

# Daily Clips



October 28, 2018

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**DAILY CLIPS**  
**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2018**

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**Dodgers squander Puig's HR, Hill's strong start**

By Jesse Sanchez

LOS ANGELES -- Dodgers starter Rich Hill did his best impression of a World Series hero and, in the end, almost became one.

Yasiel Puig did his best version of Yasiel Puig.

Through six innings, it sure looked like the Boston native and former Red Sox pitcher and the outfield star from Cuba had carried the Dodgers to victory against the Red Sox in Game 4 of the World Series at Dodger Stadium. Instead, the two returned home quietly Saturday night with their team trailing three games to one after a 9-6 loss put them on the verge of elimination.

"It was just a really difficult loss," Hill said. "We are still not out, and we have another game tomorrow here. We do have an uphill battle, but we have shown we are a team with a lot of fight and I like our chances, I really do, to win three games in a row."

The pair almost did enough to win one Saturday.

Puig, the energetic -- and sometimes puzzling -- outfielder, deposited a pitch from Boston starter Eduardo Rodriguez into the left-field stands to turn a 1-0 lead into a four-run advantage with a three-run home run in the sixth.

Puig celebrated the only way he knows how. He raised his hands and flipped the bat in the air once the ball left his bat. Puig then proceeded to flex his biceps, blow kisses into the stands and eventually return to the top step of Los Angeles' dugout for a curtain call.

Manny Machado, who was standing at third base, knew it was gone, too, and he also raised his hands. Cody Bellinger, who was at first, also celebrated long before the ball touched down.

"At that point, we were still in the game. Puig gave us a nice little cushion, but we were not able to come in and close it out," Machado said after the game in the middle of the Dodgers' locker room. "That's part of the game. Sometimes you hit and sometimes you give up runs. That's why there are 25 guys that grind it all out and leave it all on the field."

It was a typical home run celebration for Puig, Los Angeles scored its first run of the inning in an unusual fashion.

David Freese was hit by a pitch to lead off the eventful sixth and was replaced on the bases by pinch-runner Enrique Hernandez. Justin Turner hit a one-out double and Rodriguez intentionally walked Machado to load the bases.

That's when Bellinger followed with a ground ball to first baseman Steve Pearce, who fired home to force Hernandez out at home. The Red Sox tried to turn two, but Turner scored on the errant throw back to first base by catcher Christian Vazquez for the Dodgers' first run, before Puig smashed his three-run shot.

The four-run cushion seemed to be enough. It wasn't, not even with Hill on top of his game.

But the left-hander deserved a better fate. Hill threw a one-hitter for 6 1/3 innings before the bullpen collapsed behind him. In all, the lefty struck out seven, walked three, hit a batter and issued a leadoff walk to Xander Bogaerts in the seventh, then struck out Eduardo Nunez before being relieved by Scott Alexander.

"I had a conversation with Rich, and we talked about it [before the seventh inning]," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said. "He said, 'Keep an eye on me. I'm going to give it everything I have. Let's go hitter to hitter and just keep an eye on me.' So right there, I know Rich did everything he could, competed, left everything out there."

It was Ryan Madson who gave up the three-run home run to Mitch Moreland to cut Los Angeles' lead to 4-3. Kenley Jansen gave up a game-tying homer to Pearce in the eighth to saddle Hill with a no-decision. Boston tacked on five more runs in the ninth.

Hill was understandably subdued in the home clubhouse after the game. He spoke softly and stared ahead as he answered every question about what happened and what could have been. Puig sat in front of Machado's locker a couple of feet away with his eyes focused on his phone. The outfielder respectfully refused to answer questions despite a playful banter with the reporters standing in front of him.

"No, I'm not talking," Puig said in English. Then he repeated the phrase in Spanish.

A few minutes later, Machado wrapped up the interviews and the two walked out of the stadium together in silence. There was nothing more to say.

### **LA 'pen relents after Hill 'left everything out there'**

By Ken Gurnick

LOS ANGELES -- Rich Hill was cruising with a one-hit shutout as Game 4 of the World Series headed toward the seventh inning at Dodger Stadium on Saturday night, but in the Dodgers' dugout, he suddenly broke ominous news to his manager.

"Keep an eye on me," Hill told Dave Roberts. "I'm going to give it everything I have. Let's go hitter to hitter and just keep an eye on me."

What followed was a Dodgers collapse of epic proportions, a 9-6 loss to the Red Sox that leaves Boston one win from another World Series championship and Los Angeles one loss from a 30th straight year without a ring.

As many Dodgers postseasons of the past decade, this one will end on Sunday unless they can garner a win in an elimination game started by Clayton Kershaw.

"It is a tough loss," said Roberts. "Any loss in a World Series is difficult, obviously, but now we're in a situation where we're do or die. To their credit, they fought back and won a baseball game. So now it's, kind of, we've just got to bow our necks and try to win a baseball game and it's one day at a time."

In the history of best-of-seven series with the 2-3-2 format, teams that won Game 4 on the road to go ahead 3-1 have gone on to take the series 38 of 45 times (84 percent). All four previous times that the Red Sox have led a World Series 3-1, they went on to win the series. All four times the Dodgers have trailed 3-1 in the World Series, they have lost in five games.

With both bullpens on fumes after the Dodgers' thrilling but exhausting 18-inning win in Game 3 on Friday night, Roberts removed Hill with a 4-0 lead with one out and one on in the seventh inning. In the next 2 2/3 innings, Boston scored nine runs with L.A. relievers on the mound. Roberts said Pedro Baez and Julio Urias were unavailable because of recent usage. Presumably, they will be available in Game 5.

After the game, Roberts revealed Hill's warning, which set in motion the manager's bullpen moves.

"I know Rich did everything he could, competed, left everything out there," said Roberts, who said Hill had never before said anything like that to him during a start. Hill had pitched only 10 2/3 innings over the previous four weeks.

"You're talking about a World Series game where there's no margin up to that point, and there's a lot of emotion, intensity, effort, focus, and he did everything," said Roberts. "He did everything to put us in a position to win a baseball game. And, again, we've got to do a better job of picking him up."

Hill didn't join the second-guessers about his removal.

"Everybody wants the chance [to stay in the game], but the moves we've made all year have worked out, and we would not be in this position if we weren't doing that," Hill said.

Hill opened the seventh inning by walking Xander Bogaerts on a 3-2 pitch after starting the at-bat with three consecutive balls. The lefty then struck out Eduardo Nunez for the third time. With Hill at 91 pitches, Roberts brought in lefty Scott Alexander, added to the roster for the World Series to match up against left-handed hitters like Brock Holt. But Alexander walked Holt on four pitches.

"Right there at that point," Roberts said, "you get an out and we're talking about hitter to hitter. Guy's on first base and you've got a lefty on the bench or in the 'pen that has done it all year long, getting lefties out, and [we're] trying to keep those lefties on the bench -- [Mitch] Moreland, [Rafael] Devers. So you figure you have a chance to get a guy who matches up really well against Holt, and then to potentially go to [Christian] Vazquez and keep the other guys off the bench."

After Alexander's walk to Holt, Roberts replaced him with righty Ryan Madson, who got Jackie Bradley Jr. to pop out before the Red Sox called on Moreland to pinch-hit. The lefty slugger crushed a hanging changeup to cut the Dodgers' lead to 4-3.

"In that spot right there, considering who you have left in the 'pen, you have to make a decision," said Roberts. "And I felt that Ryan still had a very good chance to get him out."

Madson didn't deny fatigue played a role, especially after an 18-inning game.

"That just goes without saying. It's on both sides," he said. "It's in their bullpen, in our bullpen. It's just whoever can make the best pitches at that time wins. I think they did that today. We did it yesterday, they did it today."

Roberts gave the eighth inning to Kenley Jansen, who had pitched two innings in Game 3, but two batters into the closer's Game 4 appearance, Steve Pearce hit a game-tying home run.

"I'm just thinking about one hitter at a time when he called my name in the eighth," Jansen said about his usage. "In the situation like that, you can't focus on two innings or anything like that, you have to focus on one hitter at a time. Those guys did a great job by hitting mistakes."

Before the game, Roberts was confident his bullpen was in better shape than Boston's, but the meltdown accelerated in the ninth inning, with three runs charged to Dylan Floro (who pitched 1 2/3 innings on Friday), one to Alex Wood (who pitched one inning on Friday) and one to Kenta Maeda (who pitched two innings on Friday).

The Red Sox had no at-bats with runners in scoring position against Hill, then they went 5-for-7 in those situations against Dodgers relievers. Los Angeles hadn't blown a four-run lead all season, but it did blow a four-run lead against Houston in last year's World Series.

"But, you know, we've still got to play. And we're not out yet," Roberts said. "We've got to go out there and still, yeah, respect what they've done, but our guys aren't done. We've got our best [Kershaw] going tomorrow, and we're expecting to win a baseball game."

### **These teams came back from 3-1 deficits**

By Matt Kelly

There are few things more imposing for a team than being down three games to one in a seven-game series, but it can also be freeing. Once a club is backed into that corner, the pressure's off; either it wins three games in a row or it tips its cap and goes home for a long winter.

That's the mindset the Dodgers must embrace as they enter Sunday's Game 5 in a 3-1 hole following a tough 9-6 loss in Game 4 in which they blew a 4-0 lead over the Red Sox. Boston has plenty of experience in completing such comebacks, but it now plays the role of trying to preserve a 3-1 lead and clinch its fourth World Series title of this century.

The odds are against slow starters like the Dodgers: Through 2017, only 13 teams out of 84 had come back to win a best-of-seven series after dropping three of the first four contests. Here's a look at each of those 13 "miracle" clubs and how they came all the way back to win.

#### **2016 World Series: Cubs over Indians**

Cleveland was familiar with 3-1 deficits, having seen LeBron James and the NBA's Cavaliers come back from a 3-1 hole against the Warriors just a few months prior. But Ohioans would see their club fall on the other side this time around, thanks to a Cubs team that was desperate to end a 108-year championship drought.

Kris Bryant, as he did throughout the 2016 postseason, came up clutch with a homer to wake up the Wrigley Field crowd in Game 5, and Addison Russell's grand slam in Game 6 sent the series to a decisive winner-take-all. Then, in one of the most memorable Fall Classic contests ever, the Cubs withstood Rajai Davis' dramatic two-run homer off Aroldis Chapman -- and a momentous rain delay -- to pull ahead on Ben Zobrist's 10th-inning RBI double. Mike Montgomery closed out the bottom half, and the "Curse of the Billy Goat" was finally over.

#### **2012 National League Championship Series: Giants over Cardinals**

Not only did the Giants come back in this series; they did so with authority. After winning their final three games on the road to defeat the Reds in the NL Division Series, San Francisco outscored St. Louis 20-1 over the final three contests to punch its second World Series ticket in three years. A resurgent Barry Zito pitched into the eighth in Game 5, and Ryan Vogelsong struck out nine in Game 6. Series MVP Marco Scutaro notched three hits in the finale to help San Francisco seal the franchise's first-ever victory in a winner-take-all Game 7.

#### **2007 American League Championship Series: Red Sox over Indians**



Boston looked to be in fine shape after rocking AL Cy Young Award winner CC Sabathia in Game 1, but the Tribe stormed back for three straight victories to get Cleveland riled up for its first Fall Classic appearance in a decade. The Indians played the All-American Rejects' hit song "It Ends Tonight" over the loudspeakers before Game 5, but the Red Sox had other ideas. Josh Beckett dominated with 11 strikeouts to send the series back to Fenway Park, where J.D. Drew hit a grand slam to spur Boston to a 12-2 rout in Game 6. Red Sox employees played "It Ends Tonight" again before Game 7, and the home club ended things decisively, 11-2, to punch its second World Series ticket in four years.

#### **2004 ALCS: Red Sox over Yankees**

Eighty-six years of Bambino-sized baggage was wiped away over four magical nights in October, starting with Dave Roberts' daring steal and David Ortiz's walk-off homer in Game 4. Ortiz delivered again in a 14-inning marathon the following night to make the Fenway faithful believe, and Curt Schilling's "bloody sock" performance in Game 6 in the Bronx made him a folk hero in Boston. Johnny Damon's Game 7 grand slam seemed to lift whatever burden was left from the Red Sox's shoulders, as the self-proclaimed "idiots" became the first team to erase a 3-0 postseason deficit before sweeping the Cardinals for Boston's first championship since 1918.

#### **2003 NLCS: Marlins over Cubs**

Steve Bartman will always be the symbol of this heart-breaking series for the Cubs, but the North Siders had plenty of other chances to claim their first NL pennant since 1945. Beckett, the Marlins' emerging ace, twirled a two-hit shutout in Game 5, and Cubs shortstop Alex Gonzalez's error after Bartman's fateful reach helped the Marlins tie (and eventually win) Game 6. Chicago even held a 5-3 lead through four innings of Game 7, but could not hold on as Florida prevailed despite being outscored by two runs in the series.

#### **1996 NLCS: Braves over Cardinals**

The Braves' 1990s run was one of the most dominant by any team, but this series represented one of Atlanta's toughest tests. St. Louis was able to break through against Greg Maddux and Tom Glavine to win three of the first four contests, but -- like the Giants did in 2012 -- the Braves absolutely surged over the Cardinals once their backs were against the wall. Atlanta's three-headed monster of John Smoltz, Maddux and Glavine returned to form, but they didn't need to do all that much as Braves hitters ambushed St. Louis pitchers and outscored the Cardinals 32-1 over their last three victories.

#### **1986 ALCS: Red Sox over Angels**

Fatalism was near its peak in Boston when the "cursed" Red Sox quickly fell behind the Halos and appeared on the verge of another postseason exit. The Angels were within one strike of their first pennant in Game 5 before Red Sox center fielder Dave Henderson blasted a dramatic go-ahead grand slam, setting up an eventual 7-6 win in 11 innings. Given new life, Boston pulled away in the final two contests at Fenway Park before heartbreak struck again on a famous grounder through Bill Buckner's legs in Game 6 of the World Series.

### **1985 World Series: Royals over Cardinals**

Kansas City epitomized the phrase "never say die" in 1985, overcoming a 3-1 deficit in the ALCS before doing it again on the biggest stage. The Royals outscored the Cardinals 28-13 in this series, but still needed a controversial call from umpire Don Denkinger to squeak out a 2-1 win in Game 6 and stay alive. K.C. capitalized on its good fortune with an 11-0 blowout of the Cardinals in Game 7, with ace Bret Saberhagen twirling a five-hit shutout to seal the franchise's first World Series championship.

### **1985 ALCS: Royals over Blue Jays**

As mentioned, this Royals club really was a team of destiny. Kansas City took full advantage of the first year of the best-of-seven LCS format, starting with Danny Jackson's eight-hit shutout in a must-win Game 5. George Brett hit his third homer of the series to power the Royals to a 5-3 win in Game 6, and the star trio of Saberhagen, Charlie Leibrandt and Dan Quisenberry helped K.C. close out Game 7 at Toronto's Exhibition Stadium.

### **1979 World Series: Pirates over Orioles**

The 1979 "We Are Family" Pirates were probably one of the loosest World Series champions, with captain Willie Stargell leading a big comeback over a supremely talented Orioles squad. Stargell hit an even .400 with three homers -- including a crucial dinger late in Game 7 -- to become the first player to capture the regular season, NLCS and World Series MVP Awards all in the same season. Pirates pitchers held Baltimore to two total runs over the last three games as Pittsburgh earned its second seven-game World Series triumph over the Orioles in a span of nine years.

### **1968 World Series: Tigers over Cardinals**

If you like vintage pitching performances, this series is for you. Bob Gibson outdueled Denny McLain, baseball's last 30-game winner, in Games 1 and 4 to put St. Louis on the verge of a second straight title, but Mickey Lolich stemmed the tide with his second win of the series in Game 5 in Detroit. McLain came back on two days' rest to nearly twirl a shutout in the Tigers' 13-1 rout in Game 6, setting up a dream winner-take-all matchup between Gibson and Lolich in St. Louis. The aces traded zeroes for six frames before Jim Northrup hit a two-run triple over Curt Flood's head in center field, and that was all Lolich -- also pitching on two days' rest -- would need in Detroit's 4-1 win.

### **1958 World Series: Yankees over Braves**

Hank Aaron and the Braves shocked the Yankees with a seven-game triumph in 1957, and came oh so close to doing it again the following autumn. Warren Spahn and Lew Burdette -- who beat the Yankees three times in '57 -- combined for victories in three of the first four games, but the Yankees finally solved Burdette with six runs off the righty to stay alive in Game 5. Spahn went into the 10th inning in Game 6 before giving up a pair of runs, and Braves pinch-hitter Frank Torre lined out to end the game with Aaron representing the tying run at third base. That was the break the Yankees needed, as Bob Turley pitched 6 2/3 innings of one-run ball in relief and the pinstripes beat Burdette again, 6-2, in Game 7 in Milwaukee.

### **1925 World Series: Pirates over Senators**

The legendary Walter Johnson had finally claimed his first championship with a heroic Game 7 performance in 1924, but his luck ran out in another Game 7 the following year. Monsoon-like rain and heavy fog created perhaps the worst playing conditions of any World Series game in history, and the Senators' two blown leads didn't do anything to boost Johnson's morale. Kiki Cuyler's eighth-inning, two-run double off Washington's ace erased an original 4-0 deficit for the Pirates, who pulled off the first 3-1 comeback in postseason history.

### **Four-run lead vanishes, putting LA in 3-1 hole**

By Anthony Castrovence

LOS ANGELES -- The dugout was dead, the bats silent, and the concern was growing that, perhaps, a Game 3 that had featured double the innings might have, in a sense, featured double the losses for the Red Sox. With their pitching plan ripped up, Rich Hill locking down their lineup and Yasiel Puig doing his bat-dropping, arm-raising, bicep-kissing dance around the basepaths, a Boston ballclub that had dominated the first two games of this World Series was in serious danger of seeing its edge eliminated.

But the relentlessness that colored 108 regular-season wins and a steady run through a daunting American League playoff picture remains with the Red Sox, and it carried them in a Game 4 on Saturday night at Dodger Stadium. Scoring all nine of their runs from the seventh inning on, with four RBIs from Steve Pearce, the short-on-sleep-but-long-on-life Sox deflated and defeated the Dodgers, 9-6, and are back in a commanding and mathematically momentous position in this best-of-seven set.

"With our mindest," said Mitch Moreland, whose three-run homer in the seventh sparked the surge, "we can change a game quick."

The Dodgers, who will throw staff ace Clayton Kershaw up against short-rested, surprise Boston option David Price, had better change this Series quick. The Red Sox are one win away from their ninth World Series title, playing with an air of invincibility and inevitability. It took a game of historic length to beat Boston on Friday, and it's going to take a comeback of seismic proportions to catch the Sox now.

In the history of best-of-seven series with the 2-3-2 format, teams that won Game 4 on the road to go ahead 3-1 have gone on to take the series 38 of 45 times (84 percent). All four previous times that the Red Sox have led a World Series 3-1, they went on to win the Series. All four times the Dodgers have trailed 3-1 in the World Series, they have lost in five games.

"Now we're in a situation where we're do or die," Los Angeles manager Dave Roberts said. "To their credit, they fought back and won a baseball game."

Down, 4-0, going into the seventh, after Puig's big blow prompted a violent spike of the glove from Boston starter Eduardo Rodriguez, the Red Sox broke out of their offensive trance and then broke the Dodgers' hearts.

For perspective, the Dodgers were 54-0 when leading by four runs at any point this season, including the postseason. They were the only team not to lose such a game. Furthermore, only once in the past 10 World Series, according to the Elias Sports Bureau, had a team lost a game in which it led by four runs or more at any point (though, because baseball can be cruel, that infamy also belonged to L.A., in Game 5 of last year's Classic match with Houston).

So up to that moment when Rodriguez's glove hit the ground, it appeared the postgame criticism would be reserved for Red Sox skipper Alex Cora. He had opted to ride Rodriguez, who had pitched in Game 3 but whose starting assignment was necessitated by Nathan Eovaldi's losing-but-leviathan relief effort, a little too long, and Puig made him pay the price.

"I pushed him too hard," Cora said.

The more pressing questions, however, would be reserved for Roberts. He sent veteran starter Hill, who ordinarily operates with an inordinately short leash, out for the seventh inning of what was a rousing start. But he yanked Hill, who had hinted to Roberts that he was nearing the end of his rope, two batters into the inning, with Xander Bogaerts aboard via a walk.

"He said, 'Keep an eye on me, I'm going to give it everything I have, [but] let's go hitter to hitter and just keep an eye on me,'" Roberts said. "So right there, I know Rich did everything he could, competed, left everything out there."

Brock Holt drew another walk off reliever Scott Alexander, and Roberts, who had been burned by Ryan Madson twice in Boston, went back to Madson and got burned again. Madson elevated a first-pitch changeup to Moreland, who socked it into the right-field seats to make it 4-3.

Another pattern repeated itself in the eighth. For the second time in as many nights, Roberts went to Kenley Jansen for the six-out save. And for the second time in as many nights, Jansen, who has been homer-prone all year, gave up the game-tying solo shot -- this time to Pearce, who took him deep to left. Jansen became just the second pitcher to give up game-tying homers in back-to-back games of a World Series, joining the D-backs' Byung-hyun Kim (Games 4 and 5, 2001).

"They're a good team," said Jansen, "and it was just one bad pitch."

And then, in the ninth, the Red Sox brought the dagger. With Dylan Floro on the hill, Holt bounced a double down the third-base line with one out and roared back at Boston's bench.

That set up a dazzling display of depth. Rafael Devers came in cold to swat a run-scoring single. The midseason pickup Pearce, who faced Kenta Maeda with the bases loaded, doubled everybody home. And Bogaerts tacked on an insurance RBI single to make it 9-4.

The Dodgers offered some measure of response with Enrique Hernandez's two-run shot off closer Craig Kimbrel in the ninth, and perhaps Kimbrel's 28-pitch outing will have Game 5 repercussions. But this was a night when Los Angeles' hopes were crushed and the Red Sox reached the cusp of a crown.

### **MOMENTS THAT MATTERED**

Joltin' Joe: Boston's late-inning offensive surge is rendered meaningless if somebody doesn't put a roadblock in front of the Dodgers' bats. In Game 4, that someone was Joe Kelly, who delivered two scoreless innings of relief in which he gave up three hits with three strikeouts. His biggest moment came when he K'd pinch-hitter Yasmani Grandal with runners on the corners and two outs in the eighth to preserve a 4-4 tie.

"The only pressure I felt was to not let my teammates down," Kelly said.

**Squandered inheritance:** Madson had inherited five baserunners in Boston. All five scored. So why did Roberts trust Madson with two on and one out in the seventh, when the left-handed-hitting Moreland's pinch-hit homer made it a perfectly imperfect 7-for-7? Roberts said he was trying to stay away from Pedro Baez, who threw two innings in Game 3, and Julio Urias, who threw one inning in Game 3.

"Ryan has a very good track record of getting righties and lefties out, and actually left-handers considerably more, and we just didn't execute," Roberts said. "Moreland hit a changeup, first pitch, that was up -- and [Madson] got the prior hitter to pop up to the [second baseman] -- and he made a bad pitch, and unfortunately Mitch took a really good swing on it. So in that spot right there, considering who you have left in the 'pen, you have to make a decision. And I felt that Ryan still had a very good chance to get him out."

### **YOU GOTTA SEE THIS**

Devers came through with his bat off the bench in the top of the ninth, and he came through with his glove and arm in the bottom of the inning. With a runner aboard, one out and Kimbrel trying to preserve the 9-6 lead, Manny Machado hit a bullet to Devers' right. The young third baseman slid to make the stop, gathered himself and fired to first for the inning's second out.

"I think the last time was in Little League, probably, making a play like that," Devers said through an interpreter. "I just came in with the mentality of trying to help the team in any way that I can. And I was given that opportunity tonight to do that."

## **SOUND SMART**

- The last team to score nine-plus runs in a World Series game in the seventh inning or later, according to the Elias Sports Bureau, was the 1997 Marlins, in Game 3.
- Four clubs have come back from a 3-1 hole in the World Series by winning Game 5 at home and Games 6 and 7 on the road -- the 1958 Yankees, '68 Tigers, '79 Pirates and 2016 Cubs. The Dodgers will try to join that exclusive list.
- When Kershaw and Price square off Sunday, it will mark the fourth lefty-lefty matchup of this Series. That has only happened one other time in World Series history. The 1973 Fall Classic between the Mets and A's had five lefty-lefty games to set a record.

## **HE SAID IT**

"Sometimes in October, we talk about mechanics and how you feel at the plate and all that, [but] sometimes it's will. You will yourself to do great things. And it started very simple. A few good at-bats and then the big swing, and we kept rolling and we didn't stop playing." – Cora

## **Dodgers put title hopes on Kershaw's shoulders**

By Chad Thornburg

LOS ANGELES -- The Dodgers face long odds, down 3-1 in the World Series after Saturday night's 9-6 defeat to the Red Sox and needing to win three straight games to fulfill their championship aspirations.

But there's no pitcher they'd rather lead them into that challenge than Clayton Kershaw, who will start opposite Boston's David Price in Sunday's Game 5 at Dodger Stadium. The Dodgers are hoping Kershaw can help make them just the eighth team out of 45 in MLB history to overcome a 3-1 deficit in a best-of-seven postseason series with a 2-3-2 format.

"He's Clayton Kershaw. He's the best pitcher in the game," said third baseman Justin Turner. "He's going to go out there and he's going to empty the tank for us tomorrow and give us the best chance we have to extend this thing."

Matched up against Red Sox ace Chris Sale in Game 1, Kershaw didn't make it out of the fifth inning. He was tagged for five runs on seven hits and threw 79 pitches. Kershaw relied heavily on his slider, throwing 39, and had issues with the depth of its movement. He also didn't get a lot of help from his defense.

The Red Sox made hard contact -- which Statcast™ defines as 95 mph exit velocity or greater -- on four of the six sliders they put in play against Kershaw (66.7 percent). That tied his highest single-game hard-hit rate on sliders since Statcast™ was introduced in 2015 (minimum five sliders put in play), matching the 66.7 percent he yielded in Game 1 of the 2016 National League Division Series against the Nationals.

"Well, you can't just assume it's going to be there the next time," Kershaw said about the movement of his slider. "Definitely working on it. Definitely trying to make it better. It happens from time to time in the regular season as well. I focused on it. My bullpen focused on it, playing catch. I hope it's better tomorrow."

Kershaw's struggles in the World Series opener added fuel to the perception that he isn't the same dominant pitcher come playoff time, a narrative that's followed the four time NL Cy Young Award winner throughout his career.

The lefty's numbers have dipped in October, though Kershaw has turned in some impressive outings, including Game 5 of this year's NL Championship Series and Game 2 of the NLDS. He owns a 4.28 ERA through 29 career postseason appearances (23 starts). In elimination games Kershaw has started, that ERA climbs to 6.28. Los Angeles is 15-14 in postseason games in which he has appeared.

But those narratives are of no interest to Kershaw. Neither is his legacy, as the longtime Dodgers ace can opt out of his contract this offseason and could be pitching his final game for L.A. on Sunday.

"I don't really care about legacy. I don't really care what people think of me or perceive of me," Kershaw said before Game 4. "Game 5 is a very important game to win the World Series, and I'm looking forward to pitching that game and hopefully putting us in a great spot going back to Boston. And that's really all I care about."

"All that other stuff, people are going to have their opinions, you know, and that's fine. I'm not here to change them. I'm here to pitch. And all that other stuff will take care of itself."

Regardless of what's to come, Kershaw's teammates are confident in their ace.

"He's been the best in the game for a long time, pitched in a lot of big games," said catcher Austin Barnes. "Backs up against the wall, he's our best."

## **Hart's passion for Dodgers always in fashion**

By Alyson Footer

LOS ANGELES -- Amid the chaos and nail-biting anticipation of the 18-inning marathon that took place on Friday night in Game 3 of the World Series between the Red Sox and Dodgers was a little side story that was developing in the seats behind home plate, right in the view of a national television audience.

Mary Hart, who for decades was the host of the long-running celebrity news show "Entertainment Tonight," has been a Dodgers season-ticket holder for years, and she is a regular fixture at Chavez Ravine, both during the regular season and the postseason. Her presence behind the plate has garnered plenty of attention, especially during the many years the Dodgers have played in October, when a regional audience becomes a national one.

But Hart's popularity soared to a new level during Game 3 on Friday, thanks to her savvy wardrobe choices and her keen sense of humor, even as the stressful innings dragged late into the night.

This story involves Craig Kimbrel, the Red Sox's All-Star closer. He has an odd delivery that begins with him leaning over at almost a 90-degree angle and holding his bent arms out to the side, almost bird-like, as he peers in to the catcher for the sign.

During Kimbrel's appearance in the ninth and 10th innings on Friday, Hart did what a lot of fans do when he's pitching -- she imitated his stance. And that's when social media started blowing up, as the kids say.

Hart's Kimbrel dance immediately became one of the No. 1 trending topics on Twitter.

Hart said her fascination with the stance began in Boston last week. She and her husband, Burt Sugarman, went to Games 1 and 2 at Fenway Park, and they were struck by Kimbrel's odd delivery.

"I noticed how peculiar it was, just mechanically. How does he get his arms around and everything?" Hart said just as Game 4 was beginning on Saturday. "It was just kind of spontaneous -- I'm going to get up there and do what he's doing."

Also, she thought, maybe, just maybe, it would get into his sightline.

"There was a little bit of, 'Maybe I can throw him off a little,'" she laughed. "He's a hell of a pitcher."



Hart dancing in her vintage Dodgers sweater created quite a visual. She has two items of outerwear that she sports at Dodgers games -- a jacket and that vintage sweater, a gift from her husband some 20 years ago.

"I have it with me and I'm going to wear it again when it cools down tonight," she said.

Hart's Dodgers fandom began almost 40 years ago. She moved to Los Angeles in 1979 and was a bat girl at a Hollywood Stars game, the annual exhibition that for years was a fixture at Dodger Stadium. She met Dodgers legend and former manager Tommy Lasorda, who said to her, "Young lady, what is your dream?"

Hart told Lasorda she likes to sing, and that she'd like to be on the field to sing the national anthem at a Dodgers game.

"And I was, 30 days later," she said. "Because of my friend, Tommy Lasorda. I've had a connection for a long time."

#### LA TIMES

### **Dodger reliever Madson is struggling through the World Series**

By Jorge Castillo

When the Dodgers have been in precarious situations in the middle innings this postseason, when the opposition is threatening with runners on base and the game's complexion is a swing away from a drastic shift, manager Dave Roberts has unflinchingly confided in one reliever. That reliever, Ryan Madson, pitched to a 5.47 ERA in 58 games during the regular season, but the Dodgers, who acquired him on Aug. 31, discarded the numbers. They trusted the 38-year-old Madson's stuff and extensive experience.

For the postseason's first two rounds, the faith paid dividends. Madson, who is second all-time in playoff appearances, successfully extinguished fires in his role. He has only splashed gasoline on them in the World Series.

Madson was assigned another thorny task in Game 4 on Saturday night, when he entered with two runners on base and one out in the seventh inning. The Dodgers led 4-0. He got pinch-hitter Jackie Bradley Jr. to pop out before serving a fat changeup that Mitch Moreland blasted for a three-run home run in Boston's eventual 9-6 victory, which pulled the Red Sox within a win of seizing the World Series. The Red Sox can clinch it Sunday in Game 5.

"You got to be your best against that lineup," Madson said. "Obviously, I wasn't, and that's what will happen. That's a good lineup. If you have your best stuff then you have a chance."

Madson has appeared in every game of the series. He's inherited seven runners. All seven have scored. Somehow, Moreland was the first run charged to Madson since Game 5 of the National League Championship Series — a span that includes Madson's ineffectiveness in Games 1 and 2 of the World Series.

In Game 1 at Fenway Park, Madson relieved Clayton Kershaw in the fifth inning with two on and none out. He issued a five-pitch walk, gave up a run-scoring fielder's choice, and gave up an RBI single before escaping. Roberts stuck with Madson the next night anyway, replacing Hyun-Jin Ryu with him with the bases loaded and two outs in the fifth inning. The Dodgers led 2-1. They trailed 3-2 by the end of the inning after J.D. Martinez's two-run single off Madson.

Madson went away from his changeup, perhaps his best pitch, in both instances. He did not believe his pitch selection was at fault. After Game 2, he said, "It's kind of a crapshoot with inherited runners." He said he beat Martinez, but the slugger was able to muscle a pitch to the outfield, and commented that he should've warmed up more in the New England chill.

The weather wasn't an issue in Game 3 on Friday, when Madson got an out with two pitches to start the 12th inning of the 18-inning marathon, and it wasn't an issue on Saturday. This mess was a little later, in the seventh inning, with a bigger cushion. The results did not change.

The seventh inning began with left-hander Rich Hill, the Dodgers' starter, walking Xander Bogaerts before striking out Eduardo Nunez. Brock Holt, a left-hander, was up next. The matchup seemed favorable, but Hill was on his third time through the Red Sox lineup and Roberts pulled him after 61/3 sterling innings for Scott Alexander, another left-hander.

Alexander walked Holt. Christian Vazquez, a right-handed hitter, was due up so Roberts, who didn't have Pedro Baez or Julio Urias available out of the bullpen Saturday, brought in Madson. That prompted Red Sox manager Alex Cora to pinch-hit Bradley, a left-handed batter.

"In that spot right there, considering who you have left in the 'pen," Roberts said, "you have to make a decision and I felt Ryan had a very good chance to get him out."

Bradley popped out before Moreland, an All-Star first baseman this season, stepped to the plate pinch-hitting in the pitcher's spot. Moreland had been one for four with an RBI in his career against Madson. They last clashed in 2016. Their encounter Saturday was brief. Moreland swatted the first pitch — an 85-mph changeup up and over the plate — 437 feet into the bleachers in right-center field.

“First-pitch changeup, usually I’m not going to throw it for a strike,” Madson said. “I don’t know where it ended up — I didn’t see the video — but I know it was up out of my hand. Definitely didn’t want it to be a strike but it was. I knew it was up but I don’t know where it ended.”

It was Moreland’s first home run this postseason and his fifth hit. It pulled the Red Sox within a run and reversed the momentum, initiating a historic collapse that has the Dodgers on the brink of elimination.

### **Dave Roberts’ pitching change flops for Dodgers in Game 4**

By Dylan Hernandez

As Dave Roberts journeyed from the bench to the mound Saturday night, the fans in Dodger Stadium started to boo. The closer the manager moved to the mound, the louder the boos became.

The audience knew something Roberts didn't: He was making a mistake by removing Rich Hill from the game.

Then again, the Dodgers were ahead by four runs. What in the name of Jonathan Broxton could possibly go wrong?

Plenty, it turned out.

Hill's premature departure started a chain of events that resulted not only in the Dodgers blowing their hard-earned advantage, but allowing the Boston Red Sox to blow open the game in the ninth inning.

Defeated 9-6, the Dodgers trail the World Series three games to one. Another loss and their dreams of claiming their first championship in 30 years are over.

And if this season ends without a parade down Sunset Boulevard or Figueroa Street, Roberts will become the symbol of the franchise's latest failure, just as Yu Darvish was the previous year.

The front office could be blamed for what happened in the eighth inning, when closer Kenley Jansen gave up a tying solo home run to Steve Pearce, or the ninth, when Dylan Floro, Alex Wood and Kenta Maeda gave up five runs. Andrew Friedman and his army of assistants failed to address the team's shortcomings in the bullpen, leaving Roberts with undesirable late-inning options.

But the call to take out Hill in the seventh inning is on Roberts.

Whatever information the analytically inclined front office provided him about Hill's effectiveness the third time through the order, however confident the group of decision makers were in the roadmap to victory they designed, it's Roberts who is on the bench. It's Roberts who has to observe what's unfolding on the field and react accordingly.

And what Roberts saw in Game 4 of the Series is what everyone else in the building saw.

Hill was dominant. Absolutely dominant.

At the time of his removal, the veteran left-hander was throwing a one-hitter and the Dodgers were ahead 4-0. The only hit charged to him was a single by catcher Christian Vazquez in the fifth inning. Not a single Red Sox reached scoring position while Hill was in the game.

And Hill had faced the most difficult portion of the Red Sox lineup for a third time. He registered the final out of the fifth inning by giving up a dangerous-looking drive to leadoff hitter Mookie Betts that was caught at the warning track by center fielder Cody Bellinger. He retired Andrew Benintendi, Pearce and J.D. Martinez in order in the sixth inning.

Roberts said he was extra careful with Hill because of something the pitcher told him before the seventh inning.

"Keep an eye on me," Roberts recalled Hill telling him. "I'll give you everything I have. Let's go hitter to hitter."

Hill confirmed the plan was to go hitter to hitter.

"I felt like I was throwing the ball well, though," Hill said.

Asked whether he implied in his conversation with Roberts that he was exhausted, Hill replied, "Well, no, not necessarily. I just didn't want to end up in a situation where we ended up putting the team at risk of getting us in a situation where it's like, OK, well, one too many hitters."

Hill ended up pitching to at least one too few.

He started the seventh inning by walking Xander Bogaerts, but recovered by striking out Eduardo Nunez.

Up next was a left-handed hitter in Brock Holt.

Hill had thrown only 91 pitches. Surely, he could have continued. And, surely, he could have retired Holt, or at least had a better chance of doing so than fellow left-hander Scott Alexander, who as excluded from the roster in the National League Championship Series.

No matter. Roberts yanked Hill.

A calamity ensued.

Alexander walked Holt on four pitches, which put runners on first and second base. That prompted Roberts to turn back to the embattled Ryan Madson. Now pitching in his fourth Series, the 38-year-old Madson was Roberts' designated fireman, the reliever other than Jansen who was trusted the most to pitch under the most difficult of circumstances.

Only Madson had allowed seven of the last nine baserunners he inherited to score. Roberts said he didn't have many choices, as Julio Urias and Pedro Baez were unavailable to pitch.

Madson forced pinch-hitter Jackie Bradley Jr. to pop up. He couldn't do the same against the next pinch-hitter, Mitch Moreland.

Madson threw a changeup that stayed high in the strike zone and Moreland blasted the pitch into the right field pavilion. The three-run home run reduced the lead to 4-3. What remained of the advantage vanished in the eighth inning, when Jansen served up a home run to Pearce. A five-run inning by the Red Sox in the ninth inning turned the situation from threatening to hopeless.

An awful night was made worse when President Drumpf weighed in on Roberts' performance. Drumpf might not know anything about civility, but evidently he knows enough about baseball to recognize Roberts messed up.

"Watching the Dodgers/Red Sox final innings," Drumpf posted on his Twitter account. "It is amazing how a manager takes out a pitcher who is loose & dominating through almost 7 innings, Rich Hill of Dodgers, and brings in nervous reliever(s) who get shellacked. 4 run lead gone. Managers do it all the time, big mistake!"

Roberts smiled when he was relayed Drumpf's words.

"The President said that?" Roberts said. "I'm happy he was tuning in and watching the game. I don't know how many Dodger games he's watched. I don't think he was privy to the conversation. That's one man's opinion."

Roberts responded well. He always has. He remains a capable and charismatic spokesman for a storied franchise. He's also a leader who can convince a group of talented players to sacrifice their individual pursuits for the collective good. He's just not making particularly effective decisions.

## **The Dodgers bullpen implodes and lets 4-0 lead slip away in 9-6 World Series Game 4 loss to Red Sox**

By Andy McCullough

The manager bore responsibility for the seventh inning. The closer botched the eighth. And in the ninth, with the lead gone and the energy leaking from Dodger Stadium, the tattered remnants of the bullpen imploded.

Call it a historic collapse. Call it a systematic breakdown. Call it the early onset of winter. All apply, yet none precisely captures the bitterness of Game 4 of the World Series, a 9-6 defeat to the Boston Red Sox, when the Dodgers stood on the verge of tying this series and let the opportunity slip through their collective fingers.

"It's a tough loss," manager Dave Roberts said. "Any loss in the World Series is difficult. Obviously."

Few will sting like Saturday. Up four runs in the seventh inning, eight outs away from a shutout, the Dodgers crumbled. Presented limited options, Roberts pressed the wrong buttons. Kenley Jansen combusted once again. In the ninth, the trio of Dylan Floro, Alex Wood and Kenta Maeda could not stymie the most prolific offense in baseball, giving up five runs.

Floro permitted a double to Brock Holt and go-ahead RBI single to Rafael Devers as Dodger Stadium hushed with shock. The stands emptied when Steve Pearce roped a three-run double off Maeda and shortstop Xander Bogaerts added an RBI single. The crowd stirred when Enrique Hernandez hit a two-run homer in the bottom of the inning, but the damage was done, and the Dodgers slinked back to their clubhouse trailing three games to one.

In the aftermath, Roberts was questioned about both his decision to intervene and the players he chose. After a three-run homer by Yasiel Puig created a 4-0 cushion in the sixth, Roberts spoke with Rich Hill, who had thrown six scoreless innings up to that point. The pitcher still informed his manager to "keep an eye on me" in the seventh, as Roberts recalled.

Handed that directive, Roberts left the dugout after Hill walked one batter and struck out another. The decision backfired spectacularly when Scott Alexander walked a batter and Ryan Madson served up a three-run homer to Red Sox reserve Mitch Moreland.

The Dodgers still led by a run, but the night deteriorated from there. Called into action in the eighth inning for the second day in a row, Kenley Jansen blew a save for the second day in a row. Once more he was victimized by a solo home run, as Pearce lifted a thigh-high cutter over the center-field fence. A smattering of jeers greeted Jansen as he left the mound.

"We're all disappointed," Jansen said. "At this point, we can't think about what happened."

Lingering on Game 4 will only cause agita. The Dodgers will try to extend their season with Clayton Kershaw on the mound for Game 5 on Sunday. Kershaw will face David Price, who appeared in relief Friday.

The teams returned to the diamond Saturday after the preposterous marathon of Game 3. The game required 18 innings. It lasted seven hours and 20 minutes, longer than any other in postseason history. It ended at 12:30 a.m.. Roberts fell asleep around 3 a.m. He rose in time to be at the ballpark the next morning. He had drained three cups of coffee before his session with reporters around 1:45 p.m.

"It's the World Series, man," Roberts said. "If you can't get up for this, man, you've got to find something else to do."

The Dodgers engaged in some late-night chicanery after Game 3. Because Boston used potential Game 4 starter Nathan Eovaldi for six innings in relief, Red Sox manager Alex Cora could not immediately say who would take the mound in Eovaldi's place. The Dodgers countered by listing their starter as "T.B.D.," even though Hill had left Dodger Stadium thinking he would start.

The intrigue lasted only 12 hours. The Dodgers announced Hill as their starter a few hours before the first pitch. Roberts insisted the team was pondering using a relief pitcher to open the game, a strategy the team had not employed all season. The gambit was nixed, and Hill got the call.

Boston countered with Eduardo Rodriguez, who had faced a batter the night before. The Dodgers could not tax him until the sixth. A throwing error by catcher Christian Vazquez handed the Dodgers a run, and opened the door for Puig. Rodriguez fell behind in the count. He flung a 3-1 fastball down the middle. Puig bashed it into the left-field pavilion and cavorted around the bases.

As the ballpark rumbled, Roberts consulted with Hill. After the game, the pitcher would confirm that he told the manager they should evaluate the situation after each batter in the seventh. Hill said he did not suggest he was tiring.

"I felt like I was throwing the ball well, though," Hill said, adding "I just didn't want to end up in a situation where we ended up putting the team at risk of getting us in a situation where it's like, OK, well, one too many hitters."

Roberts indicated he had never before had a conversation like this with Hill. "He did everything to put us in a position to win a baseball game," Roberts said.

The party died down when Hill issued a leadoff walk to Bogaerts. After Hill struck out Nunez, Roberts visited the mound. He elected to let left-handed reliever Alexander face Holt, a left-handed hitter, even though Hill is also a left-hander. Roberts indicated he chose Alexander, who was not a member of the NL Championship Series roster, because he has faced left-handed hitters "all year long."

"We have to pick each other up," Roberts said.

Alexander threw four balls in a row and exited the scene. Into the fray came Madson. The more effective reliever would have been Pedro Baez, but Roberts said he was considered unavailable after three appearances in the Series and two innings in Game 3. Maeda had also thrown two innings Friday. That left Madson, who needed only two pitches during his Game 3 appearance.

So much of the agony of this series has resulted from Madson's right arm. He permitted all five of his inherited runners to score in the first two games. He added two more to his tally Saturday.

Moreland arrived as a pinch-hitter. Madson left a changeup at Moreland's waist. Moreland crushed the ball deep into the right-field bleachers. Standing beneath its arc, Puig put his hands on his head.

"You've got to be your best against that lineup," Madson said. "And obviously I wasn't."

Neither was Jansen. Nor Maeda or Wood or Floro. Nor was Roberts, who pulled the plug too soon on Hill, the only pitcher worth trusting Saturday.

As the players trudged out of the clubhouse, a message was scribbled on a whiteboard near the exit, "3 Wins." A goal-oriented staffer wrote the reminder in the wake of Game 3. Only three victories, the players who strode through the doors to the diamond were reminded, were



needed to collect the World Series trophy this organization and this city have craved since 1988.

Now a different number resonated: one. One more defeat, one more stumble against the Red Sox, and the championship dream will be dashed for a 30th consecutive season.

The margin for error is gone. Responsibility resides on the shoulders of many.

### **Kershaw not worried about his October legacy**

By Bill Shaikin

Not that we encourage drinking, but this trivia question could win you a bar bet: How many times has Clayton Kershaw started the All-Star Game?

Terry Collins did not know. So, in 2016, when he managed the National League All-Star team, he went right to the source.

“None,” Kershaw said.

“You won three Cy Youngs and you haven’t started a stinking All-Star Game?” Collins said.

“No,” Kershaw said.

Still hasn’t. No matter.

He has those three National League Cy Young awards, and a most valuable player award too. But, on a night when Magic Johnson and Kobe Bryant were in the house, when Kirk Gibson and Dennis Eckersley teamed to throw out a touching first pitch, when Sandy Koufax watched intently from the owners’ box, the reminders of what Kershaw does not have loomed.

Magic and Kobe have five rings apiece. Koufax has four, Gibson two, Eckersley one.

Kershaw could end his grand Dodgers career without one, and sooner than you think.

If the Dodgers win on Sunday, they would be one more win from playing Game 7 of the World Series on Wednesday. If the Dodgers lose on Sunday, their season is done, and Wednesday would be the last day for Kershaw to tell the team whether he is opting out of his contract.

The Dodgers’ starting pitcher on Sunday? None other than Kershaw.

Win Sunday, keep hope alive. Lose Sunday, and the ghosts of October might live forever.

How much does Kershaw care about his Dodgers legacy, and how this one game might help define it?

“Very little,” he said. “I don't really care about legacy. I don't really care what people think of me or perceive of me. Game 5 is a very important game to win the World Series, and I'm looking forward to pitching that game and hopefully putting us in a great spot going back to Boston.

“And that's really all I care about. All that other stuff, people are going to have their opinions, you know, and that's fine. I'm not here to change them. I'm here to pitch. And all that other stuff will take care of itself.”

Rick Honeycutt, the only major league pitching coach Kershaw has known, hears frustration but also focus in those words.

If fans have decided Kershaw cannot prosper in October, well, there is nothing he can say to persuade them otherwise, and no time to waste in trying.

“He can't control how other people are going to skew what happens,” Honeycutt said.

Kershaw counsels the Dodgers' pitchers, outworks everyone on the team, and never ducks responsibility. His trophy case overflows, and he has the lowest earned-run average of any starting pitcher to throw at least 1,000 innings in the past century.

He should win election to Cooperstown on the first ballot, and in a landslide.

This season should be the first since 2010 that he does not finish in the top five of the Cy Young vote.

That is seven years of dominance. Koufax earned his plaque in the Hall of Fame with six, and in only the final four did he finish in the top three of the Cy Young vote.

And yet, the Koufax for the current generation has pitched in two World Series, and so far won none. Koufax, the original, pitched in four World Series, winning three. His catalog of heroics went far beyond skipping a World Series start to observe the holiest of Jewish holidays, then throwing a complete game on two days rest.

Of course that is unfair. If one player could throw a team on his shoulders and steer them into a parade, we'd be watching Mike Trout play this week.

Yet it is reality. If championships did not define greatness, Trout would have signed a new contract with the Angels long ago. Can he win in Anaheim? Who knows? Not him, not now.

Kershaw can win here, and win now.

The "best pitcher on the planet" title has been retired, at least temporarily. Kershaw remains in the conversation, with the likes of Max Scherzer, Jacob deGrom, Justin Verlander, Corey Kluber, and Blake Snell.

And with Chris Sale.

In that 2016 All-Star Game, the one in which Kershaw would have started had he not been injured, Sale started for the American League. Sale started for the AL last year, and again this year. That is three consecutive starts, and three more in all than the most acclaimed pitcher of this generation.

Sale is the scheduled starter for the Boston Red Sox in Game 6, and he could have the chance to pitch his team into the World Series. That would mean the Dodgers would have won Game 5, to force Game 6.

Kershaw starts for the Dodgers in Game 5, with another chance to polish the legacy about which he professes not to care.

### **How'd he manage this? Dave Roberts' decision takes Dodgers from a sure win to a 3-1 Series hole**

By Bill Plaschke

They led by four runs. They needed eight more outs.

Yasiel Puig was preening around the bases, Kobe Bryant was leading cheers from behind home plate, Dodger Stadium was roaring like a freight train and swaying like a palm.

Then, a horrible managerial move. Then, boos. Then, silence.

One day after winning the longest game in World Series history, the Dodgers suffered a dramatic Saturday night collapse that may lead to the longest winter in baseball history.

Dave Roberts started it, and the Boston Red Sox ended it, pouncing on his inexplicable decision to pull Rich Hill out of a one-hitter in the seventh inning to pummel weary Dodger relievers into a 9-6 comeback win in Game 4 of the World Series.

With one out in the seventh, the Dodgers were on the verge of tying the series at two games apiece with a pivotal Game 5 on Sunday at Chavez Ravine.

By the time the evening ended, that Game 5 had been transformed into one of desperation, the Red Sox now leading the series three games to one.

One more win in the next three games and the Red Sox are World Series champions. One more loss and the Dodgers' 30-year World Series championship drought will continue.

Shortly after Saturday's game ended, Boston fans crowded around their team's dugout and chanted, "Let's Go Red Sox" while, in the stands, Dodgers fans were chanting, "Let Go Of Roberts."

In an interview room in a stadium tunnel, Roberts sat placidly with his arms folded and tried to explain. This needed a lot of explaining.

"This is a tough loss," he said in the understatement of the season.

The Dodgers entered the seventh with a 4-0 lead after scoring four runs in the sixth on a Boston error and a three-run homer by Yasiel Puig. They also had a pitcher throwing the game of his life.

Hill had allowed just four baserunners and one single in the previous six innings. Only a couple of balls were even hit hard. He appeared to be in great shape, although Roberts said Hill warned him to watch for signs of tiring.

"He said, 'Keep an eye on me, I'll give you everything I have, let's go hitter to hitter, just keep an eye on me,'" Roberts recounted.

Hill began the inning with a walk to Xander Bogaerts, but then he struck out Eduardo Nunez and still seemed fine. At the time, Hill had thrown 91 pitches, but he had seven strikeouts and was apparently able to pitch longer.

Roberts, though, saw it differently. So with the crowd groaning in shock, Roberts ran out of the dugout to replace Hill with Scott Alexander.

"Right there, I know Rich gave everything he could, competed, left everything out there," Roberts said. "The walk to Bogaerts, he started losing it a little bit ... we got a lefty in the pen that's done it all year long getting lefties out."

So Roberts apparently thought Hill was telling him he was tired. But afterward, though Hill acknowledged asking Roberts to watch him, he said he felt fine.

"We went hitter to hitter in the seventh, ultimately that was part of it," said Hill. "I felt like I was throwing the ball well, though."

While the booing fans were outraged, there was one group of people who were thrilled to see Hill removed. You guessed it. The Boston Red Sox.

"Rich Hill was absolutely on fire," said Boston reliever Joe Kelly. "For him to get out of the game ... we're excited."

And that Dodger reliever who gets lefties out? Not this time. Alexander walked Brock Holt on four pitches and was immediately pulled by Roberts amid a cascade of boos.

Ryan Madson was the new pitcher, and he was no Rich Hill, either, as one out later he allowed a first-pitch drive into the right-field pavilion by pinch-hitter Mitch Moreland, a three-run homer that closed the gap to 4-3.

The parade of weary relievers was on, and it got ugly, quickly.

The eighth inning began with Kenley Jansen, about 24 hours after he had thrown two innings and 32 pitches in the 18-inning Game 3 victory. One out into his work, he allowed a home run to Steve Pearce, breaking an 0-for-41 slump by the Red Sox's first four hitters, and tying the game. Jansen has been plagued by home runs all season, and this was no different.

By the time three more Dodgers relievers — Dylan Floro, Alex Wood and Kenta Maeda — allowed five Red Sox runs in the ninth, it felt like a foregone conclusion.

Roberts had made a mistake that could not be fixed. It was the same mistake he made in last year's World Series against the Houston Astros, pulling Hill too early in a devastating Game 2 loss. It was the kind of pitching move that has haunted Roberts throughout this season, with fans blaming him for the Dodgers' perceived underachievement.

This time, the mistake even reached the White House, where President Trump sent out a tweet that, though filled with spelling and punctuation errors, perhaps mirrored the feeling of many Dodgers fans.

"Watching the Dodgers/Red Sox final innings. It is amazing how a manager takes out a pitcher who is loose & dominating through almost 7 innings. Rich Hill of Dodgers, and bring in nervous reliever(s) who get shellacked. 4 run lead gone. Managers do it all the time, big mistake!"

When told of the tweet, Roberts said, "The president said that? I'm happy he was tuning in and watching the game. I don't know how many Dodger games he's watched. I don't think he's privy to the conversation. That's one man's opinion."

Many will feel this decision should cost Roberts his job. That is unfair and unlikely. He has led the Dodgers to three straight National League West Division titles and consecutive World Series appearances in his tenure.

"Moves we made all year have worked out. We wouldn't be in this position if they didn't," said Hill. "Things just didn't work out the way we wanted to."

It would be hard to imagine that Roberts would be fired after this one awful moment. But then, it's hard to imagine the Dodgers, just eight outs from redemption, suddenly finding themselves on the verge of extinction.

Rich Hill was pulled, and so perhaps was the rug from underneath the Dodgers' 2018 season.

## **World Series Game 5 preview**

By Houston Mitchell

A look at how hitters from both teams have done in this postseason, through Game 3 of the World Series.

### **Dodgers**

David Freese, .353 (6 for 17), 1 double, 1 homer, 5 RBIs

Yasiel Puig, .302 (13 for 43), 3 doubles, 1 homer, 5 RBIs

Justin Turner, .283 (17 for 60), 2 doubles, 1 homer, 4 RBIs

Chris Taylor, .265 (9 for 34), 1 double, 1 triple, 1 homer, 3 RBIs

Manny Machado, .241 (14 for 58), 2 doubles, 3 homers, 12 RBIs

Joc Pederson, .216 (8 for 37), 1 double, 2 homers, 2 RBIs

Max Muncy, .214 (9 for 42), 1 double, 3 homers, 6 RBIs

Matt Kemp, .182 (4 for 22), 1 double, 1 homer, 3 RBIs

Yasmani Grandal, .143 (4 for 28), 1 double, 1 homer, 1 RBI

Cody Bellinger, .130 (6 for 46), 1 double, 1 homer, 4 RBIs

Brian Dozier, .125 (2 for 16), 2 RBIs

Enrique Hernandez, .114 (4 for 35), 1 homer, 1 RBI

Austin Barnes, .083 (2 for 24), 2 RBIs

### **Red Sox**

J.D. Martinez, .310 (13 for 42), 2 doubles, 2 homers, 13 RBIs

Brock Holt, .286 (6 for 21), 1 double, 1 triple, 1 homer, 6 RBIs

Eduardo Nunez, .286 (6 for 21), 1 double, 1 homer, 4 RBIs

Andrew Benintendi, .277 (13 for 47), 4 doubles, 5 RBIs

Rafael Devers, .276 (8 for 29), 1 homer, 8 RBIs

Mitch Moreland, .250 (4 for 16), 1 double, 2 RBIs

Steve Pearce, .233 (7 for 30), 1 double, 1 homer, 4 RBIs

Sandy Leon, .231 (3 for 13), 1 double

Mookie Betts, .222 (12 for 54), 4 doubles

Christian Vazquez, .219 (7 for 32), 1 double, 1 homer, 2 RBIs

Xander Bogaerts, .216 (11 for 51), 2 doubles, 1 homer, 6 RBIs

Ian Kinsler, .206 (7 for 34), 3 doubles, 3 RBIs

Jackie Bradley Jr., .205 (8 for 39), 2 doubles, 3 homers, 10 RBIs

Blake Swihart, .000 (0 for 2)

### **Manny Machado's rough World Series continues**

By Blake Richardson

Red Sox third-baseman Rafael Devers hurled a ball across the Dodger Stadium diamond, and first baseman Steve Pearce snagged it, legs spread in a near-split as the ball rattled against his glove.

Milliseconds later, Manny Machado ran across first base, blowing some bubble gum.

As the Dodgers fell to the Red Sox 9-6 on Saturday night, Machado went one for four with a strikeout. His postseason production has steadily declined, his slugging percentage dropping from .558 in the NLDS to .214 in the World Series.

The Dodgers will face the Red Sox one more time in Dodger Stadium for Game 5 on Sunday, with the first pitch set for 5:09 p.m. If the Red Sox win, they claim the World Series title.

“We’re still, probably, going to come back in this,” Machado said calmly.

Machado has never had a season stretch this long. His deepest postseason run was the ALDS with the Orioles in 2012. And before this run with the Dodgers, Machado never had a slugging percentage above .375 in a postseason series.

He made another costly base-running mistake in Game 3, when he launched a shot deep into left field and stood in place, deceived into believing the ball was a home run. Instead it bounced off the wall, and Machado settled for a single.

As Machado dashed to first base in the ninth inning he grazed Pearce’s heel, reminiscent of when he ran over Brewers first baseman Jesus Aguilar’s foot in Game 4 of the NLCS. He waved his hand right away in an apology to Pearce.

Machado left the clubhouse with a blue cap backwards on his head that read “Villains,” the L.A. logo emblazoned into the word. But he is not publicly embracing that persona



Pearce was in Machado's wedding, his daughter the flower girl. Machado said the brush was accidental — clumsiness from exhaustion.

"It's late in the year," Machado. "My legs are giving out."

Machado was also criticized on social media for his apparent lack of 100% effort running to first base.

Had Machado crossed the base in time, the Dodgers would have had batters on first and second with one out against struggling Red Sox closer Craig Kimbrel. Cody Bellinger would have stepped up as the tying run.

Behind him in the lineup was Yasiel Puig, who gave the Dodgers a 4-0 lead in the sixth-inning with a three-run home run.

In a World Series game that is evoking astonishing displays of grit — from Red Sox Nathan Eovaldi and Eduardo Nunez to the Dodgers relievers — Machado has come up short of matching that fire with his play.

Machado was at ease in postgame interviews, commended the Red Sox strong showing and shrugged off the questions about his recent struggles at the plate.

Instead, he trained his attention on Game 5.

"It's been done before," he said of a comeback.

The Dodgers have overcome unlikely odds all season, but that is because of their determination.

To keep their World Series dream alive, Machado must have the same determination.

## **OC REGISTER**

### **World Series: Longtime Dodger fans want that old feeling again**

By Keith Sharon

She could fit under the Dodger Stadium turnstiles. Those were the days her passion for Dodger baseball was born. Those were the days of Koufax and Drysdale, then Garvey and Cey, then Hershiser and Gibson, the days the baseball world regularly tilted toward Los Angeles.

And now, like thousands of other Dodger fans, Lori McCulloch, who has occupied the same season seat since 1962, wants to relive another championship moment like she remembers from her past.

Randi Radcliffe, who has attended more than 100 games this year and traveled to several road games, can feel it too. Thanks to an epic 18-inning victory Friday night/Saturday morning, hope has sprung again.

“I think I went through every emotion possible,” said Radcliffe, who lives in Orange. “After that game, there was a feeling they made staying worth it. There was pride as a fan. It doesn’t matter what happened the first two games in Boston.”

These are the fans with Dodger blue in their blood.

“Dodger baseball is part of my family, part of my being,” said McCulloch, clutching World Series tickets from games she attended in 1963, ’65, ’74, ’77, ’78, ’81 and ’88. “It’s almost like a religion.”

The price on the 1963 ticket: \$12. McCulloch, who lives in Yorba Linda, took over paying for the season tickets in 1994 when the seats were \$2,500. Now her seat costs about \$18,000.

“It’s worth it to me,” she said. “I can’t NOT have those seats. I hope my kids can afford them someday.”

Her spark started with her grandmother, Grace Dare, who bought season tickets the first season Dodger Stadium opened in 1962. Grace was 4-foot-10, but she would scream big.

“She would yell, ‘THAT WASN’T A STRIKE,’” McCulloch remembers. “Now I do the same thing.”

In 1996, Grace won a “True Blue” contest, thanks to an essay McCulloch wrote about her love for the team.

“She took a picture with Tommy Lasorda, and gave him a kiss on the cheek,” McCulloch said.

McCulloch said they would argue which players were more attractive.

“She would say Eric Karros had a better body than Mike Piazza,” McCulloch said. “No way.”

Grace attended games with McCulloch until she was 94. She died of a stroke in 2006.

"She would love to be here," said McCulloch, watching Friday's game with her 23-year-old son, Jeff.

John Gonzalez of San Bernardino was wearing a jersey that read "Fan Since 65."

"They won the World Series the year I was born," Gonzalez said. "That's an omen. I had hope even when we were down 0-2."

There are few fans who demonstrate the level of devotion shown by Randi Radcliffe. She is currently a finalist for the Fansided.com "Sports Fan of the Year." If she wins against four competitors, she could win a trip to New York City.

A year ago, she was working in Human Relations when she was let go. The reason? She was leaving work too often to go to Dodger games.

"It was one of the best things that ever happened to me," said the 25-year-old Radcliffe, whose uncle, Jim, is an editor with the Southern California News Group.

She got a flexible job as a driver for Uber and Lyft, and she bought a Dodgers season ticket. She goes to the games alone, but she meets up with friends when she's there. She tries not to spend any money on food.

"It's not very comfortable. It's very expensive. Eating is so unhealthy," she said. "But no matter what's going on in my life, I feel safe here."

Her goal was to attend 60 games. On Oct. 28, she will attend her 103rd. She has made road trips with the Dodgers to San Diego, Oakland, Arizona, Colorado and Seattle.

"I've made Dodger baseball a priority in my life," she said.

Her seat is in the upper deck, where she looks straight at the greenery of Chavez Ravine.

"It's one of the most relaxing views in baseball," Radcliffe said.

Next year, she is going to change her schedule, going to less home games and trying to make it to more road games.

She's got her eye on one city in particular.

"I want Boston," she said.

But first, she wants the Dodgers to beat the Red Sox.

### **Could World Series Game 3 be a catalyst for extra-innings rule changes?**

By J.P. Hoornstra

LOS ANGELES — Commissioner Rob Manfred has made it one of his priorities to rein in the length of games. But he was at Dodger Stadium for all 7 hours and 20 minutes of Game 3.

The longest game in World Series history began at 5:10 p.m. Friday and ended at 12:30 a.m. Saturday. If the intervening hours catalyzed his opinions about baseball's lengthening game times, Manfred refrained from sharing them with reporters Saturday.

The commissioner floated one idea – a separate set of end-of-game rules for baseball's regular season and postseason. That would be similar to the National Hockey League – regular-season games end with a shootout, playoff games with as many overtimes as necessary. Manfred said he's amenable to beginning extra innings with a runner on second base in the regular season only.

"I think that rule worked well in the minor leagues," Manfred said. "It's something we'd have to work through with the players. I don't think we're quite ready for it yet, but it's something I'd be open to."

Minor League Baseball this year mandated that all extra innings begin with a runner on second base. The league and the MLB Players' Association have not discussed implementing the rule in the major leagues.

"We're not thinking about doing anything about changing the way games are played, either regular-season or postseason," Manfred said. "It's out there, it's used in the minor leagues. I'm obviously aware of it, but it is not under active consideration."

### **PITCHER POKER**

The Dodgers essentially told the Boston Red Sox – show me yours and I'll show you mine.

Rich Hill had been lined up to start Game 4 from the start of the World Series and left Dodger Stadium after the late conclusion of Game 3 preparing to pitch Saturday. But shortly after, a release from the Dodgers changed the scheduled starter for Game 4 from Hill to "TBD."

The Dodgers never really intended to start anyone other than Hill and were just trying to mess with the Red Sox who didn't announce a Game 4 starter until Saturday morning – right, Dave?

“Maybe,” Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said with a weak attempt at a poker face.

When asked about the Game 4 decision in the interview room, Roberts tried to explain it as “vetting all our options.”

“We were just kind of potentially toying with the idea of an ‘opener,’ and just kind of wanted to leave it open-ended,” Roberts said, referring to the tactic of starting a reliever with the intention of replacing him with a more conventional starter after an inning or so. “After more conversation and thought, we just feel great about Rich starting and going through his normal routine.

“It was just something we were thinking about. We were just trying to think about all scenarios, and what would give us the best chance today.”

The Game 4 smokescreen was just the latest subterfuge involving starting pitchers this postseason. During the NLCS, the Milwaukee Brewers used their starting pitchers as shells in a shell game, even pulling Wade Miley after one batter in Game 5.

### **SHORT STROKE**

Cody Bellinger went 1 for 7 in Game 3, his only hit a single in the ninth inning against David Price.

It was the latest example of success for Bellinger’s shortened two-strike swing, which he said he implemented in the second half of this season. The left-handed Price got ahead of Bellinger 1-and-2 before throwing him a 96-mph fastball over the outer half of the plate. Bellinger poked an opposite-field line drive to left field.

“I’ve learned a lot this year by myself with my swing: when to use it, when not to use it,” Bellinger said. “I’m just trying my best to get on base right now.”

The short stroke was unseen a year ago when Bellinger set a National League rookie record with 39 home runs. But Bellinger set a postseason record with 28 strikeouts last fall and more pitchers challenged him with four-seam fastballs up in the zone, particularly in the playoffs, making Bellinger’s long uppercut swing less useful.

This year, Bellinger saw 109 two-strike fastballs 96 mph or faster during the regular season. Only six fell for hits – two home runs, three singles and a triple.

“Even when you know it’s coming, it’s still hard to hit sometimes,” Bellinger said. “I’m just trying to incorporate what I’ve used all year. That’s helped me in some important games this year.”

## **Red Sox bullpen buys time for offense to overcome 4-run deficit in Game 4**

By Jeff Fletcher

LOS ANGELES — A night after the starter who turned into a reliever pitched so much the Boston Red Sox had to turn to a starter turned reliever turned starter, the victory went to a ... reliever.

Just a plain old reliever.

Joe Kelly, a product of Corona High and UC Riverside, pitched two critical scoreless innings as the Boston bullpen outpitched the Dodgers' bullpen, allowing the Red Sox to overcome a four-run deficit in their Game 4 victory.

Kelly struck out Yasmani Grandal with five fastballs – all of them at 98 mph or harder – to escape a first-and-third jam in the bottom of the eighth.

Kelly has not allowed a run in five World Series innings, helping a bullpen win back some of the accolades that had been lost amid a difficult second half.

Kelly was on the roster bubble before the postseason, coming off a season that saw his ERA rise from 2.79 in 2017 to 4.39 this year. Kelly apparently had a moment just before the playoffs in which he submitted to some adjustments the coaching staff had suggested.

Since the playoffs began, he's allowed one run in 10-1/3 innings, with 10 strikeouts.

Just after Kelly struck out Grandal to send the game to the ninth, still tied at 4, the Red Sox exploded for five runs against the Dodgers' bullpen.

The strong bullpen performance by the Red Sox has helped reverse a trend that was apparent late in their 108-victory season. They were having trouble getting consistent work out of the pitchers between the starters and closer Craig Kimbrel.

Kelly said his performance on Saturday night was partly inspired by what he'd seen the night before from Nate Eovaldi, one of the starters who had gone to the bullpen in the playoffs to fill the void.

In the 18-inning Game 3 marathon, Eovaldi had thrown 97 pitches in six-plus innings of relief, which earned him plenty of admiration from both sides.

"I woke up this morning sore, and I thought about Nate," Kelly said. "Nate's probably even more sore. Just try to get some momentum off that guy and come into the game thinking, If I

could pitch half as good as Nate, it might go well. He grinded out there. And that was very very impressive. And I don't think I've seen it on a baseball field before. It was awesome."

Even though Eovaldi gave up Max Muncy's game-winning homer on his 97th pitch, a day later both teams were still buzzing about his performance.

"That was nothing short of incredible," said Chris Sale, one of two Boston pitchers who didn't work in that game. "What he did last night I think picked us up as a team."

Eovaldi had begun his career as a Dodgers prospect, when he was a teammate of Clayton Kershaw, another who admired what he did on Friday night/Saturday morning.

"It was really, really impressive," said Kershaw, who will start Game 5 for the Dodgers. "I played with Nate over here for a little bit, and he's just freakishly strong. Obviously has an incredible arm. But just to be able to do that says a lot about him. It's really impressive."

With Eovaldi off the table for Saturday, though, Cora tabbed Eduardo Rodriguez, who had faced just one batter in relief on Friday. Rodriguez, who had been in the Boston rotation for much of the season but he missed a chunk of the summer with an ankle injury. Late in September, the Red Sox moved him to the bullpen in September to acclimate him to his likely postseason role.

Cora hoped Rodriguez could get through five or six innings. He didn't allow a run through five, but then he gave up a three-run homer to Yasiel Puig in the sixth, putting the Dodgers up 4-0.

Although the game seemed well in hand for the Dodgers at the time, once it became a battle of the bullpens, the Red Sox won.

## **Dodgers pitcher Rich Hill goes with his strengths, dominates in final home start of 2018**

By J.P. Hoorstra

LOS ANGELES — This being the World Series, Rich Hill could not throw the first pitch of Game 4 until a television director gave home plate umpire Chad Fairchild the signal to begin. The actors stood frozen on stage – Hill on the mound, Austin Barnes behind home plate, Mookie Betts off to the side, all waiting for their cue.

This allowed Dodger Stadium to hear two full verses, and two full choruses, of "Even Flow" by Pearl Jam, Hill's familiar entrance song. The hard rock anthem thumped and thumped. The guitar solo launched in. From the time Eddie Vedder declared "winter's on its way," until the time Hill left a 4-0 game in the seventh inning, enough time had passed that autumn felt quite near, even warm in its comfort.

Winter came quickly Saturday for the announced crowd of 54,400. Hill pitched 6⅓ innings without allowing a runner past second base. Then the Dodgers' bullpen handled the final eight outs with all the care of a pair of greasy hands. The 4-0 lead became a 9-6 loss, providing an unfit ending to Hill's final home game of 2018.

"That was prototypical Rich," Barnes said. "It's how I've seen Rich throw the ball the past couple years. Big games, he seems to bring his best stuff."

Hill hit one batter and walked three against the Boston Red Sox. He allowed only one hit, when Christian Vazquez singled with one out in the fifth inning. Using nothing more than a four-seam fastball that ranged in velocity from 87-91 mph, a heavy dose of curveballs, and exactly two pitches out of 91 that were neither a fastball nor a curveball, Hill was dominant.

Not bad for the Dodgers' fourth starter.

"Both of them, the mix of the curveball and the fastball, just played well off each other," Barnes said. "He was able to throw strikes with the breaking ball a lot – behind in the count, ahead in the count."

Hill began the seventh inning by walking Xander Bogaerts. Then he struck out Eduardo Nuñez on three pitches, the last a borderline fastball that induced Nuñez to swing and miss. Before Hill could face the seventh and eighth hitters in Boston's 7-8 lineup – Brock Holt and Christian Vazquez – Roberts walked to the mound. Hill's day was done.

Why?

"Before the top of the seventh it was a long sixth (inning) for us," Roberts said. "And I had a conversation with Rich and we talked about it. He said, 'keep an eye on me. I'm going to give it everything I have. Let's go hitter to hitter and just keep an eye on me.' So right there I know Rich did everything he could, competed, left everything out there."

Had Hill ever approached Roberts with a similar message?

"I've never heard it," Roberts said. "I've never heard it. There's no margin up to that point and there's a lot of emotion, intensity, effort, focus, and he did everything. He did everything to put us in a position to win a baseball game. And again we've got to do a better job of picking him up."

Hill received a standing ovation as he walked to the dugout, acknowledging the crowd with a laconic wave.



Left-hander Scott Alexander was the first man out of the bullpen. He walked Holt on four pitches, and right-hander Ryan Madson summarily took his place. Jackie Bradley Jr. pinch hit for Vazquez and popped out. Mitch Moreland pinch hit for Matt Barnes and slugged the first pitch he saw from Madson 437 feet into the right-field bleachers – a three-run home run.

Bogaerts, whom Hill walked to begin the inning, was the first Red Sox player to cross home plate under the heavy marine layer.

Hill said he would have embraced an opportunity to stay in the game.

“Yeah, everybody wants the chance,” he said, “but the moves we’ve made all year worked out. We wouldn’t be in this position if we weren’t doing that.”

Quietly, Hill has assembled an impressive postseason resume. He limited the Milwaukee Brewers to one run in his only National League Championship Series start, a Game 4 win. He allowed two runs in a series-clinching win over the Atlanta Braves in Game 4 of the NL Division Series.

Hill’s start Saturday against the Red Sox – the team he grew up cheering, his employer on three separate occasions – was arguably his most impressive since he blanked the Chicago Cubs for six innings in Game 3 of the 2016 NLCS. That remains his only postseason victory in a career that began in 2005.

Playoff pressure? At 38 years old, Hill dismisses the idea with a calm, even flow.

“The biggest thing when you get in these situations is, you have to stick with your best,” he said. “You know what got you here and not swaying from that. That’s the biggest thing: Understanding what got you here and understand what makes you great is your ability to – whatever pitches those are ... that’s what the guys have to stick with.

“Whatever the scouting report says, to me, is irrelevant because you go with your strengths,” Hill continued. “Especially in the postseason. Understanding that yeah, the magnitude is much greater than the regular season, but at the same time you have to stick with what got you here and really not change that at all.”

For Hill, his best pitches were a fastball and a curveball, and that was enough for 6½ innings.

Before Saturday the Dodgers hadn’t lost a playoff game started by Hill since Game 2 of last year’s World Series. In seven postseason starts dating to the beginning of October 2017, Hill has a 2.29 earned-run average. He will not be the scapegoat if the Dodgers cannot climb baseball’s final mountain.

## **Red Sox swap starters, pegging David Price on short rest instead of Chris Sale for Game 5**

By Jeff Fletcher

LOS ANGELES — Just after the Boston Red Sox pulled within one victory of a World Series title, Manager Alex Cora made a surprise announcement regarding the pitcher they hope can finish it off.

David Price will start Game 5 on Sunday, with just three days since he started Game 2 and just one day after he made a relief appearance in Game 3.

Chris Sale had been scheduled to start Game 5. He even spoke about his scheduled start in the press conference before Game 4 on Saturday.

After the game, though, Cora announced the switch, without giving a clear reason why.

“We talked about it before the game and this is a good spot for David, in a National League park to start a game,” Cora said. “Obviously he’s been throwing the ball well. It’s not that we’re playing with the lead, but we feel that for the team, for where we’re at pitching-wise it’s good for – to go with David. We talked about it the whole day and we decided, I just talked to Chris and David, and that’s what we’re going to do.”

The decision led to speculation that Sale is not healthy, but Cora said he’s OK. Cora said Sale would pitch Game 6 back in Boston, if necessary.

Sale missed much of the second half of the season with a shoulder issue, and when he returned his velocity had dipped. Since Sale came off the disabled list, he’s performed even better with extra rest, so perhaps the Red Sox are just trying to give him that for Game 6. They also might be planning to use both of them, with Sale in relief, for Game 5.

If they use both Price and Sale in Game 5 and lose, they’d have Nate Eovaldi or Rick Porcello for Games 6 and 7.

Sale gave up three runs in four innings in Game 1. Price gave up two runs in six innings in Game 2. Price also faced three batters, throwing 13 pitches on Friday night.

## **Whicker: Rich Hill gift-wrapped a Dodger victory, until the bullpen broke it**

By Mark Whicker

BOSTON — Rich Hill handed the ball to Dave Roberts with a rare show of acceptance and a slap on his manager's shoulder.

Had he known what would happen when he left the field, he might have stuck it in his pocket, crossed his arms and shook his head.

Hill left, and a 4-0 Dodger lead became a 9-6 Red Sox victory, like a balloon with a slow leak. All of the 54,400 on hand could hear the whistling and see the shrinkage, and now those fans try to imagine envision a path to victory, with the Dodgers trailing the World Series 3-1.

Clayton Kershaw, pitching another in his series of Possible Final Games in Dodger Stadium, gets the ball for Game 5 and even if he somehow gets the Dodgers on the plane to Boston, what awaits them there? The Dodgers haven't shown they can beat Boston, as happened in Game 3.

The Red Sox played whack-a-mole with that L.A. bullpen, rolling up eight runs in the final three innings, including home runs by first basemen Mitch Moreland and Steve Pearce. Their own bullpen came into this game with an 0.89 ERA in the series and improved it.

Kenley Jansen, once a human victory cigar, walked into the eighth inning, not greeted by the usual approval from the fans who had watched Jackie Bradley Jr. hit a game-tying home run in Game 3.

It was risky – make that folly – to ask Jansen to get a six-out save. Pearce proved it early. He cracked a first-pitch home run off a 92 mph cutter, and Boston tied it 4-4. Jansen would not appear in the ninth, in favor of Dylan Floro.

Brock Holt, who has been bursting out of his skin in these two games, skidded a double down the left-field line and sprinted home for the lead when pinch-hitting Rafael Devers grounded a base hit to center. Pearce followed with a three-run double to right that sent lots of blue-clad people onto the freeway ramps.

Again, the Dodgers failed to show trust to Pedro Baez after the big right-hander has spent so much recent time earning it.

The man who kept Friday night's 7-hour, 20-minute ordeal out of the Guinness Book of World Records got onto the Dodger Stadium elevator about 12 hours after his 18th-inning home run.

“Thanks for doing that,” someone said, and Max Muncy smiled. A photographer showed him some of his reactions from that game-winner, and he liked that, too. All games are different, unless you’re Baltimore, and as Muncy descended to the clubhouse level he had no idea what Game 4 would bring.

The teams flipped the magic slate and Hill pitched brilliantly, taking the Dodgers one out deep in the seventh inning. Yasiel Puig’s three-run homer off Eduardo Rodriguez had punctuated the four-run sixth.

No Boston hitter got to second base against Hill during the first six innings and nobody got a hit until catcher Christian Vazquez screamed a drive into the left-field seats that was barely foul, then singled solidly to left.

After six, Boston’s Sting Quartet of Betts, J.D. Martinez, Xander Bogaerts and Andrew Benintendi was 0 for L.A. It was 0 for 19 in Game 3 and 0 for 11 in the first six innings of Game 4.

But Boston lefty Eduardo Rodriguez, who was 13-5 for the Red Sox this season, was just as mysterious for the Dodgers. He was commanding a 94 mph fastball, then turning over a high-80s changeup to right-hand batters and sneaking in effective sliders.

The logjam was dislodged in the Dodgers’ sixth inning.

Hill was fetched by Roberts with one out and one on, in the seventh, having thrown 91 pitches, and he left peaceably this time. No splattered cups or sunflower-seed packs in the dugout. But the Dodger relievers were poor custodians.

Scott Alexander walked Bogaerts and was immediately lifted in favor of Ryan Madson, who is beginning to creak under the workload asked of him. Madson got a pop-up from Jackie Bradley Jr. and then fed a changeup to Mitch Moreland, who lambasted it so high and hard that Puig, in right-field, didn’t move a muscle. The three-run homer cut the Dodgers’ edge to 4-3 after 6-1/2 innings.

The Red Sox can stage the most ravenous feeding frenzy in baseball when they get that feeling, and they made up for all those pops and grounders against every Dodger reliever they could find. For the first time all season, the Dodgers lost a game in which they had led by four.

Funny how nine innings can feel more draining than 18, sometimes.

## **Alexander: For Dodgers, determination doesn't seem to be enough**

By Jim Alexander

LOS ANGELES — While Kenley Jansen was explaining his and his team's latest disappointment in the Dodgers clubhouse on Saturday night, reporters' phones all went off at once.

It was an Amber Alert. And no, it didn't involve a runaway World Series, but that's what we seem to have.

Less than 21 hours after the Dodgers won a survival test and figured they'd changed the momentum of the 114th World Series, the Boston Red Sox flipped it right back Saturday night.

How agonizing was that 9-6 Red Sox victory, in which the Dodgers had a 4-0 lead going into the seventh inning and blew it? Even the President second-guessed Dave Roberts, joining the chorus of Twitter critics who objected when the Dodgers' manager pulled Rich Hill one out into the seventh, after 91 pitches, only to see the bullpen cough up the game.

If this sounds like a redux of Game 2 last year against Houston, when Hill was taken out while pitching well and things fell apart ... well, some habits are just tough to unlearn, I guess.

The Dodgers' marketing slogan in 2018 was "Determined," a not-so-subtle reference to finishing one game short of last year's championship. They have proceeded to do things the hard way throughout this season, and their task now is the hardest of all: Coming back from a 3-1 World Series deficit against a team that won 108 regular-season games, led baseball in most offensive categories and has been absolutely artful in this series in scoring runs with two out.

Seven of Boston's nine runs Saturday came with two out, including Mitch Moreland's three-run homer off Ryan Madson in the seventh to draw close and two big hits in the ninth off Kenta Maeda: Steve Pearce's three-run double for an 8-4 lead, and J.D. Martinez' RBI single to make it 9-4. (Jansen's contribution, a game-tying home run by Pearce, came with one out in the eighth.)

For the series, 17 of Boston's 23 runs have come with two out. You may think you're almost out of danger, in other words, but you aren't.

"We had two guys go up there and build an inning before me, and we just kept grinding and kept grinding," Moreland said. "With our mindset, we can change a game quick. We play 27 outs, or however many it was (Friday) night. We're going to grind it until the last out, the last pitch, and we've proven that all year. We've had a lot of come-from-behind wins. We can throw a big inning together pretty quick."

Maybe the Dodgers have just run into a team that is more, um, determined than they are.

At this point, they are falling back on platitudes and trying to find something – a thread of history, a glimmer of hope – that can propel them. They thought they had it early Saturday morning, after surviving 18 innings and forcing Red Sox manager Alex Cora to use not one, not two, not three, but four of his starting pitchers. Their starters were fresh, Boston's starters were supposedly ragged, and ... well, look where that got them.

Instead of bringing back Chris Sale on three days' rest, as had been widely assumed, Cora used left-hander Eduardo Rodriguez, who had thrown six pitches in relief in Game 3. Rodriguez provided five solid innings before a messy sixth.

He also gave Twitter a world-class meme after serving up Yasiel Puig's three-run homer in that inning.

But Baseball Twitter soon had other things to worry about, not least a second-guess on Executive Time.

Roberts' response was diplomatic.

"The president said that? I'm happy he was tuning in and watching the game," he said. "I don't know how many Dodger games he's watched. I don't think he is privy to the conversation. That is one man's opinion."

Anyway, the manager has other things to worry about.

Forty of the 48 teams in World Series history who have taken 3-1 leads have gone on to win. The 2016 Cubs were the last to come back from such a deficit, winning Game 7 in 10 innings in Cleveland. The last before that: The 1985 Royals, with eternal gratitude to umpire Don Denkinger.

That history is about the only encouragement the Dodgers have left. And they'll have to go through David Price on Sunday, and then Chris Sale in a potential Game 6 in Boston on Tuesday just to get to that opportunity.

"It's been done before," Manny Machado said. "We're gonna stay positive, always. We know what type of team we have. We've been grinding all year, we've been grinding in this series, so what's three more games? Grind it all out. Keep playing, keep playing like we have. I believe in everybody in here, that we can do it."

"If there's a team that can come back from 3-1, it's definitely us."

OK. Prove it. (And a little Johnny Hustle wouldn't hurt.)

## **Whicker: Bullpen blues are too familiar to Dodgers at playoff time**

By Mark Whicker

LOS ANGELES — Once upon a time, Rich Hill would have gone nine. Twice upon a time, Walker Buehler would have, too.

It is not even a consideration these days, certainly not in the playoffs. Hill, like Buehler the night before, had a firm thumb on the Red Sox in Game 4 on Saturday night. He was throwing a one-hitter going into the seventh but then he walked a guy, and he was gone after his next batter, even with a 4-0 lead.

The game, and probably the season, then shifted into the quicksand that has always been the Dodgers' bullpen, through 30 ringless seasons.

Think about it. Joe Blanton at Wrigley Field. Jonathan Broxton getting taken deep by Matt Stairs, in back to back seasons. Scott Elbert getting the inexplicable call to face Yadier Molina in St. Louis. The home run orgy of Game 5 last year in Houston, with Brandon Morrow barely able to button his jersey.

The story always ends this way, with a parade of managers walking slowly to the mound and, with an involuntary clap, taking the ball and handing it to another grunt who is shoved to the front line. The story apparently will end that way again, with the Red Sox frolicking like freed prisoners once Hill left and the relievers arrived.

A walk by Scott Alexander preceded Mitch Moreland's three-run homer off Ryan Madson.

Dave Roberts again requested a two-out save from Kenley Jansen, who has been swimming upstream ever since he was ridden so hard last fall. Jansen only pitched the eighth and gave up the game-tying bomb to Steve Pearce. After that, it was Dylan Floro and a five-run ninth that featured the go-ahead single by Rafael Devers.

Boston won 9-6 and takes a 3-1 Series lead against Clayton Kershaw on Sunday, with a shot at its fourth World Series championship in 14 seasons after the Red Sox endured 86 years without one.

The better bullpen almost always wins. L.A.'s relievers now have a 4.81 ERA in this World Series.

Roberts said Hill told him, "Keep an eye on me," when he went out for the seventh. When Roberts did lift Hill, the lefty seemed fine with it. He usually isn't.

This time he slapped Roberts on the shoulder. Triumph was imminent. A four-run lead? The Dodgers had won every game this season in which they had led by four.

“You’re talking about a World Series game in which there’s no margin (for error) up to that point,” Roberts said. “He did everything to put us in a position to win a baseball game and, again, we’ve got to do a better job picking him up.”

Roberts will be roasted for removing Hill, by those in all walks of life. He did not expect to become the next target of a Presidential tweet, but here it came, before game’s end:

“It is amazing how a manager takes out a pitcher who is loose & dominating through almost 7 innings, Rich Hill of Dodgers, and brings in nervous reliever(s) who get shellacked. 4 run lead gone. Managers do it all the time, big mistake!”

Someone recited the President’s observations to Roberts, who responded icily.

“The President said that?” Roberts said, without as much as a quarter-smile. “I’m happy he was tuning in and watching the game. I don’t know how many Dodger games he’s watched. I don’t think he is privy to the conversation. That’s one man’s opinion.”

Others will have their opinions.

Alexander walked Brock Holt who, like a lot of Boston’s supporting cast, is blossoming in this Series.

That put men on first and second. Alexander is a ground ball pitcher. He has thrown 15 double-play grounders. But this is the new rule. When a reliever falters, take him out. The choice might have been Pedro Baez. Instead, it was Madson.

This was Madson’s 11th appearance of this postseason. He has had his moments, but he was touched up in Game 2. Here he got a pop-up from Jackie Bradley Jr., but his first pitch to Moreland was driven to such heights that some people thought Ryan Gosling was riding it.

The three-run homer cut the lead to 4-3.

“The ball just popped out of my hand,” Madson said. “It was a bad pitch, right in the middle. I wasn’t surprised he hit it, but I was surprised it went as far as it did.”

“They’re a very good team. You can get them out if you make good pitches, but you can’t miss your spots. As far as fatigue goes, that’s true for everyone. We’re all dealing with it. You have to make your pitches.”



Baez, meanwhile, was unavailable, as was lefty Julio Urias.

Madson has worked in the Dodgers' last five games, an eight-day span in which he has thrown 58 high-stress pitches. Baez threw 26 pitches in his two innings Friday night, but he threw only 15 in the two Boston games. He also has given up only three hits in 10⅓ postseason innings. Unavailable? It's hard to believe Baez wouldn't have pitched if he were really healthy.

Jansen worked two innings once in the 2018 regular season, once in 2017. But in last year's playoff run he pitched in 13 of a possible 14 games and was asked to get more than three outs in five of those. Those demands followed Jansen into this season.

"You look at the three innings he's thrown," Roberts said, "and he's thrown a lot of good pitches. The two mistakes he made, the cutters didn't cut and he gave up home runs. I don't think it's a mental or a physical thing."

To be fair. Boston's Craig Kimbrel has put Sox fans through the wringer, too, but the rest of the bullpen is firing away.

Could Nathan Eovaldi be the first player to win the Series MVP award for his work in a losing game? In Game 3, he put together what will become a legendary six innings in New England, thus making sure Joe Kelly and Matt Barnes were fresh enough to handle Game 4. The Dodgers, with 12 pitchers on their roster, seemed oddly short-handed.

Eovaldi looked like Charlie Morton, the Houston starter who descended into the midst of games to bedevil the Dodgers in the 2017 World Series.

"We're not out of it," Roberts said, but here's the other thing about a creaky bullpen in October. Once it starts falling, it usually can't find the ripcord.

Such is the gravity of this situation.

## **Dodgers' bullpen goes flat, blows 4-run lead as Red Sox take 3-1 World Series lead**

By Bill Plunkett

LOS ANGELES — It has always been the bald tire that threatened to blow. Yet, the Dodgers drove on.

Saturday night was the blowout.

Staked to a 4-0 lead after Yasiel Puig's three-run home run in the sixth inning, the Dodgers' bullpen let it all get away. Shut out by Rich Hill for six innings and scoreless in their last 11 stretching back into the Game 3 marathon, the Boston Red Sox scored nine runs in the final three innings Saturday night, taking a 9-6 victory in Game 4.

The Dodgers needed 18 innings Friday night (and Saturday morning) to step away from the edge and avoid being pushed to the brink of elimination in the World Series. Just about 20 hours later, though, they found themselves there anyway, down three games to one to the Red Sox.

"It is a tough loss," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said. "Any loss in a World Series is difficult, obviously. But now we're in a situation where we're do-or-die. To their credit, they fought back and won a baseball game. So now ... we've just got to bow our necks and try to win a baseball game and it's one day at a time."

The Dodgers will dip into Clayton Kershaw's mixed bag of October tricks and treats for Game 5 on Sunday, needing a win to extend the Series for another cross-country trip.

"Those guys did a great job of hitting mistakes," said Kenley Jansen, who made a big one to Steve Pearce in the eighth inning. "That's a really good team. I'm not going to question myself."

That's okay. Roberts is the one who will be under interrogation.

The Dodgers had a 4-0 lead after Puig's 439-foot rifle shot into the left-field pavilion – an actual home run off a left-hander by the southpaw-averse Puig – and Hill spinning a one-hit shutout. But things went south when Roberts came down off D.Mountain.

"Before the top of the seventh ... I had a conversation with Rich, and we talked about it," Roberts said. "He said, 'Keep an eye on me. I'm going to give it everything I have. Let's go hitter to hitter and just keep an eye on me.' So right there, I know Rich did everything he could, competed, left everything out there."

Roberts had a pinch-hitter on deck to bat for Hill when the Dodgers' four-run sixth inning ended and sent Hill back out for the seventh. After a walk and a strikeout, Hill was at 91 pitches and Roberts had seen enough.

That was probably the last good decision he made.

Roberts said both Pedro Baez and Julio Urias were unavailable after the 18-inning marathon in Game 3. Baez threw 26 pitches in two innings Friday night, had pitched in each of the first three

World Series games and four in the NLCS – to great results. He has allowed one run in 10-1/3 postseason innings this year.

Urias, meanwhile, threw just 11 pitches in Game 3 but has pitched in each of the first three Series games including the first back-to-back games of his professional life.

So Roberts went to Scott Alexander to face the left-handed Brock Holt. He walked him. Roberts next went to Ryan Madson – despite his failures in Games 1 and 2 in Boston.

Madson got Jackie Bradley Jr. to pop out then served up a meaty fastball that Mitch Moreland walloped deep into the right-field pavilion for a three-run home run.

Madson has appeared in each of the four games in this Series and inherited seven baserunners. All of them have scored.

“We were scuffling,” Holt said of a Red Sox offense that had scored two runs in 24 innings before Moreland’s homer. “It kind of took a big hit from one of our guys to get everyone going and obviously that was Mitch Moreland tonight.”

The slide continued when Roberts decided to go with Jansen in the eighth inning for the second consecutive night. It was a bad idea Friday night. And it was a bad idea Saturday.

In Game 3, Jansen gave up a game-tying solo home run to Bradley that sent the game deep into the night. This time, it was Steve Pearce who tied the score with a shot just over the wall in left-center field.

“You know what? They’re a good team,” a subdued Jansen said after the game, surrounded by reporters. “It was just one pitch. It’s one bad pitch yesterday, one bad pitch today.

“Can’t worry about it anymore. It already happened.”

A year ago, Roberts was hailed as a new-age manager for his liberal use of his closer, bringing him into games in the eighth inning five times during the Dodgers’ postseason run. The Jansen of 2017 has only been a memory in 2018. Roberts has tried to use him the same way and it has cost him.

“I definitely don’t think it’s physical,” Roberts said of Jansen’s back-to-back blown saves. “I know that coming into last night he had five days off. And he was as fresh as any of our relievers.

“Mentally – there aren’t too many more mentally tough than Kenley. I think it’s just one of those things where you look at the three innings he’s thrown, he made a lot of quality pitches, and the two mistakes he made, the cutters didn’t cut and he gave up two homers. I don’t think it’s a mental or physical thing.”

Things only got worse after Jansen left the game.

The Red Sox completed their comeback against Dylan Floro and piled on against Alex Wood and Kenta Maeda, scoring five runs in the ninth. Holt doubled and Rafel Devers drove him in with an RBI single to give the Red Sox their first lead of the game.

The Red Sox continued their two-out magic and Mookie Betts was intentionally walked and Andrew Benintendi beat out an infield single to load the bases. Maeda gave up a three-run double to Pearce (capping his four-RBI night) and an RBI single to Bogaerts. Forty-four of the Red Sox’s 79 runs in the postseason (and 17 of their 23 in the World Series) have scored after there were two outs in an inning. These proved decisive when Kiké Hernandez hit a too-little, too-late, two-run home run in the bottom of the ninth.

“I just look at it as things just didn’t work out the way we wanted,” Hill said. “That’s the way we have to look at it and get ready for tomorrow.

“Go out there and give it all we have to take it back to Boston.”

The Dodgers are the 48th team to fall behind 3-1 in the World Series. Seven teams have come back to win the Series – the 2016 Cubs, 1985 Royals, 1979 Pirates, 1968 Tigers, 1958 Yankees, 1925 Pirates and 1903 Boston Pilgrims (in a best-of-nine Series).

## **TRUE BLUE LA**

### **Dodgers season hangs by a thread after crushing Game 4 loss**

By Ryan Walton

Entering Saturday night, the Dodgers hadn’t lost in 54 previous opportunities this season when they led by four runs or more. When they went up 4-0 in the sixth inning on the strength of three-run homer for Yasiel Puig, they were headed for a series-tying win.

But then the bullpen got involved.

Dodger relievers ignited the Red Sox offense, giving up nine runs over the final three innings to put Los Angeles on the verge of elimination. Boston won going away to the tune of 9-4.

The game started off the rails for the Dodgers in the top of the seventh when Rich Hill walked Xander Bogaerts to start the inning. Hill would pitch to only one more batter, striking out Eduardo Nunez before manager Dave Roberts came with the hook.

Boston managed just one hit in 6 1/3 innings against Hill, but wasted no time taking advantage of his absence.

Scott Alexander was called upon to get the left-handed hitting Brock Holt. Four pitches later, Holt had walked to bring Ryan Madson on to try and stomp out the rally.

It didn't go well.

After getting Jackie Bradley Jr to pop out, Madson hung an 85-mph changeup that pinch-hitter Mitch Moreland hit a country mile to bring the Sox within a run.

"Prior to that, before the top of the 7th was going on, it was a long sixth for us. And I had a conversation with Rich, and we talked about it," Roberts explained about the way he handled Hill in the seventh. "He said, 'Keep an eye on me. I'm going to give it everything I have. Let's go hitter to hitter and just keep an eye on me.'"

"So right there, I know Rich did everything he could, competed, left everything out there."

It got worse when Roberts went to his closer Kenley Jansen in the eighth for the second consecutive night. Jansen couldn't protect the lead again, allowing a solo homer to Steve Pearce to tie the game.

With five days off in between games pitched, Jansen blew leads in consecutive games to become just the second pitcher to allow a game-tying home run in back-to-back games of a World Series. The other was Arizona's Byung-hyun Kim in 2001 Games 4 and 5, which was also the last time there were back-to-back extra-inning World Series games.

"I definitely don't think it's physical," said Roberts. "He was as fresh as any of our relievers. Mental, there aren't too many more mentally tough than Kenley. I think it's just one of those things where you look at the three innings he's thrown, he made a lot of quality pitches, and the two mistakes he made, the cutters didn't cut and he gave up two homers. I don't think it's a mental or physical thing."

The Dodgers wouldn't score in the bottom of the eight, forcing Roberts to go to Dylan Floro for the ninth. A one-out double sent Alex Wood running to the bullpen mound to get ready quick when Boston sent Rafael Devers to pinch-hit. Unprepared for the possibility, the Dodgers stuck with Floro.

Devers singled up the middle to bring the go-ahead run home. By the time the inning came to a close, Boston struck five times to take a commanding 9-4 lead.

The Dodgers rallied for a pair in the bottom half but it was too little, too late.

“It is a tough loss,” said Roberts. “Any loss in a World Series is difficult, obviously, but now we’re in a situation where we’re do or die.”

“To their credit, they fought back and won a baseball game. So now it’s kind of we’ve just got to bow our necks and try to win a baseball game and it’s one day at a time.”

Roberts revealed postgame that both Julio Urias and Pedro Baez were unavailable.

Both teams lacked energy early on Saturday night. It was understandable after all, having played the longest game in postseason just hours it seemed before Game 4 started.

The Dodgers got a big boost in the arm from Hill’s outstanding start. They were headed for a tied series when they got to Eduardo Rodriguez for four runs in the sixth inning, with Yasiel Puig delivering a big three-run homer more than halfway up the pavilion in left.

Rodriguez had effectively gone five scoreless innings for Boston, but Cora asked for more with a depleted bullpen behind him. The lefty would hit David Freese on the first pitch to put a runner on ahead of the big hitters for the Dodgers.

After Max Muncy struck out, Justin Turner doubled down the left field line to put runners at second and third for Manny Machado. With Cody Bellinger on deck, Machado would be intentionally walked to load the bases.

Bellinger hit the first pitch down to Pearce at first, setting up a double play opportunity for Boston. But catcher Christian Vazquez threw it down the first base line to allow Turner to score the first run of the game.

Working a 3-1 count, Puig got a 92-mph fastball down the heart of the plate that he didn’t miss. When the ball landed several rows into the upper half of the left field seats, the Dodgers commanded a four-run lead.

### **Up Next**

The Dodgers have no choice but to win Sunday with Clayton Kershaw on the mound.

### **Saturday Particulars**

Home Runs: Puig (1), Hernandez (1), Moreland (1), Pearce (1)

WP: Joe Kelly (1-0): 2 IP, 3 hits, 3 strikeouts

LP: Dylan Floro (0-1): 2/3 IP, 2 hits, 1 run, 1 walk

## **As the bullpen continues to struggle, Dodgers place hopes in Clayton Kershaw**

By Ryan Walton

LOS ANGELES — The sting of defeat is a poison the Dodgers have tasted three times this World Series. Another catastrophic undoing of their bullpen Saturday brings the Fall Classic one Red Sox victory from reaching its end.

It hasn't mattered what move manager Dave Roberts has made, the bullpen has betrayed him. His relievers have hemorrhaged 13 of the 23 runs Boston has scored in this series and have had their stamp on 19.

The Dodgers were eight outs away from a brand new best-of-three scenario when Roberts called on Scott Alexander as first man out. Having played 18 innings less than 24 hours earlier, the bullpen wasn't fully stocked. Pedro Baez and Julio Urias — the Dodgers best relievers in this series — were both unavailable after appearing in each of the first three games,

Alexander walked the only batter he faced, leaving another situation for Ryan Madson with multiple runners on for the third time in four games. Much like the previous two, Madson allowed the runners he inherited to score — a perfect 7-for-7 in total.

With a four-run lead and limited options, Roberts placed his trust in the 38-year-old to get the final two outs of the inning. Mitch Moreland ruined whatever plans were set in motion, crushing a changeup into the seats in right for a three-run homer.

"You've got Ryan, who has a very good track record of getting righties and lefties out, and actually left-handers considerably more, and we just didn't execute," Roberts said. "Moreland hit a changeup first pitch that was up, and he got the prior hitter to pop up to the catcher, and he made a bad pitch and unfortunately Mitch took a really good swing on it."

Given the fact that the top of the order was coming to plate in the eighth for Boston, the Dodgers turned to Kenley Jansen after pitching two innings in Friday's marathon. Playing out like it did Friday — the whole reason for the strained bullpen — the big man gave up a solo homer to tie the game.

It was the first time one reliever gave up game-tying homers on back-to-back nights in the World Series since 2001 — the only other time it happened.

Even then, the Dodgers still had a chance to win the game. But when they failed to score in the home half of the eighth, Boston steamrolled what was left of the Dodger bullpen, scoring five times in the ninth.

The performance was historically bad.

A night after Max Muncy saved their season, the Dodgers are down three games to one to the best team in baseball this year. The bullpen — the strength of the first two rounds of the postseason — has brought them to this point.

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The Dodgers have no choice but to win Sunday or they will watch their opponent celebrate on their field for the second straight year. Clayton Kershaw gets the ball Sunday with the hopes of sending the series back to Boston.

It will be the lefty's sixth career start when his team is facing elimination. In the previous five, the Dodgers have won two while Kershaw has given up 21 runs (20 earned) in 28 2/3 innings (6.28 ERA).

The environment will be a lot different than the Game 1 start that saw Kershaw allow seven hits and three walks, ending his night in the fifth inning with five runs charged to his tally. The weather won't be a factor this time around.

Game 5 will be another chance for one of the greatest pitchers in baseball history to pitch well when his team needs it most. Does that matter to him?

"Very little," Kershaw said. "I don't really care about legacy. I don't really care what people think of me or perceive of me. Game 5 is a very important game to win the World Series, and I'm looking forward to pitching that game and hopefully putting us in a great spot going back to Boston."

"And that's really all I care about. All that other stuff, people are going to have their opinions, you know, and that's fine. I'm not here to change them. I'm here to pitch. And all that other stuff will take care of itself."

The Dodgers are as confident as they can be behind their long-time ace, as if they had any other choice.



“He’s Clayton Kershaw. He’s the best pitcher in the game,” said third baseman Justin Turner “He’s going to go out there and he’s going to empty the tank for us tomorrow and give us the best chance we have to extend this thing.”

The odds the Dodgers win the next three games are a long shot. Boston has proved how good they are over the last six months and are one game away from their goal.

“Obviously, the 108 wins speaks for itself in the regular season,” Roberts said of the challenge ahead. “They’re very balanced. They pitch well. They put together good at-bats. They play defense. But, you know, we’ve still got to play. And we’re not out yet. We’ve got to go out there and still, yeah, respect what they’ve done but our guys aren’t done.”

“We’ve got our best going tomorrow and we’re expecting to win a baseball game.”

## **DODGER INSIDER**

### **Dodgers stunned late and often in Game 4**

By Cary Osborne

The stunning nature in which the Dodgers lost 9–6 to the Boston Red Sox in Game 4 of the World Series and now trail in the series 3–1 was the result of a series of events that began in the sixth inning on Saturday evening, when they had their biggest offensive breakthrough, and the Dodgers’ Game 3 18-inning victory that stretched into Saturday morning.

Dodgers starting pitcher Rich Hill gave his team his best for 6 1/3 innings. During a lengthy bottom of the sixth in which the Dodgers broke a scoreless tie with four runs, including a jolt from Yasiel Puig in the form of a three-run home run, Hill had a conversation in the dugout with manager Dave Roberts about what was best for the team.

“He said, ‘Keep an eye on me. I’m going to give it everything I have. Let’s go hitter to hitter and just keep an eye on me,’” Roberts said. “So right there, I know Rich did everything he could, competed, left everything out there.”

Said Hill, who hadn’t surpassed the fifth inning in his previous six postseason starts: “I just didn’t want to end up in a situation where we end up putting the team at risk of getting in a situation where it’s one too many hitters. When you’re in a situation like this, it’s almost (better) to be a little bit more (proactive) than reactive.”

Hill, who hadn't allowed a hit until the fifth inning and didn't allow the Red Sox to reach scoring position throughout his outing, started the seventh inning by walking Xander Bogaerts. He then struck out Eduardo Nuñez.

With one out and left-hander Brock Holt up, Roberts wanted the lefty-lefty matchup and went to groundball specialist Scott Alexander. That move also would more than likely keep the left-handed bats of Mitch Moreland and Rafael Devers on the bench.

But Alexander walked Holt on four pitches and was immediately removed in favor of Ryan Madson.

Two batters later, Moreland pinch hit and hit a three-run home run.

With Pedro Baez and Julio Urías down because of previous usage in the series, the Dodgers elected to go with Kenley Jansen in the eighth inning for the second game in a row. And for the second game in a row, the closer allowed a score-tying home run — this time to Steve Pearce, evening the score at 4–4.

Every Dodger bullpen move was met with consequences.

In the top of the ninth, the Red Sox added five more runs. Devers knocked in a run off Dylan Floro. Alex Wood allowed a single to the only batter he faced. Pearce doubled in a pair off Kenta Maeda. Bogaerts drove in a run on a single against Maeda.

“They don't miss mistakes,” Madson said.

Without Baez and Urías, who have been largely effective in the postseason, and with the number of pitches thrown by the Dodger bullpen in Game 3, the Dodgers weren't at full strength to counter the best hitting team in the Major Leagues during the regular season.

Offensively, the Dodgers were quieted by Eduardo Rodriguez for five innings.

Rodriguez's presence was also result of the 18-inning game, as previously scheduled Game 4 starter Nathan Eovaldi was shelved after throwing 97 pitches in relief in Game 3.

After Rodriguez started the sixth inning by hitting David Freese with a pitch, Max Muncy struck out. Justin Turner followed by lining a double down the left field line, putting Dodgers on second and third. Manny Machado was intentionally walked to give the Red Sox a lefty-lefty matchup against Cody Bellinger.

Bellinger chopped the first pitch he saw from Rodriguez to Pearce at first base. Pearce threw home to get the force out, but catcher Christian Vázquez's throw got away and into foul territory in right field.

Turner scored the first run of the game.

Puig then launched a Rodriguez fastball into the Left Field Pavilion at Dodger Stadium for a three-run home run.

The Dodgers had one last jolt — a two-run home run by Kiké Hernández in the ninth inning of Boston closer Craig Kimbrel. But Kimbrel settled and sat the Dodgers down.

It was the first time this year in 55 games where the Dodgers lost when leading a game by at least four runs. They were the only team in the big leagues without a loss in that situation prior to Saturday.

“Three more games left. I believe in us. If there's a team that can come back from 3–1, it's definitely us,” said Manny Machado.

The Dodgers get one more game at Dodger Stadium — Sunday's Game 5 with Clayton Kershaw on the mound.

“Obviously, the (Red Sox's) 108 wins speaks for itself in the regular season. They're very balanced. They pitch well. They put together good at-bats. They play defense,” Roberts said. “But, you know, we've still got to play. And we're not out yet. We've got to go out there and still, yeah, respect what they've done but our guys aren't done. We've got our best going tomorrow and we're expecting to win a baseball game.”

### **Hill: “You've got to look forward to tomorrow, as much as this one stings”**

By Rowan Kavner

Rich Hill finished off Eduardo Nunez on three pitches and walked off the mound to a standing ovation having wrapped up the best start of his postseason career Saturday night.

The team he grew up watching — the one that helped transform him back into a Major League starter — this time served as Hill's victim for 6 1/3 innings, his fastball and curveball carving up the Boston lineup in Game 4 of the World Series. He allowed one hit and three walks while striking out seven, holding the Red Sox without a runner in scoring position as he left the game with one on, one out and a 4–0 lead Saturday night.

“Prototypical Rich, to me,” said catcher Austin Barnes. “I’ve seen Rich throw the ball the past couple years. Big games, he seems to bring his best stuff.”

Of course, what transpired from there would be out of Hill’s hands as nine Boston runs — one charged to Hill after his departure — would cross the plate in the final three innings.

“We were in a good position, up four,” Hill said. “It’s tough. But like I said, we’ve been making moves all year that have worked out.”

Added a still-confident Hill: “I like our chances, I really do, still, to win three games in a row.”

His game score of 74 was his best ever in a postseason game. His 6 1/3 innings were the most he’d ever thrown in a postseason game. In seven postseason appearances since Game 3 of the 2016, not one to typically see a lineup for the third time through, he had never gone more than five innings.

But this start was different. The Dodgers had just wrapped up a marathon 18-inning game that saw them use eight relievers, so as much as Hill could give, the team would gladly receive.

He got seven swinging strikes and 11 called strikes on his fastball. He got four swinging strikes and 11 knee-buckling called strikes on the curve. The two worked off each other in mesmerizing fashion.

“Those two pitches play off each other,” Hill said. “That’s what’s got me here. It was good tonight though, yeah.”

But Hill hadn’t thrown more than 90 pitches in more than a month, and he was at 91 after the strikeout of Nunez. Before the seventh inning began, manager Dave Roberts said he had a conversation with Hill.

“He said, ‘Keep an eye on me, I’m going to give it everything I have. Let’s go hitter to hitter and just keep an eye on me,’” Roberts recalled. “So right there, I know Rich did everything he could, competed, left everything out there.”

The lone run charged to Hill would cross the plate after he departed, as would the other eight runs Boston scored in the final three innings of what ended up a 9–6 defeat following Hill’s effort, which ended after a walk to Xander Bogaerts and the strikeout of Nuñez.

“You’re talking about a World Series game where there’s no margin up to that point, and there’s a lot of emotion, intensity, effort, focus, and he did everything,” Roberts said. “He did

everything to put us in a position to win a baseball game. And, again, we've got to do a better job of picking him up."

Each of the next six Dodger relievers to enter would be charged with at least a run. Hill didn't express anger or point fingers afterward.

"I just look at it as things just didn't work out the way that we wanted them to," Hill said. "That's the way we've got to look at it and move forward for tomorrow."

Despite the ending, and despite the Dodgers staring at a 3-1 deficit in the World Series, he remained confident in the Dodgers' chances.

"Looking back on it, they came back and beat us," Hill said. "That's it. It is frustrating, no doubt. But at the same time, you've got to look forward to tomorrow, as much as this one stings."

## ESPN

### **The good and the bad of Clayton Kershaw's Octobers**

By Alden Gonzalez

LOS ANGELES -- It's simple now: The Los Angeles Dodgers need a win to stay alive, and Clayton Kershaw needs to deliver it. But there's so much more to it than that.

It's Kershaw, with the ability to soon opt out of his contract, starting at Dodger Stadium for the last time this season and potentially the last time in his career. And then there's that whole thing about legacy, a convoluted topic when the subject is, indeed, Kershaw himself.

Kershaw, perhaps the greatest pitcher of his era, has been an overall disappointment in the postseason. That isn't a faulty narrative; it's reality. The three-time Cy Young Award winner and seven-time All-Star owns a 2.39 ERA in 2,096⅓ career innings during the regular season, but a 4.28 ERA in 145 innings during the postseason.

That is a significant sample size for October -- almost an entire season's worth -- and a big jump in ERA. How big? Well, among those who have compiled at least 2,000 regular-season innings and 50 postseason innings, Kershaw owns the second-largest ERA increase in history from the regular season to the postseason, trailing only former Boston Red Sox knuckleballer Tim Wakefield (4.41 ERA in the regular season, 6.75 ERA in the postseason).

The Dodgers' bullpen-fueled 9-6 loss to the Red Sox in Game 4 of the World Series on Saturday night put them a 3-1 deficit, and teams with a 3-1 deficit in this stage have gone on to win only

13 percent of the time. But that makes this a great opportunity for Kershaw, because there's no better way to flip a narrative than to accomplish the improbable.

Delivering in Game 5, then perhaps helping out in Games 6 or 7 from Fenway Park, and playing a major role in this franchise's first title in 30 years, might silence the thought of Kershaw's not coming through in the postseason. It might change his legacy forever.

"I don't really care about legacy," Kershaw said. "I don't really care what people think of me or perceive of me. Game 5 is a very important game to win the World Series, and I'm looking forward to pitching that game and hopefully putting us in a great spot going back to Boston. And that's really all I care about. All that other stuff -- people are going to have their opinions, you know, and that's fine. I'm not here to change them. I'm here to pitch. And all that other stuff will take care of itself."

There have been nights when Kershaw has pitched well in the postseason, but there have been nearly as many nights when he hasn't. And that is perhaps what is most fascinating about all this.

Kershaw's eight postseason starts of six-plus innings with one run or fewer are tied with Jon Lester for the most since 2013. But his eight postseason starts yielding five or more runs are the most all time. Among his 23 starts, 11 finished with a game score above 55 and 12 finished with a game score below 55.

The volatility has usually been encapsulated within each playoff series, several of which include equal parts Good Kershaw and Bad Kershaw. That means Kershaw's shaky performance in Game 1 of the World Series -- five runs, 12 outs and very little slider command in a loss from Fenway Park -- might be an encouraging sign for what lies ahead.

Before we find out, here's a look through some of the highs and lows of previous series in which he made more than one start.

Good: 2018 NLCS Game 5. Kershaw's trusty old friend -- that filthy, 12-to-6 curveball -- returned on this afternoon. With the series tied 2-2, Kershaw relied heavily on his breaking ball to pitch seven innings of one-run ball against the Milwaukee Brewers, allowing only five baserunners while striking out nine batters. It propelled the Dodgers to clinch a second consecutive pennant in Game 7, where Kershaw swiftly recorded the final three outs.

Bad: 2018 NLCS Game 1. Here's all you need to know about this one: Kershaw allowed a home run to an opposing relief pitcher. A left-handed-hitting relief pitcher. His name was Brandon Woodruff, but the details don't matter all that much. Kershaw ultimately gave up six hits and two walks. He was charged with five runs (four earned), and he recorded only nine outs.

Good: 2017 World Series Game 1. The Dodgers seemed well on their way to their first championship since 1988 when Kershaw dominated the Houston Astros from Dodger Stadium to begin the Fall Classic, recording 11 strikeouts, issuing zero walks and allowing only a solo home run in seven innings on a 103-degree night. Kershaw threw in the mid-90s, with late-breaking sliders and filthy curveballs. In retrospect, was this the final start of Peak Kershaw?

Bad: 2017 World Series Game 5. If there's an outing that haunts Kershaw's dreams, it's this one. This is The One That Got Away. The Dodgers had a chance to win a key swing game, and Kershaw was given plenty of chances. He had a 4-0 lead when he took the mound in the bottom of the fourth, then allowed four runs. He had a 7-4 lead when he took the mound in the bottom of the fifth, then paved the way for three more to score. The Dodgers lost in 10 innings. As you probably know, they also lost the series.

Good: 2016 NLCS Game 2. Trailing 1-0 in the series to a dangerous Chicago Cubs team, Kershaw braved a hostile Wrigley Field crowd and delivered seven scoreless innings to outduel Kyle Hendricks, baseball's ERA leader that season, in what became a 1-0 victory. He allowed only three baserunners on this night. Most impressive: It came in an October of heavy lifting, giving him 19½ innings over a stretch of 10 days.

Bad: 2016 NLCS Game 6. Perhaps that workload caught up to him. The Cubs smelled an opportunity to advance to the World Series for the first time since 1945 and steamrolled past Kershaw when the series returned to Chicago, scoring two runs in the first two innings and five runs through the first five. Kershaw even tried out a sidearm delivery in this start, and Anthony Rizzo hammered the offering for a home run.

Good: 2015 NLDS Game 4. Kershaw forced a winner-take-all Game 5 -- an eventual Dodgers loss, but hey, that was no longer his problem -- with seven innings of one-run ball against the New York Mets at Citi Field. Kershaw gave up three hits, issued one walk and struck out eight batters on 94 pitches. The most encouraging part: He needed only eight pitches to get through the seventh inning, the frame that had so often doomed him in this stage.

Bad: 2015 NLDS Game 1. So, about that seventh inning ... Kershaw couldn't escape it in this one. He began it with his Dodgers trailing by only a run, then walked three batters to load the bases with two outs -- the first time in a stretch of 95 starts that Kershaw had issued three walks in the same inning -- and was pulled with 113 pitches. Pedro Baez then gave up a two-out single to David Wright. The Dodgers, as you might have guessed, eventually lost.

Good: 2013 NLCS Game 2. The Dodgers lost this game, but it had a whole lot more to do with Michael Wacha's dominance than Kershaw's struggles. The only run Kershaw allowed came in the fifth, when David Freese hit a leadoff double, took third on a passed ball and scored on a

sacrifice fly. Kershaw gave up just two hits and that unearned run in six innings. But the St. Louis Cardinals won 1-0.

Bad: 2013 NLCS Game 6. If you're looking for the genesis of the "Clayton Kershaw is not a big-game pitcher" narrative, you might be able to find it here, with Kershaw once again facing Wacha and his Dodgers now facing elimination. He allowed four runs in the third, put the first three batters on in the fifth and promptly exited. His next postseason start -- Game 1 of the 2014 NLDS -- also came against the Cardinals, and Kershaw was charged with eight runs in 6⅔ innings.

### **David Price gets Game 5 call, but expect a team effort from Red Sox**

By David Schoenfield

LOS ANGELES -- Twenty-two days ago, David Price was booed off the mound at Fenway Park. He had lasted just 10 batters in his start against the Yankees in the American League Division Series, served up two home runs and departed in the second inning as displeased fans reminded of his record in the postseason. It fell to 0-9 when the Red Sox lost that game.

Now he's looking to pitch the Boston Red Sox to the World Series championship.

In a late-night twist following Boston's remarkable comeback over the final three innings to beat the Dodgers in Game 4, manager Alex Cora closed his postgame news conference with a surprise announcement: Price, and not Chris Sale, will start Game 5.

"We talked about it before the game and this is a good spot for David, in a National League park, to start a game," Cora said. "Obviously he's been throwing the ball well. It's not that we're playing with the lead, but we feel that for the team, for where we're at pitching-wise, it's good to go with David."

The explanation feels a little insufficient, especially since it means starting Price on three days' rest -- not including his 13-pitch relief appearance in Game 3 -- instead of Sale on a regular four days' rest. But we also know enough about some stuff that is going on to speculate that Boston's decision is likely related to the health of Sale's left shoulder. His velocity has been down, his command has been off, they don't want him swinging the bat, his ability to pitch deep into the game is probably limited, he had the stomach illness, an extra couple days of rest wouldn't be the worst of ideas.

That doesn't mean Game 5 will be all about Price trying to earn his place in Red Sox lore alongside Dave Roberts' steal or the bloody sock or Big Papi's heroics. If we've learned anything



about this Red Sox roster, it's that it's 25 guys contributing -- OK, 24, since we're still waiting for Drew Pomeranz to make an appearance -- and Cora has weaved his way through his pitching staff like Maradona attacking the England defense in the 1986 World Cup.

Even though Cora said Sale would still start Game 6 if the series goes back to Boston, he later added that Sale could be available in relief in the right situation -- likely meaning if they're ahead with a chance to close it out, especially given Craig Kimbrel's potential limited availability after throwing 56 the past two games.

If he does use Sale and then weird stuff happens anyway and the Dodgers survive, Cora still has options for Games 6 and 7. Game 3 starter Rick Porcello could start Game 6 on three days' rest after throwing just 61 pitches. That would line up Nathan Eovaldi to start Game 7 if necessary after throwing 97 pitches in Friday's marathon.

But Cora is focused on winning Game 5. He has repeatedly said the point of the postseason is to win today and then worry about tomorrow. With the 18-inning game, the bullpen has been used pretty extensively the past two days -- which is why Sale is a potential relief option. The pitch counts for the Boston relievers the past two days:

Kimbrel: Two appearances, 56 pitches

Joe Kelly: Two appearances, 42 pitches

Matt Barnes: Two appearances, 34 pitches

Heath Hembree: One appearance, 25 pitches

Ryan Brasier: One appearance, 18 pitches

Pomeranz: No appearances

Heck, even Porcello is an option. Along with Price and Sale, he had even gone to Cora before Game 4 and volunteered to start. Sale had lobbied to get into Game 3 as a position player as Eduardo Nunez hobbled after a series of tumbles and crashes.

Sure, it's a cliché narrative this time of the year, but the Red Sox are all in this together. Cora held a quick team meeting after the 18-inning game and the team responded by giving Eovaldi a standing ovation. Price rode with Eovaldi on the team bus back to the hotel.

"Every single game and every single night someone else steps up," Kelly said after the Game 4 win. "It's been our mantra the whole entire season."

Indeed, the team put up nine late runs even though Mookie Betts and J.D. Martinez went a combined 0-for-8. In fact, until Pearce's home run off Kenley Jansen tied the game, the No. 1 through 4 hitters had been a combined 0-for-41 in Los Angeles. Before Pearce's home run,

Mitch Moreland smacked the big three-run homer off Ryan Madson. Moreland hadn't homered since Aug. 22 -- 78 at-bats ago.

"We don't rely on two guys," Cora reiterated after Game 4. "Brock (Holt) did a good job. Steve, he was amazing, Mitch with a big swing. We kept putting up good at-bats."

As usual, everything Cora does seems to work. His only obvious questionable decision during this postseason was leaving Eduardo Rodriguez in too long on Saturday. Cora admitted he pushed him too far. Otherwise: Every moves turns to gold. Earlier this postseason, I asked Cora about Boston's decision to carry 11 pitches all postseason when the other three teams were carrying 12. He cited one reason was that by carrying Blake Swihart as a third catcher it allowed them to pinch-hit for their other catchers.

Well, in Game 4, he hit for both catchers. The first time came in the seventh with Jackie Bradley Jr., but he still had Moreland to hit for the pitcher. In the ninth, with the game tied, Rafael Devers hit for Sandy Leon and drove in the go-ahead run. Swihart then caught the bottom of the ninth.

Cora isn't about to take credit for all this.

"It's all about the players," he said the other day. "They're talented. We got information, we put them in spots that we feel that they're going to be successful. But in the end they're the ones that hit homers and make plays and actually they make managers look good, that's it."

The Red Sox have made Cora look like a genius: They're 10-3 in October. They need one more win. You have to think Betts and Martinez are due to do damage. Price is now going for his third straight postseason win as a starter.

The narrative is pointing to the Red Sox.

Of course, there's a story on the other side as well ... and Clayton Kershaw is starting, with the season on the line. Enjoy the game.

### **Did Dave Roberts take Rich Hill out to soon? Yes, but you don't know the whole story**

By David Keown

LOS ANGELES -- Dave Roberts destroyed the Dodgers' chances of winning the World Series by managing his pitching staff like a fan who won a contest. He shuffled through his relievers, trying to find the worst one for the worst moment, and succeeded in ways even he couldn't

have imagined. He lost Game 4, and probably the series, and along the way stubbed out the finest moment of Rich Hill's career like a smoldering cigarette butt. Roberts' thoroughness inspires awe.

Or maybe, just maybe, we don't know everything. Could that be possible? Maybe the quickest and easiest summation, the one that proves most satisfying to the inner demons, isn't always the one that holds up to the facts. There's stuff happening outside the television screen, real human stuff that might not provide the same bilious catharsis but is probably worth mentioning anyway.

Hill had given up one hit through six innings of an eventual 9-6 Game 4 loss. He'd thrown a lot of pitches (91) but not an intolerable amount. None of the feared Boston hitters had reached second base. He was doing all those endearing Rich Hill things: swearing, sweating, talking to himself, lofting those parachute curveballs to the plate with a pillowy softness, hopping around after every pitch with that weird flinging leg that always makes it look as if he's trying to recall every pitch back to his hand. The Dodgers were leading 4-0, the joint was jumpin', and it looked for all the world like this World Series, once the sole province of the best team in baseball, was going to be tied at two games apiece heading into Sunday.

But Hill began the seventh by walking Xander Bogaerts, and amid an ecosystem that calls for starting pitchers to be merely functional conduits to a squadron of relievers, it wasn't surprising to see lefty Scott Alexander's tepid throwing in the Dodgers bullpen immediately conduct heat. Hill is 38 years old, and the Dodgers have a tendency to treat him like someone who will spontaneously combust if he's faced with the prospect of getting the same hitters out three times in one game. Removing him from the game before trouble strikes seems almost reflexive.

But Hill was through the toughest part of the Boston lineup three times, and he was dealing in a way that should have been feted and honored by a team whose bullpen was down to beaks and claws after an 18-inning Game 3. But after he struck out Eduardo Nunez for the third time, that was deemed enough. Roberts bounded out to the mound and did that little double-clap thing he does when he's pleased with the guy he's removing, and he took the ball. Hill walked off to a valedictory cheer, which he acknowledged subtly and perhaps begrudgingly as befitting the brand, and all of it feels quaint now.

The historians will note its eerie similarity to Game 2 of the World Series last year against the Astros, when Hill was removed after four innings, one run and three hits. The Astros were privately overjoyed at the development, as the Red Sox were Saturday night. "We were excited down in the bullpen, for sure," Red Sox reliever Joe Kelly said. "Rich Hill was absolutely on fire."

With Hill gone, the Red Sox proceeded to score nine runs in the final three innings to take a 3-1 series lead. The conga line of failure began when Alexander walked the only batter he faced on

four pitches, and continued when Ryan Madson gave up a three-run homer to pinch hitter Mitch Moreland, and from then on the game seemed to be an endless cackling taunt of everything Roberts holds dear.

But after the game, when given the polite but probably pointless chance to explain himself, Roberts said he and Hill had a conversation in the bottom of the sixth that began with Roberts asking his 38-year-old starter how he was feeling and Hill responding with a less than emphatic answer.

"Keep an eye on me," Hill said at the moment and later confirmed. "I'm going to give it everything I have, but let's go hitter to hitter. Just keep an eye on me."

Which caused everyone in the room listening to Roberts to pause for a second, and perhaps examine their souls. The easy story -- Roberts as incompetent and quite possibly traitorous -- wasn't going to last through deadline. And amid the quiet of penitence, Roberts was asked if it was rare for Hill to issue such a potentially dire warning.

"I've never heard it," Roberts said. "You're talking about a World Series game where there's no margin to that point. There's a lot of emotion, intensity, effort, focus -- he did everything to put us in position to win a baseball game."

Those facts don't absolve Roberts. Reasonable people could assume "keep an eye on me" with a four-run lead under Saturday night's conditions should be interpreted as, "Let me at least give up a run before you take the ball." Managers talk about getting 27 outs, and it was pretty obvious that Hill was the best bet to get at least two or three more of them. And there's a valid argument to be made that Madson, who has allowed seven inherited runners to score in four games, was not the man to entrust with the Game 4 legacy of Rich Hill.

But as it turns out, a baseball game only looks like a television show. Instead of smiling anchors throwing red meat at your basest instincts, a baseball game is an unpredictable endeavor played by sentient beings whose genius and artistry and fallibility all have backstories that shade more toward the gray than the black and the white.

It doesn't mean that Roberts' decisions didn't turn out poorly, or that they didn't -- in the end -- cost the Dodgers their last best chance of getting back into this World Series. It doesn't mean that Rich Hill didn't deserve to attach a few more outs to his name before heading off into the night. It just means that we don't know everything, and we never will, which makes everything else, as Roberts himself might say, simply one man's opinion.

## **Dave Roberts explains pulling Rich Hill, says he 'left everything out there'**

By Alden Gonzalez

LOS ANGELES -- The Dodgers saw a four-run lead turn into a five-run deficit in the final three innings of Game 4 of the World Series on Saturday night, leading to a 9-6 loss and an overwhelming 3-1 series deficit to the Boston Red Sox.

The sudden collapse was ignited by the questionable decision to remove starting pitcher Rich Hill, who had given up one hit through the first six innings. That decision stemmed from a preliminary conversation during which Hill expressed concern that he might not be able to hold up much longer, according to Dodgers manager Dave Roberts.

The Dodgers scored four runs in the bottom of the sixth, prompting a long half-inning. In the meantime, Roberts said Hill told him: "Keep an eye on me. I'm going to give it everything I have. Let's go hitter to hitter, and just keep an eye on me."

"I know Rich did everything he could," Roberts said. "He competed, left everything out there."

Hill began the top of the seventh with a 4-0 lead and had thrown 82 pitches to that point. He walked leadoff batter Xander Bogaerts on six pitches then came back to strike out Eduardo Nunez on three. At that point, Roberts went to his bullpen.

His initial hope was to use Scott Alexander (left off the active roster for the NLCS) and Ryan Madson (who allowed all five of his inherited runners to score in the first three games) to finish the seventh then turn to Kenley Jansen, who would attempt to record six outs in back-to-back days for the first time in his career.

The plan did not turn out well.

Six relievers -- Alexander, Madson, Jansen, Dylan Floro, Alex Wood and Kenta Maeda -- combined to give up eight runs, seven hits and three walks, blowing a game that put the Dodgers' season on the brink.

Roberts said he noticed that Hill "started losing a little bit" off his stuff during the Bogaerts walk. After Nunez came the left-handed-hitting Brock Holt, which prompted Roberts to want to match up with Alexander, a left-handed reliever. But Roberts made it seem as if he would not have gone to his bullpen if Hill hadn't previously told him to keep a close eye on him.

"I've never heard it," Roberts said when asked how rare it was to hear Hill tell him something like that. "You're talking about a World Series game where there's no margin up to that point, and there's a lot of emotions, intensity, effort, focus, and he did everything. He did everything

to put us in a position to win a baseball game. And, again, we've got to do a better job of picking him up."

Alexander walked Holt. Two batters later, Madson served up a three-run homer to pinch hitter Mitch Moreland. Jansen checked into the eighth inning looking to protect a one-run lead but gave up a tying homer to Steve Pearce -- one night after giving up a tying homer to Jackie Bradley Jr. -- with one out. In the ninth, the Red Sox tacked on five runs against the combination of Floro, Wood and Maeda to run away with the game.

The circumstance even prompted a tweet from President Donald Trump.

"The president said that?" Roberts said when told about the tweet. "I'm happy he was tuning in and watching the game. I don't know how many Dodger games he's watched. I don't think he is privy to the conversation. That's one man's opinion."

Pedro Baez, who pitched two innings during the record-setting 18-inning game Friday, and Julio Urias, who, like Baez, had appeared in every game this series, were both unavailable, Roberts said.

Hill confirmed his conversation with Roberts about keeping a close eye on him in the seventh inning. Hill did his formal interview in the clubhouse while Roberts explained his bullpen usage in the interview room and was asked if he was disappointed to not stay in the game a little bit longer.

"Everybody wants that chance," Hill said. "But the moves that we've made all year have worked out. We wouldn't have been in this position if we weren't doing that. Unfortunately it didn't fall in our favor tonight."

## THE ATHLETIC

### **After a horrifying Game 4 collapse, the Dodgers' season rests with Clayton Kershaw**

By Fabian Ardaya

LOS ANGELES — As Cody Bellinger's lazy fly ball landed harmlessly in Andrew Benintendi's glove in left field, Yasiel Puig stood in the Dodgers dugout, arms crossed along the top rail, head down. He did not look up on contact, instead waiting to hear from the noise of the crowd to hear the end result.

As his teammates shuffled from the dugout to the clubhouse, Puig remained there. Had this game followed a different script, the one that appeared set in stone even into the eighth inning, he would have been the hero, his three-run blast and joyous bat flip the pivotal moment that

swung the entire World Series in his club's favor. Instead, the crowd sighed disappointedly and Puig stood there, frozen.

Eventually, he picked his head up and joined his teammates down in the clubhouse. They all sat and dressed quietly. There would be no need for team meetings, for a rallying cry as had been seen in the opposing dugout. The loss was demoralizing, devastating even, but there is not much to be said when the only words are the ones everyone knows.

"We can't question ourselves," closer Kenley Jansen repeated. "Just got to go out there. We have another day tomorrow."

Before the media could even enter the clubhouse, Clayton Kershaw stepped out. With the Dodgers on the brink of elimination down 3-1 entering Game 5, it will be Kershaw getting the ball. His hair, left uncut since early in the season, was matted back. His beard, which has gone unshaven for almost that long, was still wet. His next start might be his most important in a Dodger uniform, but he had to get home. Routine is routine.

With the season on the line, there are few anyone would rather call on than Kershaw.

"Kersh is our guy," Justin Turner said. "We love when he has the ball. We want him to have the ball. He's our stopper, and we feel good about it. He's Clayton Kershaw. He's the best pitcher in the game. He's going to go out there and he's going to empty the tank for us tomorrow and give us the best chance we have to extend this thing."

There are questions of legacy, particularly in the postseason, particularly if you've pitched as well as Clayton Kershaw for as long as Clayton Kershaw. He's now twice been within a series' reach of that elusive title, with his left arm leading the way. His mission for Sunday is simple, to keep his team's season alive and start the climb out of a 3-1 hole against an 108-win Red Sox club that appears to be a juggernaut. His stuff, as has been discussed at length, is diminished, but his aptitude and tenacity on the mound have shown he can still be dominant. He was not in Game 1, when he allowed five runs over four innings and the Red Sox pelted him with two outs.

He will have to be on Sunday. For the last time this season, and perhaps in his career, he will pitch as a member of the home club at Dodger Stadium. He, at 30, enters potential free agency if he opts out of his contract. The timer on when he makes that decision starts at the end of the World Series, spanning 10 days. Whether that starts Monday plays strongly in Kershaw's hands or, more specifically, his left arm.

It would be difficult to match the events of Kershaw's last Game 5 World Series start a year ago in Houston, the Dodgers sitting at 2-2 with a chance to grab a stranglehold of the series with the final two games played at home. He was staked a four-run lead, which came undone the

very next half-inning on a game-tying blast from Yuli Gurriel. Given a three-run lead the next inning, Kershaw and the Dodgers bullpen gave it right back. The Dodgers lost that game, 13-12, in 10 innings and lost the series in seven.

That night, Kershaw and the Dodgers became the first team in a decade to hold a four-run lead and go on to lose a World Series game. The Dodgers joined them again on Saturday, taking a 4-0 advantage before allowing the Red Sox to score nine unanswered runs in an eventual 9-6 loss that puts them at the brink of elimination. All season, the Dodgers had gone without losing a game in which they held a four-run lead, the only team in baseball to do so.

Until Saturday. Until Ryan Madson's first-pitch changeup, intended for the dirt, instead hung over the middle as Mitch Moreland crushed it into the right-field stands. Until Jansen, for the second consecutive night, threw a cutter that didn't cut and Steve Pearce tied the game. Until Rafael Devers, with a lefty loosening but not quite warm, singled off a tiring Dylan Floro to give the Red Sox the lead. Until a bullpen that had held together remarkably throughout the postseason, gave way.

"We're all disappointed right now," Jansen said. "But at this point we can't think about what happened and question ourselves. That goes for everybody, from the manager to the coaches to the players."

The Dodgers are now left to overcome their own devastating deficit. A 3-1 lead is not unassailable. Six times in baseball history has a club been able to come back, including four times when a club has had to play a potential Game 6 and Game 7 on the road. But, as Turner put it, "it's not easy."

"(But) we're a pretty good club with our backs against the wall," Turner said. "Don't count us out yet."

"Get it back to Boston, and it's a flip of a coin," Manny Machado said. "We've put ourselves in this situation, but we've been with our backs against the wall before."

"We know what type of team we have here. Three more games left, grind it all out and keep playing. I believe in everybody in here. We can do it. If there's a team that can come back from a 3-1, it's definitely us."

It will start with their trusted lefty, Kershaw. When he's been at his best this postseason, he's been able to spot that slider/cutter hybrid pitch to the backdoor on his arm side, in on the back heel of a right-handed hitter and just about anywhere he wants with depth and with movement to be able to play off his trademark curve. He lacked that in a cold Game 1, the Red Sox's patient hitters waiting him out and punishing the soft spin that didn't break. Even as his new



version of himself is predicated on avoiding mistakes, Boston made him pay for the ones he did make. He worked on his slider in bullpens between starts, including a flat-ground shadow session on Friday afternoon. But that is not a guarantee that this version of his stuff will be his best.

“You can’t just assume it’s going to be there the next time,” Kershaw said. He’ll have to hope it is.

A brilliant outing could even itself prove meaningless. The Dodgers’ starters have flummoxed the Red Sox’s powerful lineup twice in Los Angeles, with Walker Buehler and Rich Hill combining to allow one run over 13 1/3 innings, only to have the bullpen surrender the lead. But, in many regards, Buehler’s postseason career is just beginning. Hill is a journeyman who has turned himself into a cult figure — each postseason outing he makes is just a testament to the journey it’s taken him to get here.

A Clayton Kershaw start just means more, particularly now that it could be his last in Dodger blue. Game 5 is Game 5, and the Dodgers’ season depends on it. For years, Kershaw has shied away from talk on how he will be remembered, though Sunday could be a final memory for this chapter of his career.

“I don’t really care about legacy,” Kershaw said. “I don’t really care what people think of me or perceive of me. Game 5 is a very important game to win the World Series, and I’m looking forward to pitching that game and hopefully putting us in a great spot going back to Boston. And that’s really all I care about. All that other stuff, people are going to have their opinions, you know, and that’s fine. I’m not here to change them. I’m here to pitch. And all that other stuff will take care of itself.”

## **A lot of ‘what ifs’ for the Dodgers and their beleaguered bullpen in Game 4 meltdown against the Red Sox**

By Pedro Moura

Saturday’s bottom of the sixth inning nearly etched itself into Dodger lore. Yasiel Puig homered and instantaneously shot his arms to the heavens. Eduardo Rodriguez flung his glove to the dirt. Dodger Stadium rattled and clamored. Between a Boston error, a pitching change, a hit batter and an intentional walk, it all lasted 23 minutes. Amid the din, Dodgers manager Dave Roberts found Rich Hill to discuss the rest of the game now that the team held a four-run lead.

At that point, Hill had retired 12 of the last 13 Red Sox he faced. The left-hander had thrown 82 pitches over six shutout innings against his hometown team. He had allowed only one single

and two walks. But Roberts wanted to know how the 38-year-old felt before he sent him out for the seventh, in what would become the longest postseason start of his career. Hill supplied what the manager interpreted as a warning.

“He said, ‘Keep an eye on me,’” Roberts said. “‘I’m going to give it everything I have. Let’s go hitter to hitter.’”

The manager did as felt he was asked. What spun out as a result proved so disastrous it prompted even the president of the United States to criticize Roberts’ reasoning. Six Dodgers followed Hill to the mound. None left it intact. The Red Sox battered every tired reliever and sentenced the Dodgers to one of the worst defeats in their franchise’s history, 9-6, in Game 4 of this World Series. Once eight outs from a tied series, the Dodgers are now one loss from their season’s end.

Roberts had managed 64 previous Hill starts. Never before, he said, had Hill expressed concern that he might not have much left. That caused him alarm. In the hushed aftermath, Hill confirmed the critical conversation, but stopped short of saying he felt tired. He said he hoped to continue pitching.

“I just didn’t want to end up in a situation where we ended up putting the team at risk of getting us into a situation of one too many hitters,” Hill said. “When you’re in a situation like this, you have to be a little more reactive.”

The Dodgers’ season may have hinged on different interpretations of the same words. Roberts considered what Hill said as the seventh inning began. He described watching Hill start to lose his command while walking Xander Bogaerts, then regaining it to strike out Eduardo Nuñez. But, at that point, with one out, Bogaerts at first and the lefty-hitting Brock Holt approaching, Roberts opted to insert Scott Alexander, his left-handed sinker specialist.

A double play would have been ideal. The Dodgers would have settled for a grounder of any sort. Instead, Alexander failed to throw a strike, and Roberts turned to Ryan Madson, the goat of Games 1 and 2. The organization believed Madson’s primary problem in those games had been insufficient usage of his changeup. On Saturday, he started by throwing three of four to Jackie Bradley Jr., who popped out. Madson tried another changeup to begin against pinch-hitter Mitch Moreland. He wanted it outside the zone, a chase pitch, but it was over the middle.

Moreland clobbered it 437 feet.

“You gotta be at your best against that lineup,” Madson said. “Obviously, I wasn’t.”

Hill defended Roberts' choice to remove him, noting the success the manager had with pitching decisions during the regular season.

"We wouldn't be in this position if we weren't doing that," Hill said. "Unfortunately, it didn't fall in our favor tonight."

Favorable or not, what damned the Dodgers more than any decision Roberts made was their lack of reliable relief. Even after the seventh-inning mess, Kenley Jansen was unable to traverse the eighth unscathed, just in as in Game 3. And even after Jansen's eighth-inning failings, Dylan Floro, Alex Wood and Kenta Maeda were all incapable of limiting ninth-inning damage after doing so in Game 3. Pedro Báez and Julio Urías were unavailable after pitching in the first three games of this series.

"No one is expected to be fresh," Roberts said before the game. "That's just where we're at. In this situation, with what we've gone through already, nothing's ideal. You can't get every optimum matchup, probably, most likely. That's the reality. If you don't get the optimum matchup, you've still gotta go out there and get outs."

No one did. Jansen said he hated the word "if," but what if the Dodgers' All-Star closer had recorded a single scoreless inning in Game 4? What if Jansen had recorded two, on five days of rest, in Game 3, and not forced his team into nine extra innings?

Game 4 will be remembered as the game the manager flubbed — probably the series. There is still a chance at redemption, however slim, and it will depend on the players. As the Dodgers departed their stadium Saturday night, Game 3's rally bananas continued to hang from the clubhouse exit, and the morning's message remained on a nearby whiteboard: Only three more wins are required to win the World Series. In the corner, a brave soul had scribbled a reminder of the morning's chapel.

How Roberts can possibly extract 27-plus additional innings from his tattered pitching staff this series, we may never know. Walker Buehler lines up to start in the seventh game, if this gets there. Clayton Kershaw starts Game 5, and Hyun-Jin Ryu in Game 7. In a best-case scenario, Roberts would have to unearth seven or eight innings from his beleaguered bullpen. Jansen and his teammates would have to do their jobs.

## **Rosenthal: An exit that left baseball fans puzzled (even though there actually was a good reason)**

By Ken Rosenthal

Well, it's official. Joe Fan, as represented by the President of the United States, is quite confused by baseball in 2018.

The removal of a starting pitcher who allowed one hit in 6 1/3 innings from Game 4 of the World Series is a bi-partisan concern of the highest order. And while the Dodgers' Dave Roberts actually had a good reason for pulling left-hander Rich Hill, one that was not known until after the game, it might be nice if Joe Fan could figure out what the heck his favorite manager was doing from time to time.

The disconnect reaches all the way to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, where President Drumpf took to Twitter on Saturday night to say, "It is amazing how a manager takes out a pitcher who is loose & dominating through almost 7 innings, Rich Hill of Dodgers, and brings in nervous reliever(s) who get shellacked. 4-run lead gone. Managers do it all the time, big mistake."

It sure was a mistake on Saturday night — the Dodgers blew Hill's 4-0 lead in a span of five batters once he left the game, then suffered a 9-6 defeat to the Red Sox, falling behind in the Series three games to one. Yet, Sox manager Alex Cora admitted to the opposite mistake, sticking too long with his starter, lefty Eduardo Rodriguez. The first person to figure out this sport should explain it not only to the President, but the rest of us, too.

Hill, a 14-year veteran beloved by his teammates, did not deserve such a cruel outcome. The late Tip O'Neill, the former Speaker of the House and a Red Sox fan, once said all politics are local. Well, all sports are personal, which is why this one hurt so much. Hill, 38, might never get a chance to pitch in the World Series again.

He has made three career Series starts, all in the last two seasons with the Dodgers, producing a 1.80 ERA in 15 innings. Two of his starts, however, followed the same chilling pattern: Debatable hook by Roberts. Game-tying homer off Kenley Jansen. Series-turning loss at home for the Dodgers.

In Game 2 last year against the Astros, Hill struck out seven in four innings, yielding only one run, but Roberts balked at allowing him to face the Houston order a third time, yanking him for Kenta Maeda with the Dodgers trailing 1-0. The Astros' Marwin Gonzalez tied the score 3-3 with a leadoff homer off Jansen in the ninth, and the Astros went on to win, 7-6 in 11 innings, evening the series.

One year and two days later, Hill was even better than he was that night, and even better than he was in Game 6 against the Astros, when he allowed one run in 4 2/3 innings in a 3-1 Dodgers victory. Yet he again turned into a sympathetic figure. The Dodgers, until Saturday night, had been 54-0 this season, including postseason, when leading by four or more runs.

“His ability to strike that curveball . . . those were some of the better ones I’ve seen out of him,” Dodgers catcher Austin Barnes said. “When he has that good fastball-curveball mix, it’s tough on hitters. There is such a big speed differential. I know the gun says 90, but it’s the hardest 90 I’ve ever seen. I don’t know if it’s his extension or not. But it’s a firm 90.”

So, why the heck did Roberts get Hill? The temptation, as it often is for the average fan, is to blame analytics, but Hill knew he was nearing the end — he would finish with 91 pitches after exceeding 100 only three times this season. While a federal investigation of Roberts’ bullpen choices in Game 4 indeed might be warranted, the manager’s decision on Hill stemmed not from a front-office script, but a conversation he had with the pitcher before the top of the seventh.

“Keep an eye on me,” Hill said, according to Roberts. “I’m going to give it everything I have. Let’s go hitter to hitter and just keep an eye on me.”

Those words gave Roberts license to act however he saw fit; Hill later told The Athletic’s Pedro Moura he hoped to stay in the game, but a pitcher can’t have it both ways. “I just didn’t want to end up putting the team at risk of getting into a situation of one too many hitters,” Hill said. “When you’re in a situation like this, you have to be a little more reactive.”

OK, so that explains Roberts’ removal of Hill for another left-hander, Scott Alexander, after Hill opened the seventh by walking Xander Bogaerts and striking out Eduardo Nuñez. Roberts said he wanted Alexander in a left-left matchup with Brock Holt, then against No. 8 hitter Christian Vazquez to potentially escape the inning without facing the left-handed hitters on the Red Sox’s bench, Mitch Moreland and Rafael Devers.

The plan, however, went awry when Alexander walked Holt. Roberts turned to right-hander Ryan Madson, and Cora unleashed his left-handed hitters. A pop up by Jackie Bradley Jr. provided only temporary relief. Moreland hit a three-run home run to pull the Red Sox within 4-3 and continue Madson’s Series nightmare. All seven of Madson’s inherited runners have scored.

From there, the Sox regained their offensive rhythm against the rest of the Dodgers’ hapless bullpen. Game-tying homer by Steve Pearce off Jansen in the eighth. Go-ahead RBI single by Devers against righty Dylan Floro in the ninth (Roberts failed to warm up left-hander Alex Wood

in time, not that it necessarily would have mattered). Three-run double by Pearce off Kenta Maeda to give the Sox an 8-4 lead.

Dodgers fans will lament this one, just as they lamented Game 2 of last year's Series (and uh, Games 5 and 7 as well). Yet, in the age of analytics, Dodgers fans are not the only ones who struggle to understand their team's machinations. It is difficult for the average fan to grasp why a pitcher such as Hill would be removed from a one-hitter in the seventh inning, even if Hill was on board with the idea.

Baseball thinking is changing, even among players, and most fans eventually will catch on, if not always agree. As Hill put it, "It's tough, but we've been making moves all year that have worked out. Unfortunately, it just didn't work out tonight." Roberts, when informed of Drumpf's tweet, questioned how many Dodgers games the president has watched, said he wasn't privy to his conversation with Hill, and concluded, "That's one man's opinion."

The Dodgers lost a game, and maybe a series.

Hill probably lost his last shot at World Series glory.

"I always talk about the moment, enjoying the moment, being prepared for the moment," Hill said before the Series began. "As long as you focus on your effort and doing everything that is possible to go out there and win, you can sleep at night and look back 20 years from now, whether the outcome falls in your favor or not, knowing you did everything you could.

"You don't think, 'Time is running out,' or, 'Time is of the essence.' What you do with that is you make sure you give your best effort, and that's it."

He gave his best effort, as he always does. Even the President wanted more.

## CNN

### **Thanks to the Dodgers in the World Series, Los Angeles makes history with a 'sports equinox'**

By Jill Martin

(CNN)Trailing the Red Sox three games to one in the World Series, the Dodgers are fighting to keep their season alive. But Game 5 of the World Series has taken on extra significance -- and is far from the only major sporting event happening in Los Angeles on Sunday.

It marks a quirky bit of history in American sports. For the first time, all five major American men's sports leagues -- Major League Baseball, Major League Soccer, the National Basketball

Association, the National Football League and the National Hockey League -- are hosting games in the same metropolitan area on the same day.

That unusual scheduling alignment is called a sports equinox. According to the Elias Sports Bureau, this has never happened previously in North American sports history.

A look at the Sunday sports schedule in Los Angeles County (all times are in Pacific):

- NHL: New York Rangers at Los Angeles Kings, 12:30 p.m. at the Staples Center
- NFL: Green Bay Packers at Los Angeles Rams, 1:25 p.m. at Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum
- MLS: Houston Dynamo at Los Angeles Galaxy, 1:30 p.m. at StubHub Center
- MLB: Boston Red Sox at Los Angeles Dodgers, 5:15 p.m. at Dodger Stadium
- NBA: Washington Wizards at Los Angeles Clippers, 6:30 p.m. at the Staples Center

Additionally, the NHL franchise Anaheim Ducks, based in nearby Orange County, host the San Jose Sharks at 5 p.m. PST.

There is one notable name missing. Perhaps ironically, the biggest sports star in the city -- LeBron James -- has an off day. The Los Angeles Lakers will be on the road Monday taking on the Minnesota Timberwolves.

The NBA, NHL and NFL are in regular season action, and MLS has its final day of the regular season. What made this history possible was the World Series schedule and with the Dodgers in it.

There are 10 metropolitan areas with teams currently in each of the five major men's leagues: Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Los Angeles, Miami (the MLS expansion franchise is scheduled to start playing in 2020), Minneapolis-St. Paul, New York City, Philadelphia and Washington, DC. The Elias Sports Bureau only considered regular season and postseason play for its research. No preseason games, exhibition games or All-Star Games were included.