

OCTOBER 16, 2015, 7:19 AM

LAST UPDATED: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2015, 3:04 PM

Mets fans' online optimism comes with dash of the jitters

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Dodgers fans may have been cheering in their home ballpark, but Mets fans were loud and clear as they supported their favorite team online Thursday night.

Even before the first pitch of Game 5 of the National League Division Series was thrown, millions of Mets fans were already tweeting, supporting and posting about the team's chances of winning.

Many fans took to Twitter, the platform that seems to have become the favored digital megaphone for Mets fans, and posted under the hashtag #MetsTwitter.

"Mets vs. Dodgers Game 5 in an hour! Super Pumped! I think Mets vs. Cubs NLDS has a nice ring to it, LETS GO METS!" Twitter user @JTritini, a New Jersey resident, posted before the game.

While Mets fans are notorious for having a dash of pessimism mixed in with their undying support of the team, it was clear that optimism was riding high online before the game. Hashtags like "#BeatLA," "#YaGottaBelieve" and others scattered various Twitter feeds.

Other Mets fans, however, had typical jitters as the game got closer.

"My heart rate is now through the roof," Twitter user @Bradbm posted under the #MetsTwitter hashtag before the game began.

Dozens of fans posted their predictions for the final game of the division series, and others pondered which players might be the key to securing a trip to the National League Championship Series for the Mets. As the first few innings unfolded, nearly every play was met with frantic excitement, angst or anger by thousands of fans online.

It shouldn't be surprising that Mets fans were buzzing online as their team faced a win-or-go-home game. Klear, a social-media analytics firm based in Tel Aviv, Israel, found that Mets fans generated the most posts of any Major League Baseball franchise fan base on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram between July 14 and Aug. 13. While the study was done during an extremely tumultuous time for the Mets, experts say it is "in the DNA" of Mets fans to gripe about, cheer or even just discuss their favorite team online.

A Twitter user who lives in St. Charles, Mo., but grew up in Belleville, seemed to sum up the Mets' online presence mere minutes before the first pitch.

"I have a feeling that #MetsTwitter is going to be hard to keep up with tonight," @STLMetsFan5 said.

Thursday's game may have been the most important one of the series, but the passion Mets fans have for talking about their team online reached fever pitch for the entire series.

"Our traffic is up and our social engagement is up," Eric Simon, a Wyckoff resident who started AmazinAvenue.com, said. "People have really captured moments during the games: the [Ruben] Tejada and [Chase] Utley slide, the [Yoenis] Cespedes bat flip in Game 3 and [Curtis] Granderson making the money symbol - there has been a lot of discussion when all of that has happened."



AP PHOTO/LENNY IGNEZLI

New York Mets' Daniel Murphy watches his solo home run during the sixth inning in Game 5 of baseball's National League Division Series against the Los Angeles Dodgers Thursday, Oct. 15, 2015, in Los Angeles.

11/10/2016

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As for Thursday night, Simon said fans both online and on his website were "definitely pumped" and were expressing their happiness with the Mets regardless of how the game ended.

Rory D'Lasnow of Hackensack said his Web feed was full of fans with "lots of nerves" but also "a lot of optimism."

"I think I saw a couple of tweets that really embody what I'm feeling right now," D'Lasnow said, "which is - 'this has been a hell of a ride, but I'm not ready for it to end just yet.'x"

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