multiple decisions, multiple things. One of the -- Dylan's been good, throwing the ball more consistently lately. If indeed there's a Game 3 and Darvish is in play, it gives him an extra day rest. Dylan's rested.

He's thrown the ball well here. He's thrown the ball well against this club. And Dylan has a big arm, and we feel he's the guy we feel is the best suited for Game 2.

**Q. And that would mean Michael will be available in the bullpen?**

MIKE SHILDT: That would be accurate.

**Q. Given the experience he has in the role in the past, what can that do for you guys?**

MIKE SHILDT: It's another weapon. It's another weapon that's there. Again, we've got bullpen guys that clearly



have gotten us here that we trust. And Michael will be used appropriately, relative to the guys that have the experience and have done well in that role. And the spot will present itself potentially this year for Michael to show up.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports