

MLB World Series: Dodgers vs Blue Jays

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Los Angeles, California, USA

Dodger Stadium

Los Angeles Dodgers Dave Roberts

Pregame 5 Press Conference

Q. Last night you had hinted at you were looking into some changes, potentially, with the lineup. Just with how you either adjusted the top of the order, moving Will Smith up, or even having Alex Call in there, what do you like about these guys and how the hope is to get something going offensively early in this one tonight?

DAVE ROBERTS: I think that was kind of the thought. Obviously getting Alex in there, I felt that -- at the bottom just the at-bat quality, seeing pitches, the potential to get somebody on base for Shohei at the top. I feel good with Kiké in center field and Alex's defense in left. And then as far as Mookie and Will, I just feel like -- I feel that that's the best way to win the game tonight. So both players were alerted and both players are all on board. So that was a decision I made.

Q. How much with the Will Mookie switch is trying to provide some more protection behind Shohei too and force them to maybe pitch to him a little bit more?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, like I said, it's just whatever I felt is the best chance to win today.

Q. With Mookie, what have you been seeing from him the last couple weeks? Has it looked more like -- with just some of the contact and the pop-ups kind of like some of the stuff he was struggling with earlier this year, have you been okay with his approach, kind of what have you guys seen out of him?

DAVE ROBERTS: You know, I think there's a little bit of -- there's some mechanics. They're making good pitches. He's working hard to kind of clean some things up. Yesterday he lined a ball, but Clement was there on the line, got a base hit.

So for me it's just -- yeah, there's some mechanical things,



but right now all that matters is just going out there and taking four or five good at-bats, and so all I'm concerned about is tonight, and I know that's what's on Mookie's mind too.

Q. During the regular season, you were kind of reluctant to move Mookie down in the order, and this is obviously a different situation, but kind of why now?

DAVE ROBERTS: Well, I think that when -- I think in the postseason, you got to be a little bit more reactive than the regular season. When I netted out the value of what I feel gives us the best chance to win today, that was a decision I made, and I think that's why -- like I said, at some point you got to be a little bit more proactive than I normally would.

Q. You also had mentioned the possibility of Miggy getting a start. Is the reason there just Tommy's ankle not being quite ready?

DAVE ROBERTS: Tommy's ankle not being all the way there, which he could do it, which he did in whichever game it was, Game 3, but also, I just feel like Alex versus Yesavage, I think he's going to take some really good at-bats.

Q. You said that you liked overall the approach against Yesavage last time around. What needs to change maybe in those at-bat qualities when you sort of have those runners on base like did you against him in Game 1 and even yesterday?

DAVE ROBERTS: Well, I think at-bat quality is not just pitches. It's hitting mistakes. So I do think that the first time through the at-bat quality was good as far as kind of gathering information. But I think in total, two times through the order, there were a lot of pitches that we missed. And so that kind of takes away from bat quality, and that's the second time through.

So we have seen him, we're prepared, and then now it's kind of nine guys coming together being ready to hunt mistakes, and when you get a mistake, then be willing to do some -- be ready to do something with it and continue to fight. But it's not just Shohei, it's not Freddie, it's not Will, it's all collective nine guys got to do their jobs.

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Q. With that, do you feel like some guys maybe are trying too much to try to join Shohei and Freddie in being contributors in the lineup? Are you pressing a little bit?

DAVE ROBERTS: I hope not, but if you see some of the chase that we've had, which is uncharacteristic, that speaks to that. But I hope that's not the case because we have a talented group of hitters and we've got to kind of hunt our pitches, our lanes, and avoid that uncharacteristic chase down below.

Q. Because you've been here and done that, does that make you even more relaxed?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, I think so. I think so. I'm relaxed, but I'm focused, anxious to get going. But I think that's a part of it with the experience that we've had and I've had, yeah.

Q. Have some of the things that you guys have done, like giving Clayton and Freddie lockers for their kids, stalls in the locker room, create the type of family atmosphere that's helped encourage free agents and other players to come here?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, I think Andrew said it best, trying to make Los Angeles, the Dodgers, a destination place where players want to come and play. You got to convince the wives and feel comfortable with the kids around at times, and I think we do as good a job as anybody just trying to make people feel welcome and be themselves. So, yeah, that's definitely part of the calculus.

Q. Do you think that the intentional walk has outlived its usefulness? Like, the other night, a pitcher, if you want to walk-around somebody like they did with Ohtani in the last at-bat, feel free. But I mean, this free pass down to first base, 12 pitches were eliminated because of that, and I think the game wouldn't have gone 18 innings if it wasn't for those walks. I mean, you went through it with Barry and watched it when you played. Now you're managing Ohtani. You're taking the bat out of the hands of one of the greatest players in the game.

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, I understand that, and obviously, for me on the bias side, I would probably say I wish we could outlaw that because it would benefit the Dodgers. But I think in totality, it's still a strategy and it's not applicable to every team that's not the Dodgers, right? So I think that it's just hard to make a rule and be so affected by the World Series and not pitching to Shohei. So, yeah, I'm trying to be non-biased, but I do think there's some strategy

to it, though.

Q. Yeah, there is. And obviously, Barry walked 900 times intentionally. So I mean, I think people are paying to see these guys hit, not walk. That's kind of my stance on it.

DAVE ROBERTS: That's fair. That's a fair take.

Q. Regarding being proactive, at this point, do you add anything to what you've done, and is there such a thing as over-thinking it?

DAVE ROBERTS: There is such a thing as over-thinking it. I'm more of the mind to bet on my guys and bet on them to play good baseball and win two more games, so that's where I'm at.

But with that, yeah, you got to make decisions with enough information, and I feel that I've done that today.

Q. Max reminded us of the mantra last night that every game is a one-game series and all you have to do is win this one game. But that being said, in this being your final home game of the series, how much bigger is this one game?

DAVE ROBERTS: It's huge. It's a three-game series -- as someone said, it's a three-game series and to win that first one is big, and obviously, it's at home. They're all big games. Coming off of losing last night, I'm going to leave it out there, our players are going to leave it all out there to win tonight, and then whatever happens, we're going to pick up the pieces and get on a plane to Toronto. So they're all big to me.

Q. Where does Shohei fit into your pitching plans for the rest of this series?

DAVE ROBERTS: Yeah, I haven't talked to Shohei yet, but obviously he won't be available tonight. We'll see where he comes in beyond that. But I haven't had that conversation. But certainly, when you're talking about Game 6, potentially Game 7 of the World Series, all hands on deck. So we'll see where that goes.

Q. I would assume you would want to incorporate him into that if he can go.

DAVE ROBERTS: If he can go, if it makes sense, certainly he would be an option.

Q. After Game 1, Blake Snell said he didn't have his fastball command, his changeup wasn't as effective as he would like it to be. Do you think that's a byproduct

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of the longer layoff between the CS and that Game 1 start, and now that he's back on normal rest do you think it will be more effective tonight?

DAVE ROBERTS: I think that it's easy to expect him to be markedly better than he was in Game 1. So I do think that he was -- he'll never make an excuse for that layoff, and that's just a circumstance we were in. But, yeah, I expect him to be much better with the fastball and the changeup today.

Q. I'm sure that you really wanted to win the World Series here in L.A. Does it upset you that, no matter what, the World Series will be won in Toronto, Canada?

DAVE ROBERTS: Not at all. Not at all. I think ultimately it's to win the World Series, regardless of where it happens.

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