

MLB World Series: Dodgers vs Blue Jays

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Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Rogers Centre

Los Angeles Dodgers

Dave Roberts

Workout Day Press Conference



Q. The Dodgers just announced that had Alex Vesia is away from the team with his wife, Kayla. Just keeping the focus on the World Series and baseball, what does this mean for the bullpen and for the roster and how you guys can find a way to replace someone just who's been so valuable for the group right now?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, you know what? I think right now, we're in the mode of trying to understand the process, the rules, a way that we could sort of try to navigate the roster. So I think we have a little bit of time -- I think 10 o'clock tomorrow or something like that -- to finalize our roster.

But, yeah, we're going through the process of trying to backfill his spot on the roster.

Q. Just to clarify that, are you anticipating he won't be available this series or is there a way that maybe if it's, like, a bereavement situation or something like that, he could -- you could add him later?

DAVE ROBERTS: You know what? Honestly, I think we're just going day-to-day with really no expectations.

Q. With you guys having been here before and having a lot of veteran players on the team, and the Blue Jays, most of their guys seem kind of really excited just to be here. Is there an advantage one way or the other? I mean, to them, it's all new and they're very excited about it. To you guys, it's a big deal, but you've been here before. Is there an advantage to the experience versus the newness?

DAVE ROBERTS: First off, we're very excited to be here as well. I think that some part of it you could argue that the naivety, the inexperience, is a good thing. But I feel that the ability to manage moments, your heartbeat, is advantageous, especially in a seven-game series. So I

think that we're equipped to play well, and we're facing a very good ball club. But, yeah, I like the experience, but I also like the enthusiasm that those guys have. And we have some of those guys too.

Q. I saw that you were having kind of a long conversation with Andy Pages the other day back in L.A. What were you talking with him about and are you kind of seeing him making the adjustments he needs to ahead of this series?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, we were just talking about some approach stuff at the bat. I think he's valuable in the sense of having his center field defense. I just see him getting some big hits for us and trying to continue to look forward and free him up mentally. And that's just kind of a lot of the thought behind me having a chat and just letting him know I'm supporting him and I still believe in him. That's kind of the genesis.

Q. At the beginning of the season, there was kind of a similar situation. Do you think maybe with a guy like him where he's had this layoff could almost help him free himself up like you said?

DAVE ROBERTS: I think so. I think so. With young players, confidence is something that you've always got to -- you got to keep an eye on, and it can go awry pretty quickly if they're not having success. So I just wanted to make sure that -- to keep him in a good head space.

But, yeah, to be able to not have to get hits and take some time to have some lives, not have to look at the scoreboard, and feel better about your swing. I think there's some good to that for Andy for sure.

Q. What do you expect to get from Kershaw in this series? Would you like to get him in there to get him one more appearance before the end of his career? I know this is strategic, it's not sentimental, but what's your thoughts on it?

DAVE ROBERTS: I would love to get Clayton in there at some point, but I'm going to pitch the best players I feel are the best in that particular moment. So if it happens, that would be great.

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Q. But he's going to be on the roster again?

DAVE ROBERTS: He's on the roster, yes.

Q. How different of a World Series do you think this will be for Shohei, especially considering how early last year's series he got injured?

DAVE ROBERTS: I hope it's completely different for Shohei. Certainly having him healthy going in is a great thing. I think him kind of feeding off that last game is a good thing. Last year, it was just more of just being able to post and stand in the batter's box and do whatever he could to sort of help us, where I think this year he's equipped to have a big series. And he's just going to have to be smart and disciplined because they're going to pitch him careful, and he's just got to be smart, and if he's disciplined, then it should bode well for him and for all of us.

Q. In that series last year and even during -- when he was struggling earlier this year, in this postseason, how much do you sort of feel other teams feeling his presence in the box even if he's not swinging or if he's not a hundred percent offensively?

DAVE ROBERTS: You feel Shohei when he's in the hole, let alone on deck or in the batter's box. You feel it. He's always looming. Whether he's swinging the bat well or not, he has the ability to impact the game, so you feel it.

Q. You obviously have had great pitching from your starters. How challenging was it, I guess, to make sure all those guys would be at optimal strength on October 1st given their histories and knowing that you probably weren't going to get 33 starts out of all four of those guys?

DAVE ROBERTS: You know, I don't think it was -- it was challenging, but it wasn't difficult because I think that was the goal of the organization, the coaches, front office, myself, how do we get these guys to be at optimal performance towards the end of the season. So then the question is how do you get there.

So redlining those guys, pushing those guys, shortening their rehabs to try to win X amount of games wasn't the answer, in our opinion. So we had other guys step up, younger players fill innings. But with that, we were able to kind of build guys up the right way to then have 'em ready to go.

So this wasn't by chance. It was a calculated decision. But, yeah, the cost was in the regular season, we just

weren't optimal throughout the summer.

Q. There have been a lot of people framing this series as a David versus Goliath battle. I'm curious if you see your team as the Goliath in this.

DAVE ROBERTS: Or David. I mean, hey, they're from the East, and that's the AL East.

Yeah, you know what? We got really good players, they got really good players. So the great thing about baseball is anything can happen. It's going to be a great series. These guys are on a high right now, so we're expecting a battle. So we certainly don't see it that way.

Q. As a player, you shared the clubhouse with really great players, and you also faced good pitchers. As a manager, you have managed really great pitchers and you have faced really great pitchers. Seeing that, do you think that the one you have is the best rotation you have seen in your MLB career?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, I think for me as a player/coach, it's the best rotation I've been a part of, but when you're talking about the Braves in the '90s, you're talking about Hall of Famers. So we still got some work to do, but I'm really -- you know, it's really good having healthy starters and, like I've said all along, the goal is to let your best pitchers take down the most outs, and because they're throwing the baseball the way they are, it kind of sets everything else up.

Q. Do you anticipate staying with Glasnow for 3 and Ohtani for 4?

DAVE ROBERTS: I haven't completely landed on that one, but most likely.

Q. I have a two questions: One, do you still expect the same pitchers for this series; and two, when you win the championship series, you mentioned, Let's get four more wins and ruin the baseball. Do you feel like you became a villain?

DAVE ROBERTS: What was the first question?

Q. How many pitchers are you going to bring this series?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, I think we're going to go the same kind of similar roster. There might be a couple little tweaks. I don't feel like I'm the villain. I was just poking fun at some people that said that the Dodgers were ruining baseball. Clearly I don't believe that. I think that baseball is in a great place right now. Very great players, very

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exciting. Viewership is up. This is going to be a great World Series. So I was just having a little fun with people that said that about the Dodgers, but I hope I'm not the villain.

Q. It's the World Series, you're in Toronto, do you have any special memory in Canada?

DAVE ROBERTS: I love Toronto. Toronto's a great city, great people. Canada is a great country. I remember being here with the Indians at the time and having a good series, and just playing the Blue Jays. Played here when I was with the Dodgers. Stayed in the hotel room in center field one time, so that was fun. But, yeah, I have nothing but fond memories, yes.

Q. At this point of the World Series do you think you have a stronger team than the last year?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yes, I do. I do. I think that Shohei's healthy, as we mentioned. The starting staff is in much better shape. Position player-wise we're healthy. So, yeah, I do.

Q. Do you expect your starting rotation to go deep in this World Series?

DAVE ROBERTS: I do. I do. I expect them to pitch well, yes.

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