Q. Dave, I assume you and Clayton have had many long, philosophical talks today so you can gauge his mood and see how he's doing before this assignment?
DAVE ROBERTS: (Laughs). Definitely the under on that one. Haven't seen him yet, but I'm sure he's preparing for tonight.

Q. Dave, Kiké was just in here talking about one of the things that came up was his versatility. Hitting, not hitting over the years, keeping his value, being so valuable, moving around the diamond. How common is that, and how valuable of a piece is that for a manager these days?
DAVE ROBERTS: It's probably more common than it has been probably in the last five to seven years, something like that. But to have the quality of defender, not so common. We obviously value his versatility a lot and the offensive production has been much more consistent this year, and he's earned opportunities to play more. So he's been a big kind of contributor to our ball club, on the field, in the batter's box, defensively and in the clubhouse.

Q. What would his best defensive position be?
DAVE ROBERTS: I would say somewhere in the middle of the diamond. So now you're talking short, center field, second base. For me it's -- they're all plus for me. It's hard to pick one.

Q. Walker Buehler recently compared the pressure of the game he was facing here to like a post-season college game. When you hear a young player do that, do you just sort of laugh at the naivete, or is that a testament to the fact that Buehler feels like he's been in almost every situation, it seems like, before?
DAVE ROBERTS: I think it's just all in context, and a person's experience what they can pull from. So I think that for him to say that, that's all he knows and that's a fair comp, I guess, but obviously for me who's been through much more than a college playoff game. So I think that on that scale, I can kind of laugh at the naivete, but it's all relative, and obviously it's a big spot, but he continues to kind of surpass all expectations.

Q. Do you like the Division Series format? I know we ask you this every year. What do you think about it?
DAVE ROBERTS: I think it's good. I think the way that Major League Baseball has done it, the way it kind of lays out as far as the Wild Card and the division winner record and all that kind of stuff and the 2-2-1 format with the travel days in between, I think that's great. Yeah, I'm very pleased with it.

Q. Dave, can you ballpark the percentage of signs from your third baseman that get missed during the course of a season?
DAVE ROBERTS: I would say -- probably for us, I'd say probably 15 to 20.

Q. 15 to 20. Does that number change in the postseason?
DAVE ROBERTS: Significantly. And this is where it's -- and it's more of you want to run on a 3-1, 3-2, something like that. It's not necessarily a missed hit and run or a bunt, something like that. But yeah, in the postseason, our guys are even more locked in, yeah.

Q. Dave, we talk about the situational hitting, hitting with runners in scoring position, and yet you guys led the National League in home runs in September while getting better at those things. How is that -- how do you strike that balance?
DAVE ROBERTS: I think that you're always trying to get better in all facets, and I think that -- and I know that our goal is to win a championship, and when things are more magnified, you're at times forced to give yourself up a little bit more in the postseason. You're facing better arms. So the ability to move a runner, to shorten your swing, to not punch, I think that there is something that can get you with talent to win X amount of games. But when you're trying to win 11 games in October, for us we believe that it takes more than that. And that's where the situational hitting that we talk about all the time just doesn't turn on in the postseason.

So it hasn't been great for us consistently, but it hasn't been from lack of effort, and our guys most importantly understand the importance of it. So we're always striving to get better in that aspect, but I think that all 30 teams are trying to do that as well.

Q. Now that we're just a couple of hours away from
Clayton making the start, can you like give us a DEF CON rating on just how pissed off he was to not pitch Game 1? I mean, he won't hear about it now.

DAVE ROBERTS: No. I think that he was -- there's probably a lot of emotions, and I don't want to speak for him. You know, when you are who he is, there is a certain expectation that he has for himself, and -- but I respect the way that he kind of followed what we asked of him. And now his only job is to go out there and do what he's always done and what he loves to do and go out there and compete and pitch well.

Q. Do you have a plan mapped out for if this thing goes five games, and if so, what does what you did last night change anything if at all?

DAVE ROBERTS: I wouldn't say a plan right now, no. Our goal isn't to play five games. I'm focused only on tonight. And, you know, when and if that situation arises, we will have a plan. But I don't think it does anyone any service to talk about Game 5 right now.

Q. Kiké was just saying how Max was sort of blocked in the organization before he got his chance. I know you have a lot going on, but do you ever think about maybe all the guys who might need that one call or one roster move to shake their way and get an opportunity and how maybe that could have been him who didn't if things didn't go a certain way?

DAVE ROBERTS: I think about that. I think about guys. But I think that everyone has a different path. And where Max is at right now maturity-wise, performance-wise, where he was a few years ago in Oakland, probably different. And that's not even into the mechanics. So I think that some people are supposed to be Cody Bellinger and get here sooner than others. You sort of make your own breaks is what I believe. So Max continued to persevere and perform, and he got an opportunity, and he took advantage of it, to his credit.

Q. How much of Anibal Sanchez had you seen prior to this year and how did he look different to you as you scouted him preparing for this game?

DAVE ROBERTS: He's sort of the same guy that I recall. And gosh, I don't even know if I had an at-bat against him. I might have had an at-bat against him. But he's a guy that is a pitch maker. He doesn't give in. He really has a good changeup. So I think that for us it just goes back to just getting him in the strike zone, because he -- like I said, he doesn't give in. I don't want to call him a nibbler, but he really has confidence in his ability to continue to execute pitches by not giving in. So it's going to be a challenge for us. It is.