# WORLD BASEBALL CLASSIC 2026
# NEWS & NOTES

**March 11, 2026**

## About the World Baseball Classic

*Globe's Got Game:* The sixth installment of the biggest international baseball tournament in the world brings many of the best players on the planet together to compete for their home countries and territories. Japan won the first two versions of the tournament, taking home trophies in 2006 and 2009. In 2013, a dominant Dominican Republic squad did not lose a game, going 8-0, in winning the title. In 2017, the United States won it all. Then, in 2023, Japan claimed its third title.

This one-of-a-kind tournament was created to serve as a platform for increasing baseball's worldwide exposure, attracting new fans and players to the universal game of baseball. More than 4.7 million fans from all over the world attended WBC games over the first five installments. The 2023 World Baseball Classic generated total viewership of 455 million across 152 countries and territories. At least $250 million in new government funding tied to the World Baseball Classic has flowed to federations since 2006. At least 35 new baseball facilities linked to the World Baseball Classic have been built since 2011.

Since its debut, the World Baseball Classic has shown continued growth across the international stage, showcasing 16 different countries and territories in both 2006 and 2009. In 2013, a new Qualifier round was introduced. A total of 12 new countries were invited to participate in the Fall 2012 event along with four teams from the 2009 tournament that were required to re-qualify for the 2013 Classic, to fill another 16-federation field. The Qualifying Round returned for the 2017 edition of the WBC, leading to the first-ever WBC berths for the national teams of Colombia and Israel. For the 2023 edition, the field expanded to 20 – with all 16 countries that participated in the '17 WBC returning, along with four additional teams from the Qualifying Round. National teams of Great Britain, Nicaragua and Czechia each received a first-ever WBC berth, and Panama qualified to return for the first time since 2009. The 2026 field features each of the top four finishers from the four pools in 2023 and four teams that advanced from the 2025 qualifiers. They are Nicaragua, Colombia and Chinese Taipei, which were part of the '23 WBC, and Brazil, making its second appearance (2013).

The competitive format of the 2026 World Baseball Classic will feature 10 Round Robin games per pool during the First Round, with the top two teams from each pool advancing to the single-elimination bracket, consisting of four single-elimination games in the Quarterfinal Round and three single-elimination games in the Championship Round.

For a complete schedule and ticket information, go to worldbaseballclassic.com.

## FORMAT AND LOCATIONS

**FIRST ROUND (ROUND ROBIN)**

**Pool A:** Puerto Rico, Cuba, Canada, Colombia, Panama at Hiram Bithorn Stadium, San Juan, Puerto Rico, March 6-11
**Pool B:** USA, Mexico, Italy, Great Britain, Brazil at Daikin Park, Houston, Texas, March 6-11
**Pool C:** Japan, Australia, Korea, Czechia, Chinese Taipei at Tokyo Dome, Tokyo, Japan, March 5-10
**Pool D:** Venezuela, Dominican Republic, Netherlands, Israel, Nicaragua at loanDepot Park, Miami, Florida, March 6-11

**QUARTERFINAL ROUND (SINGLE ELIMINATION)**
**Quarterfinal 1:** Pool A Runner-up vs. Pool B Winner, at Daikin Park, March 13
**Quarterfinal 2:** Pool B Runner-up vs. Pool A Winner, at Daikin Park, March 14
**Quarterfinal 3:** Pool C Runner-up vs. Pool D Winner, at loanDepot Park, March 13
**Quarterfinal 4:** Pool D Runner-up vs. Pool C Winner, at loanDepot Park, March 14

**CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND (SINGLE ELIMINATION)**
All games at loanDepot Park, March 15-17
**Semifinal 1:** Quarterfinal Winner vs. Quarterfinal Winner
**Semifinal 2:** Quarterfinal Winner vs. Quarterfinal Winner
**Title game:** The two winners face off

## STANDINGS
**https://www.mlb.com/world-baseball-classic/2026-standings**

## UPCOMING SCHEDULE
### All Times are Local

### Tuesday, March 10
*Pool A:* Canada vs. Puerto Rico, 7:00 p.m., Hiram Bithorn Stadium
*Pool B:* Italy vs. United States, 8:00 p.m., Daikin Park
*Pool C:* Czechia vs. Japan, 7:00 p.m., Tokyo Dome
*Pool D:* Israel vs. Netherlands, 7:00 p.m., loanDepot Park

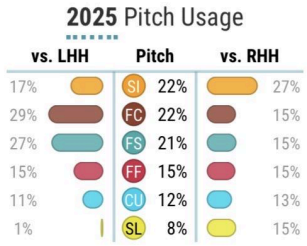
### Wednesday, March 11
*Pool A:* Canada vs. Cuba, 3:00 p.m., Hiram Bithorn Stadium
*Pool B:* Italy vs. Mexico, 6:00 p.m., Daikin Park
*Pool D:* Dominican Republic vs. Venezuela, 8:00 p.m., loanDepot Park

**UPCOMING PITCHERS**

***Pool A:*** **Canada vs. Cuba, 3:00 p.m., Hiram Bithorn Stadium:** RHP Cal Quantrill vs. LHP Livan Moinelo

- Team Canada is sending 31-year-old Cal Quantrill to the mound on Wednesday to face Cuba. Drafted by the San Diego Padres with the 8th overall pick of the 2016 Amateur Draft out of Stanford University, he made his big league debut on May 1, 2019 and picked up his first MLB win at Rogers Centre in Toronto on May 25. Cal is the son of Team Canada bullpen coach and 14-year MLB veteran and All-Star (2001) Paul Quantrill. Cal was traded to Cleveland in 2020 prior to the trade deadline and later led Cleveland's rotation in ERA (2.89) and innings pitched (149.2) in 2021 before leading Cleveland in wins in 2022 with 15. He was traded to the Colorado Rockies

on November 17, 2023 and spent the 2024 season with the club before signing with the Miami Marlins on February 12, 2025. On May 18, 2025 he became the second pitcher in Marlins history to throw an immaculate inning. His catcher that day was fellow Canadian Liam Hicks. Quantrill was claimed off waivers by the Atlanta Braves on August 21, 2025 and later signed a minor league contract with the Texas Rangers on September 9, 2025. He is currently signed to a minor league deal with an invite to spring training with the Rangers. **International:** Quantrill helped Canada win silver medals at the 2011 U-18 Pan American Championship in Colombia and the 2012 U-18 Baseball World Cup in Seoul, South Korea. He represented Canada at the 2023 World Baseball Classic. Baseball Savant page LINK




- Making second start of this tournament. The 30-year-old appeared in four games in the 2023 edition of the tournament, allowing no runs on two hits with three walks and five strikeouts in 4.1 innings of work against the Netherlands, Italy, Chinese Taipei and Australia. Moinelo currently pitches for the Fukuoka Softbank Hawks, going 12-3 with a 1.46 ERA in 2025 across 167.0 innings on the mound, earning the Pacific League ERA title in his first season as a starter. The southpaw holds the club record for strikeouts in a game after fanning 18 batters in his start on June 6, 2025. He is the first Cuban-born player to win MVP in the history of Nippon Professional Baseball.

***Pool B:*** **Italy vs. Mexico, 6:00 p.m., Daikin Park:** RHP Aaron Nola vs. TBA

- Catholic High School (LA)..he attended Louisiana State University... honored by the 2014 National Pitcher of the Year by the College Baseball Foundation... selected by Phillies in First Round (7" overall) of 2014 MLB Draft.. he began his pro career with Clearwater (A)...he made MLB debut on July 21, 2015....named an NL All-Star in 2018, he finished third in Cy Young voting that season...he recorded 200 or more strikeouts in five seasons (2018, 2019, 2021-2023).... he led all Major League pitchers in innings pitched and starts from 2017/2018 up to 2025...in 2022, he had over 220 strikeouts and fewer than 30 walks, a feat only achieved once before in MLB history... he played World Series that year against the Houston Astros...he made five consecutive Opening Day starts for the Phillies (2018-2022)...he was placed on the 60-day injured list in 2025 with a stress reaction in his right rib cage...he ranked fourth on the Phillies' all-time strikeout list (1,779+) as of late 2025...he signed a seven-year, $172 million contract with the Phillies in November 2023...his brother, Austin Nola is a former MLB catcher...they faced each other in 2021. Baseball Savant page LINK

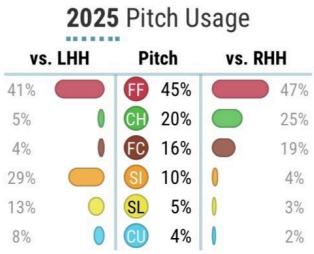


***Pool D:*** **Dominican Republic vs. Venezuela, 8:00 p.m., loanDepot Park:** RHP Sandy Alcantara vs. LHP Eduardo Rodriguez

- Alcantara will make his first start in the 2026 WBC and second overall against Venezuela. In the last matchup, Alcantara took the loss to Venezuela, allowing 3 ER over 3.2 innings (7.36 ERA) with a HR and 3 BB, while striking out 2 batters. Baseball Savant page LINK




- "El Gualo" is participating in his second WBC tournament. Made his debut and unique participation in on March 14th, 2023, against Nicaragua. In that outing he faced 12 batters during 2.0 IP, allowing 7 hits 1 R (1 ER) while striking out 3 rivals. Venezuela won 4-1 after a three-run rally in the 4th inning. He has a career 5.76 ERA in regular season games (3) played in Miami (10 ER in 15.2 IP), but in his last two outings he has had a 1.69 ERA (2 ER in 10.2 IP). Tossed 157.2 IP in 2025, his highest since the 157.2 IP he threw in 2021. Last season, he led the Diamondbacks pitching staff and finished 9th in NL in SO against right-handed hitters with 114 (143 total). In 2025, he had the 5th lowest ERA among the NL qualified pitchers in the month of June with 1.98. Is ranked 25th among the active pitchers with 8.947 SO/9. Last season he finished above 86% of the league in hard hit. In an era in which pitchers going 5.0 plus innings it's a commodity, Eduardo went 5.0 and up in 22 of his 29 outings with the Diamondbacks in 2025, tossing 128.1 IP, while allowing 50 ER for 3.50 ERA in those games. The southpaw is six MLB wins shy of 100. Once he reaches the milestone, he will become in the 9th Venezuelan-born player with 100+ Wins in Major League regular season games, joining Félix Hernández (169), Freddy García (156), Johan Santana (139), Carlos Zambrano (132), Anibal Sánchez (116), Carlos Carrasco (112), Wilson Álvarez (102), and Kelvim Escobar (101). E-Rod is 13 SO shy for tying Kelvim Escobar in the 8th spot in the all-time list with 1,310 punchouts among the Venezuelan-born players. Hall of Fame candidate Félix Hernández is the all-time leader among Venezuelans with 2,574, followed by Johán Santana (1,988) and Anibal Sánchez (1,774). Has participated in the Playoffs in three seasons 2017, 2018, 2021), and has a career 1-1, 6.35 ERA (16 ER / 22.2 IP), 17 H, 25 SO, 7 BB, 1.059 WHIP in 4 GS, all with the Red Sox. Rodriguez is ranked 11th in SO (803), 5th in wins (62), 4th in WHIP (1.358), 9th in SO/9 (8.9), 9th in IP (809.0), 12th in ERA (4.23) among the left-handed pitchers with 700.0+ innings tossed between 2019 and 2025. Became a lefty after falling from a tree during his childhood in Venezuela. Landed in a concrete sidewalk over his right elbow and broke it, making him use his left arm to keep playing with his friends. His childhood idol was LHP Johán Santana, the current Pitching Coach for Team Venezuela in WBC. Among his hobbies are fishing, cooking arepas and spending time with his family. The nickname of "el Gualo" comes from his childhood days in Venezuela, when his younger brother called him like that while he was learning to speak. Baseball Savant page LINK




# QUICK FUN FACT CORNER!

*Watch this space throughout the tournament for a selection of notes to keep an eye on*

**Scoring**
-Highest-scoring innings, World Baseball Classic history:

3/6/26 Japan: 10 runs, 2nd inning
3/10/26 Japan: 9, 8th
3/13/23 USA: 9, 1st
3/12/09 Cuba: 9, 7th

-Largest shutout wins in WBC history:

3/10/06 USA vs. South Africa: 17-0
3/8/26 Mexico vs. Brazil: 16-0
3/7/26 Chinese Taipei vs. Czechia: 14-0
3/9/13 Cuba vs. Chinese Taipei: 14-0
3/8/09 Korea vs. China: 14-0
3/6/26 Japan vs. Chinese Taipei: 13-0

**Homer happy**
-There have now been 7 individual multi-homer games this WBC

That's the most in a single WBC, surpassing  2009

-HR & OF assist in same World Baseball Classic game:

3/9/2026 MEX Jarren Duran (1st w/2 of either)
3/9/2026 USA Aaron Judge
3/8/2026 MEX Alek Thomas
3/20/2023 JPN Masataka Yoshida
3/13/2023 DOM Juan Soto
3/9/2023 CHN Pei Liang
3/9/2017 ITA John Andreoli

h/t @EliasSports

-Saturday: first two walk-off home runs in WBC history, first day with 2 walk-offs of any kind

Sunday: first day in WBC history with two home runs to clinch run-rule wins, there had been 2 in WBC history prior (h/t @EliasSports)

-Home runs to clinch run-rule wins, WBC history:

3/8/26 MEX Julian Ornelas
3/8/26 DOM Juan Soto
3/10/17 PUR T.J. Rivera
3/12/09 CUB Frederich Cepeda

h/t @EliasSports

-There were 20 home runs across WBC games Saturday

That is tied for the most on a single day in WBC history, with 3/8/09

-Entering Saturday there had never been a WBC walk-off home run

THERE WERE 2 SATURDAY (Albies, Hernaiz) !!!!!

First calendar date in WBC history with two walk-offs of any kind

-Nate Eaton's leadoff HR is the 11th in WBC history, joining:

3/6/26 BRA Lucas Ramirez
3/12/23 CAN Edouard Julien
3/14/17 JPN Tetsuto Yamada
3/9/17 MEX Esteban Quiroz
3/12/13 NED Andrelton Simmons
3/10/13 JPN Takashi Toritani
3/22/09 USA Brian Roberts
3/20/06 CUB Eduardo Paret
3/15/06 PUR Bernie Williams
3/12/06 JPN Ichiro Suzuki

**Scoreless**
-There have already been 9 shutouts in this WBC

There were four all of the 2023 WBC

Most in a single tournament: 11 in 2009

**Mama said strike you out**
-Most consecutive strikeouts by a pitcher in a WBC game:

3/15/2017 USA Drew Smyly: 6
3/4/2013 CUB Danny Betancourt: 6
3/5/2026 AUS Alex Wells: 5
3/14/2023 MEX Taijuan Walker: 5

3/11/2023 JPN Hiroya Miyagi: 5
3/6/2013 JPN Masahiro Tanaka: 5
3/10/2009 DOM Ubaldo Jimenez: 5

h/t @EliasSports

**Every team captain in the 2026 #WorldBaseballClassic** 🫡

Martín Maldonado, Puerto Rico
Alfredo Despaigne, Cuba
Josh Naylor, Canada
Jose Quintana, Colombia
Aaron Judge, United States
Vinnie Pasquantino, Italy
Jazz Chisholm Jr., Great Britain
Harry Ford, Great Britain
Leonardo Reginatto, Brazil
Tim Kennelly, Australia
Warwick Saupold, Australia
Jung Hoo Lee, Korea
Chieh-Hsien Chen, Chinese Taipei
Salvador Perez, Venezuela
Manny Machado, Dominican Republic
Xander Bogaerts, Netherlands

**Family time**
-Brothers to be WBC teammates, both having already made MLB debut:

2026 CAN Josh & Bo Naylor
2026 VEN William & Willson Contreras
2026 ISR C.J. & Garrett Stubbs
2023 PR Alexis & Edwin Diaz
2023 NED Joshua & Richie Palacios
2017 COL Donovan & Jhonatan Solano
2013, ‘09 MEX Adrian & Edgar Gonzalez
2013 PR Jose & Yadier Molina
2009 MEX Jerry Jr. & Scott Hairston
2006 PR Jose & Javier Valentin

h/t @EliasSports

-Druw Jones is on the Netherlands’ roster. His father, Andruw, is managing, making them the 3rd father/son manager + player duo in a WBC (2013 Tony & Francisco Peña, 2009 Felipe & Moises Alou)

They’ll also join this list of father/son duos to each play in the WBC in their careers, as will Australia’s Max & Trent (‘06) Durrington:

Jung Hoo (2026, ‘23) & Jong-Beom Lee (2006)
Cal (‘26, ‘23) & Paul Quantrill (‘06)

**No. 1**
-With No. 1 overall picks Travis Bazzana, Bryce Harper & Paul Skenes on WBC rosters, they will join this list of No. 1 overall MLB Draft picks to play in the WBC:

Ken Griffey Jr.
Chipper Jones
Joe Mauer
Adrián González
Alex Rodriguez
Carlos Correa

# TEAM NOTES

## POOL A

### PUERTO RICO



**WBC HISTORY:** Puerto Rico has appeared in each edition of the World Baseball Classic, advancing to the championship game twice, coming up one win short in 2013 and 2017. The team is 23-11 all-time during World Baseball Classic play entering 2026, going 4-2 in 2006; 4-2 in 2009; 5-4 in 2013 losing the championship game to an undefeated Dominican squad; 7-1 in 2017, their only loss coming in the finals against the USA, and 3-2 in 2023.

**MEET THE MANAGER**: Yadier Molina will serve as manager of Puerto Rico at the World Baseball Classic for the second consecutive tournament. The Cardinals legend played his entire career in St. Louis and is widely considered one of the greatest defensive catchers of all-time, winning nine Rawlings Gold Gloves, six Fielding Bible Awards, four Platinum Glove Awards, and one Silver Slugger Award. A two-time World Series champion, Yadi's Cardinals team made the playoffs 12 times, winning four National League pennants. Molina played for the Puerto Rican national team in the first four World Baseball Classic (WBC) tournaments, winning two silver medals (2013, 2017). Upon retiring in 2022, Molina ranked first all-time among catchers in putouts and second among catchers with 130 Defensive Runs Saved (DRS) since the stat was tracked, and among active players, ranked first with 845 assists, 40.2% of runners caught stealing, and 55 pickoffs. Molina made his debut as manager of the U-23 National Team in the 2017 World Cup and 2018 World Cup and previously was the manager of the Magallanes Navegantes team in the Professional League of Venezuela. In 2026, the St. Louis Cardinals hired him as a Special Assistant to President of Baseball Operations Chaim Bloom.

**MONDAY'S GAME**: Puerto Rico defeated Cuba 4-1 behind a pitching staff that did not allow an earned run in the contest...Right-hander Elmer Rodríguez earned the win in his WBC debut, tossing 3.0 scoreless innings while striking out three...Fernando Cruz recorded a hold with 1.0 scoreless inning and two strikeouts, before Edwin Díaz closed it out with his first save of the tournament, striking out two in a perfect ninth...Martín Maldonado led the offense, going 1-for-4 with a double and three RBI.

**SATURDAY'S GAME**: Puerto Rico won in walk-off fashion over Panamá, 4-3, on a Darell Hernaiz solo home run in the 10th inning, just the second walk-off home run in WBC tournament history, hours after

Ozzie Albies hit the first for the Netherlands earlier in the day...Right-hander Eduardo Rivera allowed one run and one hit over 4.1 innings in his WBC debut, while José Espada earned the win with 2.0 scoreless innings of relief.

**GAME ONE**: With a 5-0 shutout win over Colombia, Puerto Rico moved into sole possession of the all-time lead with six shutouts in WBC history, breaking a five-way tie with Japan, Korea, Venezuela, and the Dominican Republic.

**GRAND OPENINGS:** Puerto Rico has posted an 14-2 (.875) mark all-time in first-round WBC contests before the 2026 tournament started, signifying the most wins among all teams in the first round of the tournament, ahead of Japan (13-3)...since the inception of the WBC in 2006, team Puerto Rico has combined to outscore its opponents, 107-33, (+74) in the first round.

**HOME FIELD**: Team Puerto Rico will play in Pool A, with the games taking place at Hiram Bithorn Stadium in San Juan, Puerto Rico…This will be the fourth classic that Team Puerto Rico will stay home to play opening round games, and the first one since 2013. Team Puerto Rico is 9-3 (.750) in Puerto Rico during the World Baseball Classic…They went 4-2 in the first two rounds of 2006, 3-0 in 2009's pool play, and then 2-1 in 2013…They have outscored the opposition 57-28 (+29 run differential) over the 12 games here in San Juan. The Puerto Rican team will be joined by Team Canada, Team Colombia, Team Cuba, and Team Panama in Pool A…Ottawa (Team Canada's capital city) is the farthest distance from San Juan, measuring 1,938 miles away…The three other teams are all similar distances, with Bogota (Team Colombia) being the closest at 1,088 miles, while Havana (Team Cuba) is 1,100 miles away and Panama City (Team Panama) measures 1,111 miles.

**CUBA**



**WBC HISTORY:** Cuba was the runner-up of the 2006 World Baseball Classic, ranked sixth in the 2009 World Baseball Classic, placed fifth in the 2013 tournament, seventh in 2017 and fourth in 2023. In the international arena beyond the WBC, Cuba has won 25 World Cups in 35 appearances and three Olympic Games – Barcelona '92, Atlanta '96 and Athens '04, in addition to silver medals in Sydney in 2000 and Beijing in 2008.

**MEET THE MANAGER:** German Mesa is a former star shortstop with participation in major international events...made his debut in the National Series during the 1984-85 season with the Metropolitanos at age 17...integrated Industriales, the flagship team of Cuban Baseball during the 1988-89 season...was the regular shortstop for the National team, joining in 1989 for the Intercontinental Cup...is an Olympic, World, Pan American, and Central American Champion...also directed Industriales between 2018-11, with a championship in 2010...won a championship in 2016 and 2024 with the Gigantes de Rivas...member of the technical staff for Cuba teams attending events like the World Baseball Classic and Premier 12. Team Cuba has participated in every WBC from its beginning in 2006 with five different managers – the late Higinio Velez in 2006 and 2009, Victor Mesa in 2013, Carlos Martin 2017 and Armando Johnson in 2023.

**CANADA**



**WBC HISTORY:** Team Canada has played in all five previous World Baseball Classic events going a combined 5-10…Perhaps the most famous win in Canadian baseball history took place during the inaugural WBC when Canada upset heavily favored USA, 8-6, at Chase Field on March 8, 2006…Canada will be looking to make it out of the first round at the 2026 WBC for the first time ever.

**MEET THE MANAGER:** Set to make history as the only person to manage in all six World Baseball Classics, Team Canada will again be led by Ernie Whitt in the 2026 World Baseball Classic…Whitt has a 5-10 record as Manager of Team Canada at the World Baseball Classic…Managing Team Canada for the 22nd time in international competition and his record sixth World Baseball Classic...has a 78-42 record managing Team Canada...secured gold medal victories at the 2011 and '15 Pan-American Games and silver at the 2019 Pan Am Games. Won bronze medals at the 2009 and '11 IBAF Baseball World Cup...also managed Canada to a fourth-place finish at the 2004 Olympics in Athens...played 15 years in the Majors with Boston, Toronto, Atlanta and Baltimore...was an All-Star in 1985 with Toronto... was inducted into the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame in 2009.

**TEAM NOTES:** Seattle Mariners slugger Josh Naylor of Mississauga, Ontario was recently named captain of Canada's WBC and will wear the "C" on his jersey during the tournament…this will be the first time in the history of the WBC that Canada will officially have a captain…Canada's roster includes 14 players who competed in the most recent World Baseball Classic in 2023 including Phillippe Aumont, Owen
Caissie, Denzel Clarke, Indigo Diaz, Edouard Julien, Otto Lopez, Bo Naylor, Tyler O'Neill, Cal Quantrill, Jacob Robson, Noah Skirrow, Abraham Toro, Jared Young, and Rob Zastryzny.
Former big leaguer Phillippe Aumont who has a wealth of international playing experience on his resume is coming out of retirement to pitch for Canada in his fourth World Baseball Classic, having previously appeared in the 2009, 2013, and 2023 tournaments, while Tyler O'Neill is set to play in his third consecutive WBC after appearing in the 2017 and 2023 editions. Josh Naylor (2017) and Jameson Taillon (2013) are set to compete in their second WBC. Joining Whitt on the coaching staff is 2006 American League MVP Justin Morneau, who will make his coaching debut with Team Canada after representing Canada as a player in the 2006, 2009, 2013, and 2017 World Baseball Classics. Returning from the 2023 coaching staff are Denis Boucher, Greg Hamilton, Russell Martin, and Paul Quantrill, while Stubby Clapp returns to the World Baseball Classic after previously playing for Canada in the 2006 and 2009 tournaments and serving as a coach during the 2013 event.

**FAMILY:** The 2023 World Baseball Classic was a special time for the Quantrill family with father, Paul, and son, Cal, both members of Team Canada...After a 14 big league seasons with the Red Sox, Phillies, Blue Jays, Dodgers, Yankees, Padres and Marlins that ended in 2005, Paul, who will act as Team Canada's bullpen coach, ended his competitive playing career playing for Canada in the inaugural WBC in 2006...Cal, a former member of Canada's Junior National Team (U18) is set to play in his second WBC and has spent seven seasons in the majors with the Padres, Guardians, Rockies, Marlins and Braves…The Naylor brothers (Josh and Bo) were teammates with the Cleveland Guardians from 2022-2024 will be reunited for the first time as members of Team Canada…Josh played for Canada in the 2017 WBC while Bo suited up for the national team during the 2023 WBC…adding to the family ties is the fact that Josh and Bo's mother, Jenice, is a cousin of Denzel Clarke's mother, Donna.

**COLOMBIA**



**WBC HISTORY:** After failing to reach the 2013 World Baseball Classic, Colombia qualified for their first-ever Classic at the 2016 World Baseball Classic Qualifiers after Dilson Herrera hit a solo home run in the eighth inning of the qualifying championship game against Panama on March 20. The 2017 WBC team was managed by Luis “Pipe” Urueta. Its pitching staff was anchored by Major Leaguers José Quintana and Julio Teherán and included then-prospect Jorge Alfaro and Gio Urshela. The group was placed in Pool C, competing against the United States, Dominican Republic, and Canada. Colombia ultimately finished third in the division and did not move on to the second round, though they did manage to defeat Canada 4–1 at Marlins Park in Miami.
The 2023 World Baseball Classic team was managed by Jolbert Cabrera. The roster featured key players such as Gio Urshela, Harold Ramírez, Jorge Alfaro, Dilson Herrera, Jordan Diaz, Elias Diaz, Reynaldo Rodriguez and pitcher Nabil Crismatt. The roster also included prospects, such as Dayan Frias, Gustavo Campero and Guillermo Zuñiga. The group led off in Pool C alongside the United States, Canada, Mexico and Great Britain, finishing the group stage with a 1-3 record, the lone win coming in their first game against Mexico, and not advancing to the quarterfinals.

**MEET THE MANAGER:** José Mosquera is a former professional catcher and accomplished international manager entering his 10th season with the Pirates organization...managed the DSL Gold team to a 31-25 record in 2025, finishing in a tie with the DSL Cleveland Goryl team for first place in the Central Division...served as bench coach in the 2023 World Baseball Classic...has led Colombia to major international success, including a gold medal at the 2023 Pan American Games, a bronze medal at the 2021 U23 World Cup, and a gold medal at the 2021 Junior Pan-American Games...guided Caimanes de Barranquilla to the Colombian Professional Baseball League to multiple Colombian League championships and managed the club to a Caribbean Series title in 2022, earning All-Star Team Manager honors...he served as general manager of the Caimanes during the 2025/2026 season, when the organization won its third consecutive league championship.

**GAME 3 RECAP VS. CUBA:** Colombia was eliminated from the World Baseball Classic after suffering a 7-4 loss against Cuba in Pool A play...Despite the loss, Colombia’s offense scored four runs on seven hits and recorded 10 walks...The 10 walks in a single game have been the most for any team in Pool A play...Despite having base runners on base in eight of the nine innings, Colombia’s offense was 1-for-11 with runners in scoring position.

**BULLPEN BRIGHT SPOTS**: RHP David Lorduy has tossed 3.1 innings of relief giving up just one hit across two games...In Friday night’s game against Puerto Rico, he recorded outs against two of the three batters, inducing an inning-ending groundout from Nolan Arenado...On Sunday against Cuba, Lorduy tossed 2.2 hitless innings and recorded one strikeout...RHP Emerson Martinez has recorded a 0.90 ERA after tossing 3.1 innings, while giving up just two hits, one hit-by-pitch and one walk, and recording four strikeouts. across two games.

**GAME 2 RECAP VS. CANADA**: After being shutout by Team Puerto Rico in their first game of the tournament, Colombia finally scored its first run thanks to a two-out RBI single by Michael Arroyo in the third inning...Arroyo finish the day going 2-for-3...RHP Austin Bergner got the nod to start Game 2 against Canada on Saturday...He tossed 2.0 innings in his World Baseball Classic debut.

**HITTIN’ HAROLD**: Harold Ramirez went 3-for-4 on Sunday against Team Cuba...This marked the second game where he was the only batter in the game to record a multi-hit game...Also happened on Friday night, when he went 3-for-4 against Puerto Rico...At the end of play on Sunday night, Ramirez’s six hits were tied for first in WBC play with Chinese Taipei’s Yu Chang.

**GAME 1 VS. PUERTO RICO**: In Colombia's first game of 2026 WBC play, Team Captain José Quintana tossed three hitless innings against Puerto Rico, while recording one strikeout and one walk…Despite the defeat, Team Colombia recorded six hits, the most in the first day of Pool A play.

**TWO FOR TWO**: Team Colombia's roster features two sets of brothers in Pool A play…Brothers Jonathan and Donovan Solano return to Colombia's WBC roster as bench coach and infielder…Brothers Carlos and Michael Arroyo, both infielders make their first appearance on Colombia's World Baseball Classic roster this year

**COLOMBIA'S NORTH COAST**: Although Colombia might be thought of as a soccer-loving country, Colombia's Northern region has a deep-rooted passion for baseball, particularly on the coast…Of Team Colombia's 30 players, 23 hail from cities and towns in the north of the country, including 15 from Cartagena, a major coastal city.

**PANAMA**



**WBC HISTORY:** Team Panama is competing in its fourth World Baseball Classic and second consecutive edition of the tournament. The team went 2-2 in 2023 after going a combined 0-5 in 2009 and 2006. Those 2023 wins came against Chinese Taipei and Italy.

**MEET THE MANAGER:** Jose Mayorga is the youngest manager to win a Panamanian league title after has led the Federales de Chiriquí to league championships in 2023 and 2024 including a berth in the Caribbean Series for each year...managed the Federales in the 2026 Caribbean Series after an invite by the Caribbean Professional Baseball Federation (CPBF)...also took the Panamanian national team to a fifth place finish in the 2024 WBSC Premier12...named manager of the Panamanian national team in April 2025 and current manager of the Vancouver Canadians in the Northwest League...a former catcher in the Phillies farm system from 2010-2015...ended his career with 244
games, 155 hits, 66 RBI and a .244 batting average.

**YOU AWAKE?**: Panama picked up their first victory of this year's tournament late Sunday evening against Canada, 4-3. Canada struck first with an Abraham Toro RBI double in the bottom of the second. Luis Castillo matched with an RBI double of his own in the top of the fourth tying the game for a short period before Denzel Clarke regained the lead with an RBI single in the bottom of the fourth. After a walk, error and single to fill up the bases in the top of the sixth, pinch hitter, Rubén Tejada came through with a clutch two-RBI single to take the lead. The speedy Enrique Bradfield Jr. then laid down a bunt on a 2-1 count to drive in the game-win-ning run for Panama. Canadian-born Miguel Cienfuegos shutdown the Canadian offense, facing the minimum through 2.1 IP and striking out three resulting in his first career WBC victory. Dario Agrazal picked up his first career save in professional baseball after striking out Jared Young to secure the victory. It is the first time Panama has won at Hiram Bithorn Stadium during the World Baseball Classic in eight tries.

**SPRING FORWARD**: Panama surrendered their second loss in Pool Play A Saturday evening against Puerto Rico, 4-3, in 10 innings. Prior to the game, outfielder Allen Córdoba, was scratched from the lineup about an hour before game-time due to left shoulder sore-ness. Starter Ariel Jurado held Los Boricuas to

the minimum through 5.0 IP; it was the first time since Bruce Chen (5.0 IP, 4 H, 2 ER, 1 BB, 3 SO) in the 2006 WBC that a Panamanian starter went 5.0 IP in the main tournament. Los Panas broke through in the fifth inning on back-to-back doubles by Christian Bethancourt and Luis Castillo to take an early 2-0 lead. After the ghost runner was moved over to third base, José Caballero drove in the go-ahead run in the top of the 10th, ultimately losing on a walk-off home run in the bottom of the inning by Darell Hernaiz.

**THIRD TIME'S A CHARM**: Panama suffered their first loss in Pool Play A Friday afternoon against Cuba, 3-1. Although starter Logan Allen gave up three runs on two home runs, he struck out five, tying Alberto Guerrero for most strikeouts by a Panama pitcher in WBC main tournament history. Panama pitching struck out 11 batters, the most by Panama in WBC main tournament history. Offensively, Johan Camargo was able to scratch a run on a base hit to drive in Leo Bernal. Although Panama had base runners on base in six of the nine innings, batters were 1-for-9 with runners in scoring position. Los Panas will match up against Puerto Rico for the third time in World Baseball Classic play, which ties the most amount of games against any country in the tournament after yesterday's game against Cuba. Panama has been held to one run between both games starting with their first meeting at Hiram Bithorn Stadium in the 2006 WBC. After taking the lead in the top of the fourth inning on a bases loaded walk by Carlos Ruiz, Puerto Rico came back in the fifth and scored the deciding two runs on a home run by Alex Rios and an RBI single by Bernie Williams. In their second meeting Panama was shut out by Puerto Rico also at Hiram Bithorn Stadium, 7-0 in which the Panamanian squad were limited to five hits.

**GRACIAS PAOLO**: 39-year old Paolo Espino announced he would retire from baseball action after these World Baseball Classic games in what is his third WBC. At just 19-years old, Espino made his debut in the 2006 tournament against the Netherlands going an inning, striking out one and just giving up a hit. The Panama City native made two appearances in the tournament giving up 6 H, 2 ER, 1 HR and striking out one and three walks. During his two tournaments he has played with the likes of current hitting coach, Carlos Lee, teammate Rubén Tejada, and his cousin and General Manager, Dámaso Espino. The 6-year MLB veteran made his Major League debut in 2017 with Milwaukee and played with Texas (2017), Washington (2020-23) and Toronto (2024), with a 5-15 record, a 5.12 (151 ER, 265.2 IP), 298 H, 55 HR, 69 BB, 217 SO and 1.38 WHIP in 97 games (42 starts).

**THE RETURNERS**: 15 of the 30 players are returning to the World Baseball Classic including Paolo Espino (2006 & 2009) and Rubén Tejada (2009 & 2013) who are in the their third WBC. Espino is one of three players (others: Alexei Ramirez, CUB & Shairon Martis, NED) who have played in the first tournament back in 2006 and are on the roster for the 2026 WBC. Those returning for their second tournament include, Dario Agrazal, Jonathan Araúz, Alberto Baldonado, Jamie Barría, Christian Bethancourt, José Caballero, Luis Castillo, Allen Córdoba, James González, Severino González, Javy Guerra, Humberto Mejía, Jose Ramos, and Jhonny Santos. The majority of the group shared their first experience Chinese Taipei in 2023.

**THE NEWCOMERS**: The other 15 of 30 players are in their first World Baseball Classic including, Logan Allen, Miguel Amaya, Leo Bernal, Enrique Bradford Jr., Johan Camargo, Miguel Cienfuegos, Jorge García, Miguel Gómez, Leonardo Jiménez, Kenny Hernández, Ariel Jurado, Abdiel Mendoza, Edmundo Sosa, and Erian Rodríguez. In the second generation of WBC players, Kenny Hernández's father, Santos, played in the 2006 tournament while Miguel Gómez's father, also Miguel, played along side righty Paolo Espino who was 19-years old at the time.

**THE PROSPECTS:** Catcher Leo Bernal is the 98th best prospect in all of baseball according to MLB Pipeline and is the sixth best prospect in the Cardinals farm starting out the 2026 season. Known for his defense, he has already thrown out 27 would-be basestealers picking up a 39.1% CS rate and is an

outstanding defender with a .989 fielding percentage, leading to winning the MiLB Gold Glove Award in 2025. The Florida native, Enrique Bradfield Jr. is the 10th-best prospect in Baltimore's system according to MLB Pipeline in 2026. The speedster has stolen 135 bases in the minors since 2023 and his 74 stolen bases ranked second among all minor leaguers during the 2024 season. Other prospects include, Miguel Cienfuegos (SD), James González (ATH), Leonardo Jimenez (TOR), Abdiel Mendoza (SEA), Erian Rodríguez (CHC), and José Ramos (NYM).

## POOL B

### USA



**WBC HISTORY:** The 2006 World Baseball Classic was the first time American Major League players had an opportunity to compete in an international tournament. That year, Team USA advanced out of Round One by going 2-1, including a 17-run victory over South Africa. The U.S. was knocked out in Round Two, but not before earning a dramatic win over eventual champion Japan, in which Alex Rodriguez drove in the winning run on a walk-off hit in the bottom of the 9th inning. In the 2009 World Baseball Classic, David Wright drove in the winning run on a walk-off single to reach the Semi-Finals where the U.S. was knocked out of the tournament by eventual champion Japan. After the United States was eliminated in bracket play in 2013, Team USA finally broke through in 2017. The stars and stripes beat Canada in a must-win opening round finale before picking up wins over the Dominican Republic and Japan to secure a spot in the title game, where an 8-0 win over Puerto Rico gave the United States its first WBC title. Looking to defend its title in 2023, the U.S. picked up wins over Great Britain, Canada, and Colombia to advance out of pool play. Trea Turner hit a grand slam to lift the stars and stripes past Venezuela in the quarterfinal before a 14-2 rout of Cuba secured the United States' spot in the title game for the second consecutive tournament. Team USA took on Japan in front of a packed loanDepot Park, falling 3-2 in an instant classic to take home silver.

**MEET THE MANAGER:** Former Major League infielder Mark DeRosa gets his second career managerial stint as he leads Team USA in the 2026 WBC...the Passaic, New Jersey native had a 16-year big league career that started in 1998 mainly as a utility infielder with the Atlanta Braves and included stops with the Rangers, Cubs, Indians, Cardinals, Giants, Nationals and Blue Jays...since retiring as a player in 2013, DeRo has been a regular as an analyst on MLB Network... an Ivy Leaguer (Penn), DeRosa is the first manager to guide Team USA in multiple World Baseball Classics. Previous managers were Buck Martinez (2006), Davey Johnson (2009), Joe Torre (2013) and Jim Leyland (2017).

### MEXICO



**WBC HISTORY:** Mexico has been a part of all five previous World Baseball Classics including serving as a host site in the 2009 edition of the WBC. In 2006, they reached the second round and placed 6th overall with a 3-3 record. The following tournament yielded a 2-4 record and an 8th place finish as the home field advantage didn't quite pan out in 2009. The 2013 and 2017 WBCs both led to 1-2 records and a first round exit. Mexico finished third in the 2023 WBC, losing in the semifinals to eventual champion Japan.

**MEET THE MANAGER:** Team Mexico will again be led by Benjamin "Benji" Gil. Born in Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico, Gil is a former first-round pick (19th overall) of the Texas Rangers in the 1991 Draft. He went on to play in parts of eight seasons with the Rangers (1993, 1995-97) and the Angels (2000-03). Gil was a member of the 2002 World Champion Angels going 4-for-5 in the Fall Classic and also won a Mexican League Championship in 2007 while with the Sultanes de Monterrey. Gil has an extensive managerial career in the Mexican Leagues. He was named the first manager in the history of the Mariachis de Guadalajara and proceeded to be named Manager of the Year after guiding them to a league-best 46-17 record. Additionally, he managed five seasons with the Tomateros de Culiacan (2014-15, 2017, 2019-21) winning the league championship in four of his five seasons. currently serves as manager of the Charros de Jalisco, where he has led the club to back-to-back Liga ARCO Mexicana del Pacífico championships...guided the team to the 2025 Caribbean Series final and the 2026 Caribbean Series championship...also managed the club to the 2025 Serie del Rey title in the Liga Mexicana de Beisbol. Benji was also at the helm for Team Mexico during the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo where the Mexican squad failed to notch a win and finished with an 0-3 record.

**ROSTER CONSTRUCTION:**
• México returns 12 players from the 2023 roster, including key contributors Randy Arozarena, Jarren Duran, Joey Meneses, Rowdy Tellez, and Luis Urías...the 2026 roster also introduces 18 new players, including 11 pitchers and seven position players...New additions to the pitching staff include Andrés Muñoz, Robert Garcia, Brennan Bernardino, Victor Vodnik, and Daniel Duarte.
• México will have a trio of 2025 MLB All-Stars in INF Jonathan Aranda, RHP Andrés Muñoz, and C Alejandro Kirk.

**MLB CONNECTIONS:** México has 20 players who have been included on the rosters from Major League organizations for the 2026 WBC: Samy Natera Jr. (Angels), Joey Meneses (Athletics), Alejandro Kirk (Blue Jays), Joey Ortiz (Brewers), Luis Gastelum (Cardinals), Javier Assad (Cubs), Alek Thomas (D-Backs), Randy Arozarena (Mariners), Andrés Muñoz (Mariners), Jared Serna (Marlins), Alex Carrillo (Mets), Daniel Duarte (Mets), Taijuan Walker (Phillies), Nick Gonzales (Pirates), Robert Garcia (Rangers), Alejandro Osuna (Rangers), Jonathan Aranda (Rays), Jarren Duran (Red Sox), Brennan Bernardino (Rockies), and Victor Vodnik (Rockies).

**ITALY**



**WBC HISTORY:** Italy is participating in its sixth World Baseball Classic. Italy went 1-2 in both the 2006 and 2009 editions of the World Baseball Classic but went on to win two of three games in the First Round of the 2013 WBC to advance to the Second Round. They defeated Mexico and Canada before losing a pair of one-run games by future finalists Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. In 2017, Italy beat Mexico with a five-run ninth-inning comeback but was ultimately eliminated in the tiebreaker against Venezuela in extra innings. In 2019, Mike Piazza was named Manager and led the team during the 2023 WBC. Under his guidance the Azzurri achieved a historic quarterfinal finish, defeating Cuba and the Netherlands in the opening round.

**MEET THE MANAGER:** Francisco Cervelli was appointed Italy's manager on 1/24/25....led the Azzurri to a silver medal at the 2025 European Championship after their ninth-place finish in 2023...enjoyed a 13-year Major League career, debuting in 2008 with the New York Yankees and playing seven seasons with the club (2008-2014), including the 2009 World Championship...went on to play for the Pittsburgh Pirates (2015-2019), Atlanta Braves (2019), and Miami Marlins (2020)...for his career, hit .268 (605-for-2256) with 41HR, 275RBI and a .358 OBP in 730G/651GS...defensively, committed just 52 errors in 5,679.2 innings (.990 fielding percentage)...following his playing career, served as San Diego's Catching Coach in 2022...previously participated in the World Baseball Classic for Italy in both 2009 and 2017.

**GAME TWO**: The Azzurro defeated Great Britain, 7-4, in their second game of pool play on Sunday at Daikin Park. RHP Dylan DeLucia (3.2IP, 2H, 2R/ER, 1BB, 5K, OHR, 2WP, 69P/385) started and did not record a decision. 3B Andrew Fischer (2-for-4, 2R, 1HR, 2RBI) and C J.J. D'Orazio (2-for-4, 2R, 1HR, 1 RBI) each hit solo HRs in the third inning. SS Miles Mastrobuoni (2-for-2, 1 double, 1RBI, 1BB) hit an RBI double in the fourth inning. LF Dante Nori (2-for-4, 1RBI, 1BB) and CF Jakob Marsee (2-for-4, 1 double, 1BB) each recorded multiple hits and reached base three times. RHP Greg Weissert (1.0IP, 1H, OR/ER, 2BB/1IBB, 1K, 17P/95) earned the save after tossing a scoreless ninth inning.

**BACK-TO-BACK**: Team Italy has won consecutive games for just the second time in WBC play (also 3/7/13 - at Mexico and 3/8/13 at Canada).

**HOME RUNS**: 3B Andrew Fischer and C J.J. D'Ozario hit back-to-back solo home runs in the third inning on Sunday vs. Great Britain. This marks the first occurrence for Team Italy in WBC play and only 12th time for any team in the WBC [credit: Elias].

**GAME ONE**: The Azzurro defeated Brazil, 8-0, in their pool play opener on Saturday at Daikin Park. LHP Sam Aldegheri (4.2IP, 1H, OR/ ER, 2BB, 8K, 63P/42S), who was born and raised in Verona, Italy, started and did not record a decision. 3B Zach Dezenzo (1-for-3, 1RBI, 1BB) hit a go-ahead RBI single in the sixth inning. LF Dante Nori (3-for-3, 2R, 1 double, 2HR, 2RBI, 1BB) recorded a multi-homer game with solo shots in the seventh and eighth innings. 2B Jon Berti (3-for-4, 2R, 2 doubles, 1BB) reached base four times. DH Dominic Canzone (2-for-4, 2R, 1HR, 4RBI, 1BB) hit his first HR of the tournament with a three-run shot in the seventh inning. RHP Alek Jacob (1.1IP, OH, 3K, 18P/11S), RHP, Gordon Graceffo (1.OIP, 1H, 1BB, 3K) and RHP Claudio Scotti (2.OIP, 2H, 1K) combined with Aldegheri for an Azzuro WBC single-game record 15K.

**TWO FOR NORI**: LF Dante Nori recorded his first multi-homer game yesterday against Brazil, at just 21 years and 151 days old, he became the second-youngest player in WBC history with a multi-homer game, trailing only Team Brazil's Lucas Ramirez (2HR, 20 years, 49 days on 3/7/26 vs. USA). It also marked the first multi-home run game in Italy WBC history and moved Nori into a tie for fourth place on Italy's all-time WBC home run list.

**FIRST TIME IN AZZURO**: Compared to the roster that took part in the 2023 World Baseball Classic, only five players return to wear the Italian jersey: Captain OF Vinnie Pasquantino, UTL Miles Mastrobuoni, RHP Claudio Scotti, RHP Matt Festa, and LHP Joe La Sorsa.

For the other 25 players, the 2026 WBC will mark their first appearance in the tournament.
RHP Gabriele Quattrini, INF Giaconino Lasaracina, Scotti and C J.J. D'Orazio have previously represented Italy in

other international play, including the European Baseball Championship.

**FIRST IMPRESSIONS MATTER**: This marks Italy's sixth appearance at the World Baseball Classic. In the previous five tournaments, the Azzurri won their Opening Game four times: in 2006 against Australia (10-0 in 7 innings), in 2013 against Mexico (6-5), in 2017 against Mexico (10-9), and in 2023 against Cuba (6-3 in 10 inn.). Italy's only opening game loss came in 2009 against Venezuela (7-0).

**HOW BASEBALL STARTED IN ITALY**: Baseball was first played in Italy in 1884 by American sailors in Livorno and was officially introduced in 1919. The first official exhibition game was played in Rome in 1920 in an effort to promote the sport. Following the success of that event, the Academy of Physical Education in Farnesina sent a group of students to the United States to learn the game. The sport became increasingly popular throughout the country during World War II as United States soldiers taught the game to locals, leading to the creation of the Italian Baseball League (now called Serie A) in 1948 and the Italian Baseball Softball Federation (FIBS) being created around the same time.

**GREAT BRITAIN**



**WBC HISTORY:** This is Great Britain's second time participating in the WBC, going 1-3 in 2023 and earning automatic entry to the '26 Classic by finishing fourth in their pool. Since 2022, when Great Britain qualified for the World Baseball Classic for the first time, the programme has achieved historic success across all levels including: 2023 Re-qualification for the World Baseball Classic by defeating Colombia; 2023 Silver Medal, Senior European Championship; 2023 Silver Medal, U23 European Championship; 2024 U23 Baseball World Cup participation; 2025 U23 European Champions; and 2025 Women's European Champions.

**MEET THE MANAGER:** Bradley Marcelino is a British Baseball Hall of Famer and former Great Britain international...born in Essex, England, Marcelino played his youth baseball in the UK until age 11 and represented GBR as a player from 1999–2013...during his playing career, Marcelino set multiple records for the Senior National Team that he still holds today, including all-time runs scored and games played...he was inducted into the British Baseball Hall of Fame in 2018, joining his father, Oscar, Great Britain's Game Strategy coach...Marcelino debuted as manager at the 2025 European Baseball Championship after serving on Great Britain's Coaching Staff for multiple European Championships and World Baseball Classic Qualifiers, as well as the 2023 World Baseball Classic...he is currently the Hitting Coordinator for the Arizona Diamondbacks and lives in San Diego with his wife, Johanna, and sons, Clayson and Easton.

**WATCH PARTIES**: Clubs from around the country are organizing events to watch the game, thanks to our friends at Baseball Outlet...The Watch Parties will take place across Great Britain on 6 March 2026, starting at 5:30 PM ahead of the 6:00 PM GMT first pitch.

Clubs hosting parties include: Wythenshawe Cricket & Football Club hosted by the Manchester Baseball Club; The Royal Oak hosted by the Bristol Baseball Club; The Center Spot hosted by

Exeter Baseball Club; Bowlarama hosted by the Glasgow Baseball Association; Footlights Sports Bar & Grill hosted by Edinburgh Baseball Club; Gôl Football Centre hosted by Baseball Softball Gwalia; Newcastle.

**BRAZIL**



**WBC HISTORY**: Brazil punched its ticket to the 2026 World Baseball Classic after winning three of its four games in last year's Qualifiers in Tucson, Arizona...Brazil dropped
their first matchup against Colombia but went on to win its next three games against Germany (9-7), China (12-2) and defeat Germany again in a 6-4, winner-take-all final...the victory marks Brazil's return to the global stage after a 13-year absence, and only their second-ever appearance in the WBC after making their tournament debut in 2013. Brazil is seeking their first win after falling to Japan (5-3), Cuba (5-2) and China (5-2) in their tournament debut in 2013.

**MEET THE MANAGER:** Manager Yuichi Matsumoto will lead Brazil for the first time in the World Baseball Classic, marking it the first time the team is ever managed by a native Brazilian...the
46-year-old made his professional debut in 2002 after being signed by the Yakult Swallows of NPB in 1999...he joined the coaching staff in 2015, following 14 seasons spent at first base and in the outfield with the Swallows...the São Paulo native represented Brazil in the 2002 Intercontinental Cup as well as the 2013 World Baseball Classic.

**SHOW OF SUPPORT:** Dante Bichette Jr. has been wearing pink cleats in support of his best friend's wife, Liz Gonzalez, who's been battling breast cancer and just started her treatment. He wanted to make sure they were all behind her as she goes through this tough time.

**TEAM NOTES:** There have only been five Brazilian-born players to have ever reached the Majors, four of which are here with Team Brazil in some capacity:
• Former Kansas City outfielder Paulo Orlando will serve as Brazil's hitting coach in this year's tournament...Orlando spent four seasons in MLB with the Royals and in 2015 he became the first native Brazilian to become a World Series champion...in 278 games with the Royals, Orlando hit .263 with 14 homers and 81 RBI.
• Brazil's pitching coach will be André Rienzo, former pitcher who spent parts of three
seasons in the Majors with the White Sox (2013-14) and Marlins (2015)...Rienzo became the first Brazilian to pitch in an MLB game and also the first to record a win in 2013… overall, he pitched in 45 games (23 starts) at the Major League level.
• Former All-Star catcher Yan Gomes will serve as the catching coach for Brazil in this year's WBC...Gomes spent 13 seasons in the Majors with Toronto (2012), Cleveland (2013-18), Washington (2019-21), the Athletics (2021) and the Cubs (2022-24)...when he made his debut in 2012 with Toronto, the team that drafted him in the 10th round in 2009, he became the first Brazilian-born MLB player and went on to become the first and only Brazilian to be named an All-Star in 2018 with Cleveland...in 2019, he joined Paulo Orlando as the only Brazilians to ever win a World Series
• RHP Thyago Vieira is currently the only player in Brazil's roster with Major League experience...the 33-year-old has appeared in 68 games out of the bullpen across five seasons in MLB, playing for the Mariners (2017), White Sox (2018-19), Brewers (2023-24), Orioles (2024) and Diamondbacks (2024) in

addition to spending three seasons (2020-22) in Japan with the Yomiuri Giants of the NPB (Nippon Professional Baseball)...Vieira had
started the 2025 season in the Dbacks 40-man roster before undergoing Tommy John surgery last March.

**FAMILY BUSINESS**: Brazil's roster features three players with familiar last names.
• IF Dante Bichette Jr., son of four-time All-Star Dante Bichette, played in the 2017 qualifiers alongside his brother, Bo, and helped lead Brazil through the 2026 WBC qualifying tournament with five runs in four games.
• OF Lucas Ramirez, son of 12-time All-Star slugger and World series MVP Manny Ramirez, makes his WBC debut this year...he went 5-for-13 in Tucson last March to help Brazil qualify and is currently in the Angels system...the 20-year-old was drafted in the 17th round in 2024 out of American Heritage High School in Plantation, FL.
• Also part of the father and son business is RHP Joseph Contreras, son of All-Star pitcher José Contreras...the right-hander is a senior at Blessed Trinity High School in Roswell, GA and is currently ranked the No. 34 draft prospect on Baseball America and No. 47 on MLB Pipeline...he will represent Brazil for the first time in his career...at 17 years old, he
will be the youngest competitor in the 2026 World Baseball Classic.
• All three players qualify to play for Brazil due to their Brazilian mothers

**OSVALDO CARVALHO:** The infielder for the Nikkey Marília baseball team was named MVP of the Brazilian Cup in 2024-25...balancing his athletic pursuits with work, Osvaldo serves as a construction worker in Marília, laying down
pavement on highways, his major source of income and a profession he had to turn to during the pandemic in 2021. Has been part of international tournaments in youth categories since 2011, including pre-world championships and Pan-American games and debuted for the Brazilian national team in the 2022 South American Championship in Lima, Peru where they won gold....he made his debut with the senior national team in 2023, contributing to Brazil's historic silver medal at the Pan American Games, the country's first in baseball...when he appeared in the World Baseball Classic Qualifiers last March, he was the only player on the national team without any professional experience.

## POOL C

### JAPAN



**WBC HISTORY:** Samurai Japan has been one of the premier teams in the World Baseball Classic (WBC) since the tournament's inception in 2006. The team holds an impressive all-time WBC record of 30 wins and 8 losses (.789) and is the only nation to have won the tournament three times, the most in WBC history.

In the inaugural 2006 tournament, Japan—managed by Sadaharu Oh—overcame early challenges, advanced to the final, and defeated Cuba to become the first WBC champion. Daisuke Matsuzaka was named the tournament's MVP for his dominant pitching. In 2009, under manager Tatsunori Hara, Japan defeated Korea in the championship game to secure back-to-back titles. Matsuzaka again played a key role and earned his second consecutive WBC MVP award. Japan reached the semifinals in both the 2013 and 2017 tournaments, finishing tied for third place each time.

In 2023, under manager Hideki Kuriyama, a dynamic roster blending young talent and veteran leadership powered Japan through the tournament. After a dramatic semifinal win over Mexico, Japan defeated the United States in the final to reclaim the world title. Shohei Ohtani was named MVP for his extraordinary two-way performance. With elite pitching, disciplined offense, and strong team cohesion, Samurai Japan has consistently demonstrated world-class excellence on the WBC stage.

**MEET THE MANAGER:** Team Japan Manager Hirokazu Ibata has long been recognized as one of the most knowledgeable infield specialists in Japanese baseball, both as a former player and now as a leader. After a successful playing career built on excellent defense, smart decision-making, and steady performance, he moved into coaching and now plays an important role in shaping the future of Samurai Japan.

Ibata began his professional career with the Chunichi Dragons, where he became known as a highly dependable shortstop. His strong fundamentals, accurate positioning, and consistent defensive play earned him seven Golden Glove Awards and five Best Nine selections. At the plate, he was calm and reliable, collecting more than 1,800 hits and maintaining a .281 batting average over his career. His skills also stood out on the international stage.

During the 2013 World Baseball Classic, Ibata was a key part of Japan's infield and performed at a high level throughout the tournament. He delivered one of the tournament's most consistent performances, batting .556 with 10 hits, 5 RBI, and 4 runs scored, earning a place on the All-Tournament Team.

Through his coaching experiences with several Samurai Japan youth teams including the U-12, U-15, and U-18 squads, he developed an approach shaped by his years in professional baseball and his work with younger players. In 2023, Ibata became manager of the top national team and led a young roster to the Asia Professional Baseball Championship title in his first major tournament. Motivated by Japan's recent championship run at the WBC, Ibata is determined to guide the top national team in its pursuit of a consecutive title.

**Game 3 – Japan stays Perfect behind Yoshida's Heroics:** Japan edged Australia 4–3 in a tightly contested WBC matchup, overcoming a slow offensive start and a 1–0 deficit through six innings. Australia's pitching kept Japan quiet early, but the game shifted in the bottom of the seventh when Japan finally broke through with Masataka Yoshida's two run homerun. On the mound, starter Tomoyuki Sugano set the tone by putting up four scoreless innings, and Chihiro Sumida followed with an impressive three-inning stretch, allowing only an unearned run while striking out seven. Taneichi delivered a perfect eighth before closer Taisei gave up two solo home runs but ultimately held on to secure the win. Shohei Ohtani was held hitless but still influenced the game, drawing two intentional walks that set the table for the hitters behind him. The victory pushed Japan to 3–0 in pool play and locked up the top seed heading into the final group game.
The turning point came off the bat of Masataka Yoshida, who delivered the decisive two-run home run that flipped the score in the seventh inning and energized a stagnant Japan lineup. Yoshida now has 19 RBI in 10 career WBC games, making him one of the tournament's most prolific run producers, and he continued that trend with another clutch performance. His disciplined approach and ability to deliver in high-leverage moments have made him one of Japan's most dependable hitters throughout this WBC run.

**Game 2 – Ohtani, Suzuki, Yoshida Lead Japan to Victory**: Team Japan earned a hard-fought 8–6 win over Korea, overcoming an early 3–0 deficit with a powerful offensive response and several historic performances. Korea jumped ahead in the top of the first, tagging starter Yusei Kikuchi for three runs, but

Japan immediately countered with Seiya Suzuki's two-run home run to cut the deficit to 3–2. The big inning came in the third, beginning with Shohei Ohtani's towering blast. Suzuki added his second home run of the night, continuing Japan's surge at the plate, before Masataka Yoshida capped the frame with Japan's third homer, giving Japan a 5–3 lead. The three-homer inning was the second most ever hit by a team in a single inning in WBC history (Venezuela hit four in 2009). Korea tied the game in the fourth with Hyeseong Kim's two-run shot, tightening the contest once again. Japan rallied in the seventh, loading the bases with two outs before Suzuki drew a bases-loaded walk to put Japan ahead 6–5. Yoshida followed with a two-run single to extend the lead to 8–5. Yoshida now has 17 RBI in just nine career WBC games, continuing his reputation as one of the tournament's most consistent run producers. Korea pushed across a run in the eighth, but Japan managed to hold off the late threat and secure the 8–6 victory. With steady relief work and timely power, Japan closed out a statement win to remain unbeaten in the tournament. Shohei Ohtani's home run in the third was his second in as many games, making him just the 13th player ever to homer in each of his team's first two World Baseball Classic games, joining Japan's Yoshi Tsutsugo (2017), Shuichi Murata (2009), and Hitoshi Tamura (2006). Ohtani has been nearly impossible to retire so far in the tournament, reaching base consistently and being retired only once in his first eight at-bats.

**Game 1 – Japan's Dominant Opener**: Japan opened its 2026 World Baseball Classic campaign with a commanding 13–0, seven-inning victory over Chinese Taipei at the Tokyo Dome, highlighted by a record-setting 10-run second inning — the most runs ever scored in a single frame in WBC history. Shohei Ohtani ignited the outburst with a grand slam and finished the night with five RBIs, falling a triple shy of the cycle. His 117.1 mph double in the second inning was the second-hardest-hit ball across the last two WBCs, behind only his 118.7 mph double on March 11, 2023 against Czechia. Ohtani's five RBIs in the second inning also set a new WBC record for the most by a player in a single inning. Japan sent 15 batters to the plate in that frame, effectively putting the game out of reach before adding two more runs in the third.
On the mound, Japan combined for a one-hit shutout, with Yoshinobu Yamamoto setting the tone before four relievers — Shoma Fujihira, Hiroya Miyagi, Koki Kitayama, and Ryuhei Sotani — closed out the mercy-rule win. The dominant performance not only showcased Japan's depth on both sides of the ball but also set an emphatic tone for the defending champions as they move on to face Korea in Game 2.

**TEAM NOTES**: In preparation for the WBC tournament, Team Japan held its training camp in Miyazaki from February 14–24, a period that included two exhibition games against the SoftBank Hawks. After completing camp, the team traveled to Nagoya for two exhibition games against the Chunichi Dragons (February 27–28). Team Japan then moved to Osaka for additional tune-ups against the Orix Buffaloes on March 2 and the Hanshin Tigers on March 3. The team continued on to Tokyo to begin tournament play.

Japan's 2026 roster features eight Major League players, the most the national team has ever brought to a World Baseball Classic. The MLB contingent includes Shohei Ohtani (Los Angeles Dodgers), Yoshinobu Yamamoto (Los Angeles Dodgers), Yusei Kikuchi (Los Angeles Angels), Tomoyuki Sugano (Colorado Rockies), Seiya Suzuki (Chicago Cubs), Masataka Yoshida (Boston Red Sox), Munetaka Murakami (Chicago White Sox), and Kazuma Okamoto (Toronto Blue Jays).
Ohtani is making his second WBC appearance after earning MVP honors in the 2023 tournament. Kikuchi is participating in his first WBC. The strong MLB presence underscores both the depth and the global impact of Japanese talent, and this group is expected to bring significant experience and star power to Japan's 2026 campaign.

**AUSTRALIA**



**WBC HISTORY:** Team Australia has appeared in all three previous World Baseball Classics. Australia returns to the WBC after making a quarterfinals appearance in 2023 and narrowly missing out on a chance to head stateside after a 4-3 loss to Cuba in the quarterfinals in Japan.

**MEET THE MANAGER:** David Nilsson is a former catcher at the Major League level and current manager of the Australia national baseball team leads Team Australia for a second time in the WBC...in the 2023 tournament, Nilsson's club advanced to the quarterfinals for the first time...played for the Milwaukee Brewers from 1992-99, reaching All-Star status in 1999 to become the first Australian to appear in an All-Star Game...ended his career with 837 games, 789 hits, 105 homers and a .284 career batting average...represented Australia at the Olympics in 2000 and
'04, helping Australia to a silver medal in Athens in 2004, Australia's first Olympic medal in baseball...also played in this tournament for Team Australia in 2006, appearing in three games...has been at the helm of the Australian national team since being named to the position in June 2018 after leading Brisbane to four consecutive ABL titles from 2016-2019.

**C/DH Alex Hall** has two homers in this WBC and four in his WBC career.

- Hall's four career WBC homers (most by any Australian player in tourney history) are tied for seventh-most in WBC history...Cuba's Alfredo Despaigne has the most all-time home runs (seven).

**Entering game 3:**

- On yesterday's off day, UTL Robbie Glendinning and C Robbie Perkins, along with Australian youth baseballer Logan McCargill met with Japanese-baseball legend Sadaharu Oh for nearly an hour at the team's hotel. The event was put together by Mr. Oh, Japan Airlines and the World Children's Baseball Foundation (WCBF), an organization that brings children from around the world together in Japan to learn baseball, cultural exchange and friendship through clinics and activities. Both Robbies participated in the event when they were kids nearly 20 years ago. (Link)
- C/DH Alex Hall now has three career WBC homers after his homer on Friday…the three homers are the most by an Australian player in the WBC.
- Since the start of the '23 WBC, 20 of Australia's 40 runs have been scored via the homer (including 7-of-8 so far in this year's tourney.

**Robbie Perkins**: C Robbie Perkins' homer in game one was his second home run for the Aussies in WBC play.

- His other WBC blast was a three-run homer against Korea in Australia's WBC-opening win in the 2023 tournament.
- Perkins is now one of five Australians to have two career homers in WBC play...two of the other five are on this roster (UTL Robbie Glendinning and C Alex Hall)...rounding out the group are: IF Luke Hughes and OF Chris Snelling....no Australian player has three career homers in WBC play.
- The Canberra native is in his third WBC for Australia (also 2017 and 2023) and is 4-for-20 with two homers, five RBI, four runs scored and two walks in seven career games.

**TEAM NOTES:** OF Tim Kennelly and RHP Warwick Saupold
are captaining the club for this edition of the Classic....the 2026 WBC is the fourth WBC for both Kennelly and Saupold, who have appeared on the team in each of Australia's last three tournament appearances

(2013, 2017 and 2023). The 39-year-old Kennelly announced his retirement from baseball following the 2025-2026 Australian Baseball League season so this WBC will be his final tournament with the national team. He's widely regarded as the greatest player in ABL history and is the modern ABL's all-time leader in hits, home runs, RBI, runs and games played...he's a three-time league MVP and a seven-time Claxton Shield champion. Saupold, 36, is coming off a strong ABL season that saw him log a 3.22 ERA with six saves in 14 games (one start) for Perth...the Perth native has 82 games of MLB experience to his name (all in relief) with Detroit from 2016-2018.

**KOREA**



**WBC HISTORY:** Korea advanced to the championship round in 2006 and the championship game in 2009, falling to Japan on both occasions...Took home the Gold Medal in the Olympics in Beijing in 2008, the Silver Medal in Atlanta in 1996 and the Bronze Medal in Sydney in 2000. However, Team Korea has struggled to perform in recent international competitions, and had exited early, including in the 2013, 2017 WBC, the 2021 Tokyo Olympics and 2023 WBC.

**MEET THE MANAGER:** Ji Hyun Ryu is a legendary franchise icon of the LG Twins, where he spent his entire 11-year playing career as an elite shortstop...1994 KBO Rookie of the Year and a central figure in the Twins' historic 1994 championship… transitioned into a premier coaching mind, serving as the manager of the LG Twins (2021–2022) where he recorded one of the highest winning percentages in franchise history...distinguished by his "Smart Baseball" philosophy, blending traditional tactical fundamentals with modern data-driven decision-making...recognized for his calm, analytical leadership and his ability to maximize the utility of a diverse roster...an extensively decorated international veteran, having served on the coaching staffs for the 2014 Asian Games (Gold), 2017 WBC, and 2020 Tokyo Olympics...appointed as the Skipper for the 2026 WBC with a mandate to restore Korea's elite standing through explosive offense, disciplined pitching and defensive precision.

**GAME TWO:** Team Korea engaged in a fierce, back-and-forth heavyweight clash against rival Japan in their second Group C matchup at the Tokyo Dome on March 7, ultimately falling just short in a hard-fought 6-8 loss.

Despite the final score, the Taeguk Warriors showcased tremendous resilience, striking first against Japan's elite pitching and battling relentlessly until the final out.

Silencing the crowd to start: Team Korea wasted no time silencing the Tokyo Dome crowd, jumping out to a quick 3-0 lead in the top of the first inning. They immediately shook Japanese starter Yusei Kikuchi, with Do Yeong Kim, Jahmai Jones, and Jung Hoo Lee getting 3 straight hits. Lee drove in the first run with a line drive RBI single. Moments later, Bo Gyeong Moon delivered a clutch, 2 out, 2 run double to cap the early rally.

Fighting Back: In the top of the fourth, Hyeseong Kim launched a dramatic 2 run home off star reliever Hiromi Ito, tying the game at 5-5 and proving Korea's lineup can trade home runs with anyone in the lineup.

Bullpen Stability: Following starter Young Pyo Ko's early exit, the Korean bullpen stepped up to stabilize the middle innings. Relievers Joo Young Son and Woo Suk Go delivered crucial scoreless frames in the fifth and sixth innings,

Fighting to the Bitter End: Team Korea mounted a thrilling comeback attempt in the top of the eighth. Down by 3, Jung Hoo Lee sparked the rally with a leadoff double. After drawing crucial walks, Ju Won

Kim delivered a clutch RBI single to cut the deficit to 8-6. The Taeguk Warriors loaded the bases with two outs, pushing Japan to the absolute brink before the rally narrowly concluded.

**GAME ONE:** Korea's four home runs were the most in a WBC game in team history. Only 2 teams have hit more than 4 HR in a WBC game:

3/10/13 Japan: 6
3/8/09 Cuba: 6

Most WBC grand slams:

Korea: 4
Chinese Taipei: 3
Japan: 2
USA: 3
Cuba: 2

**TEAM NOTES:** Historically, South Korea's national baseball teams relied exclusively on native-born players, but WBC
eligibility rules allow athletes to represent the birth country of their parents… following Tommy 'Hyunsu' Edman's groundbreaking debut for Team Korea in 2023, the 2026 squad has fully embraced this rule by recruiting a wave of Korean-American MLB talent, including pitcher Dane Dunning, infielder Shay Whitcomb, and outfielder Jahmai Jones… a major storyline during their recent stop in Osaka has been building chemistry and integrating these players into the Korean baseball culture-even bonding over team Wagyu BBQ dinners-
as they unite under the Taegeuk mark to push for a deep tournament run.

**CZECHIA**



**WBC HISTORY:** Returning to the World Baseball Classic for the second time in National Team history … as a team at the 2023 WBC, slashed .211/.287/.293 with five doubles, two home runs and 14 RBI … earned their lone victory over China (8-5) to qualify for the 2026 WBC, utilizing a three-run go-ahead home run by first baseman Martin Mužík in the top of the ninth inning.

**MEET THE MANAGER**: Pavel Chadim (PAH-vel HA-dim) … took over as manager in Dec. 2021… spent his career as an outfielder in the Czech Extraliga, the Czech Republic's top league … won over 10 titles as a player with Draci Brno baseball club … also played for the Czech National Team and played a part in the country's first three European Championship appearances ('97, '99, 01) … batted .362 from 1995-2011 in the Extraliga … has been managing youth teams in the Czech Republic since 2003, overseeing two trips to the Little League World Series in 2013 and 2014 ... He led the men's national team to the WBC for the first time and to its first-ever medal at the European Championship. He has long been involved in development projects at the Czech Baseball Association.

**RHP Ondřej Satoria** made his last career start for the Czech National Team … enters the game with a career 3.68 ERA (7.1 IP, 3 ER) in three career WBC appearances (one start) with three walks and seven strikeouts for Czechia … tossed 3.1 scoreless innings in his first appearance of the 2026 WBC on March

6 vs. Australia with one hit allowed, one walk and three strikeouts … gained national attention in Japan after tossing three innings against Samurai Japan in the 2023 WBC, allowing five hits with three runs, two walks and four strikeouts … all four strikeouts came from the top four of Japan's batting order … faced MLB star Shohei Ohtani twice, inducing a groundout in his first at-bat and striking him out with a 72.1 mph slider in his second … works as an electrical construction control technician for an electric company in the Czech Republic… finished his National Team career with 4.2 scoreless innings vs. Samurai Japan, allowing six hits with no walks and three strikeouts … 8.1 scoreless innings in the 2026 WBC overall (also: 3.2 IP vs. Australia) with seven combined hits allowed, one walk and six strikeouts … finished his WBC career (including the 2022 WBC qualifiers) with a 2.25 ERA (12.0 IP, 3 ER) in four career WBC appearances (two starts) with three walks and 10 strikeouts for Czechia.

**TEAM NOTES:** At the 2025 Baseball European Championship, went 4-2 to earn a medal and finish in the top three for the first time in National League history (bronze) behind Italy (silver) and Netherlands (gold) … picked up wins over Spain (9-1 & 9-2), Sweden (10-0) and Israel (4-3) while dropping games to Germany (1-8) and Italy (5-8) … finished third in the 2020 Olympic Qualifying tournament behind Israel and Netherlands after finishing fifth in the 2019 European Baseball Championship … have finished in the top five in each of their last five trips to the European Baseball Championship (third, 2025; fifth, 2019; fifth, 2016; fourth, 2014; fifth, 2012).

**CHINESE TAIPEI**

**WBC HISTORY:** Chinese Taipei has appeared in all five previous Classics, posting a 5-12 record. The team reached the second round in 2013 but was knocked out in the first round in 2006, 2009, 2017, and 2023. Chinese Taipei lost all three games against Israel, the Netherlands, and Korea in 2017, the second time in the tournament's history to go winless (also lost to Korea and China in 2009). Chinese Taipei hosted the first round of the World Baseball Classic 2023, competing against Panama, Italy, the Netherlands, and Cuba. With all five teams completing the group stage with 2-2 records (the first five-way tie in WBC history), Chinese Taipei was relegated to the Qualifiers with the lowest ranking in Team Quality Balance among the five teams.
With the World Baseball Classic Qualifier 2025 held in Taipei, Chinese Taipei defeated Spain in the final game to advance to the Main Tournament and continue their presence at the World Baseball Classic.

**MEET THE MANAGER:** Chinese Taipei manager Hao-Jiu Tseng is a solid outfielder with a ten-year professional career, known for his defensive ability and nicknamed "Totoro." Tseng was named manager of the Rakuten Monkeys after the Japanese e-commerce giant acquired the Lamigo Monkeys in 2020 and led the team to the Taiwan Series in 2022, but they were swept by the CTBC Brothers. In 2024, Tseng became the manager of Rakuten's minor league team and served as manager of Chinese Taipei at the WBSC Premier12 2024. With a team that is widely considered an underdog, Tseng led Chinese Taipei to win its first-ever WBSC Premier12 championship, also the first major international tournament in Taiwan baseball history, by defeating the world's No.1 Japan. Tseng later led Chinese Taipei to clinch a berth in the 2026 World Baseball Classic by defeating Spain in the final game of the 2025 Qualifier.

**MEET THE CAPTAIN:** Chinese Taipei captain Chieh-Hsien Chen from CPBL Uni-President 7-Eleven Lions has been named captain for a third consecutive tournament, starting from the WBSC Premier12 2024, World Baseball Classic Qualifier 2025, and World Baseball Classic 2026. Chen, who was asked by Chinese Taipei manager Hao-Jiu Tseng to first serve as the captain of the Premier12 2024, has long

served as the captain of his parent club, the Lions. Chen is known for his cheerful, humble personality and brings a relaxed atmosphere and an upbeat, positive attitude to the clubhouse.

**BOUNCED  BACK WITH 1st WIN**: After going 0-2 in the first two games in World Baseball Classic 2026 and being shut down for 16 innings, Chinese Taipei's bats went alive in the 3° game as they managed to score 14 runs on 11 hits while the pitching staff combined a 7-inning shutout to collect their 1st win in this year's tournament. The win marks the 1st victory for Chinese Taipei in Tokyo Dome since 2006 as they defeated China, 12-3. Chinese Taipei is now 2-8 in the Tokyo Dome in WBC history.

**CHEERING MUSIC:** To cheer for the Chinese Taipei team, a professional band from Taiwan, consisting of 8 trumpets, 4 trombones, and 2 soprano saxophones, will play to lead the crowd. The band will perform at the grandstand during the TPE-AUS, TPE-CZE, and TPE-KOR games, and at the left bleacher during the TPE-JPN game.
According to Ta-Chang KAO, one of the most senior trumpeters from the CTBC Brothers cheering band and organizer of the WBC band, this would be the largest band ever to assemble to cheer for Chinese Taipei in an international tournament.

## POOL D

### VENEZUELA



**WBC HISTORY:** Venezuela has appeared in each edition of the World Baseball Classic, advancing to the semi-final round in 2009 before losing to South Korea in the Semifinals. Venezuela is 16-13 all-time at the classic, advancing to the second round in 2006, 2017 and 2023.

**MEET THE MANAGER**: Omar López is serving as manager of Team Venezuela for the second consecutive time (also in 2023). Born in Valencia, VZ, López also was a part of Team Venezuela's staff in the 2017 World Baseball Classic, serving as their Quality Control Coach. Most recently, he guided the Cangrejeros de Santurce to the Puerto Rican Winter League championship and an entry into the Caribbean Series, reaching the semi-finals in that tournament. The 2026 season will be Omar López' seventh as a member of the Astros Major League coaching staff and his third as the Bench Coach. This will be his 28th season in the Astros organization overall. He joined the Astros Major League staff in 2020 after a successful two-year stint as manager of the Double-A Corpus Christi Hooks (2018-19). In 2018, López was named the Texas League Manager of the Year after guiding the Hooks to an 82-56 record and a spot in the postseason.

**NUEVE AREPAS FROM VENEZUELA**: On Monday, Team Venezuela defeated Team Nicaragua 4-0 to earn its third win in the first round of WBC 2026. The Vinotinto had Ronald Acuña Jr. in show-time mode, supporting RHP Yoendrys Gómez and RHP Keider Montero who bulked for 5.0 IP combined on behalf of Venezuela and keep the country undefeated against Nicaragua in two matches.
•This was Venezuela's sixth World Baseball Classic shutout, tying Puerto Rico and Japan for the most by any team in the history of the event (H/T Sarah Langs)
•Gómez earned his first WBC win in his career after tossing 2.0 IP, allowing a pair of hits and striking out three rivals.
Montero piggybacked Gómez, and stayed on the mound during 3.0 IP, allowing a trio of hits, and striking out a pair in such a key moments in the game.

•Andrés Machado toed the rubber in the ninth, and every out he made was via strikes to seal the blanqueada.

**ONE-MAN SHOW RONALD**: On Monday night, Ronald Acuña Jr. went 3-3, with a home run, two runs scored, a pair of RBI, and a walk. He belted his career first jonrón at a WBC game with Team Venezuela on Monday, a 402 ft. solo blast towards right center field to extend the lead 2-0 in the top of the third inning.
'La Bestia' is the second player with a HR and a SB in a World Baseball Classic game for Venezuela, joining our current Hitting Coach, Miguel Cabrera (3/10/13 vs. Spain), (H/T Sarah Langs)

**UP AND READY FOR THE CHALLENGE**: Team Venezuela has already faced RHP Sandy Alcántara. On March 11th, 2023, the Vinotinto scored three runs and collected five hits (including a home run) and got three walks in 3.2 IP tossed by the Dominican Cy Young hurler.
Here are some career stats for some Team Venezuela players against Alcantara on regular MLB season:
Ronald Acuña Jr.:.314 BA (11-35), four doubles, one triple, one home run, nine runs scored, one RBI, five SB.
Luis Arráez: 400 BA, (2-5), one run scored, one RBI.
Willson Contreras: .375 (3-8), one double, one home run, three runs scored, two RBI.
Salvador Pérez: .667 (2-3), one double, one run scored.
Maikel Garcia: 667 (2-3), one run scored.
Ezequiel Tovar: .400 (2-5).

**UN ANO MAS EN TU VIDA**: Today, OF Jackson Chourio is turning 22 years old. The youngest soul of the Vinotinto roster is celebrating in such a special environment as it is being surrounded by the elite of the Venezuelan-born baseball players, along with more than 30,000 people in the stands. ¡Feliz cumpleaños, Jackson!

**THE RHYTHM OF THE TAMBORES**:Team Venezuela sealed its second victory of the current WBC after defeating Team Israel 11-3 at loanDepot Park on Saturday.
The Vinotinto lined 14 hits (6 XBH) to support a pitching masterclass from LHP Enmanuel De Jesus, who threw 4.2 no-hit innings before a triple from Garrett Stubbs broke the gem. Eugenio Suárez went over the fences and Luis Arraez followed suit (twice), to remind foes that he can do whatever he wants at the batters box.

**ENMANUEL THE GREAT**: LHP Enmanuel De Jesus toed the rubber for the second time in his career at a WBC game. Facing the same rival as in 2023, the lefty overcame his previous outing by tossing 5.0 IP, allowing two hits, one run and striking out eight batters. Those eight punchies turned into a new record for a Venezuelan pitcher in a WBC game. The previous one was at seven, held by three hurlers: RHP Freddy Garcia (3.8.2006 vs. Italy), RHP Luis Garcia (3.11.2023 vs. Dominican Republic), and RHP Félix Hernández (3.16.2009 vs. Puerto Rico).

¡**BOTASTE LA BOLA, CHAMO, BOTASTE LA BOLA**!: IF Luis Arraez had a night for the memories. On Saturday night, the San Felipe native went 4-5 against Team Israel, with two home runs, two doubles, four runs scored, five RBI, and became in the first player in WBC history with multiple multi-HR games in his career (H/T Sarah Langs), by repeating the feature he made himself on 3.7.2023 against Team USA. His first blast was a solo shot off Jordan Geber in the fifth inning to put the score 5-1 for Venezuela. His second jonrón came just a tad later, a three-run homer that turned loanDepot Park into a pachanga (huge party) with the score 10-2 for the Vinotinto in the sixth inning against Rob Kaminski. Note aside, the three-time MLB batting champion has had another two-homerun game in his MLB career, it happened

against the Atlanta Braves on 9.15.2023. All of the three two-homerun games in his career have had loaDepot Park as its venue.
With his four XBH, Arráez collected 12 total bases on Saturday night, setting a new record for WBC. The previous mark (11) was held by Ivan Rodriguez (Puerto Rico) from 3.7.2009 (H/T Sarah Langs). On Saturday, DH Eugenio Suárez reached two consecutive games with at least a home run against Team Israel, after blasting a two-run homerun at the bottom of the first inning off Ben Simon to extend the Venezuelan lead 4-0. Suarez went 2-4, with one run scored, a pair of RBI and a walk. In his previous match against ISR (March, 15th, 2023), Suárez went 3-4, with a HR, one R, three RBI.

**A BIT ABOUT VENEZUELA**:
Why "Vinotinto"?
There are different versions on why the Venezuelan national teams wear "Vinotinto" colors or maroon. One of the most popular ones explains that during the Bolivarian Games celebrated in Bogotá in 1938, the Venezuelan national soccer team didn't have their uniforms to play, so they borrowed the Vinotinto ones from the Venezuelan National Guard, making it the first time the color was worn by a national team in an international tournament. After that last-minute solution, the Venezuelan national soccer team kept using the maroon colors, the other national federations joined them, and that's why the Vinotinto = Venezuela.

**DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**



**WBC HISTORY:** The Dominican Republic has competed in the 2006, 2009, 2013, 2017, and 2023 World Baseball Classic tournaments. They finished 4th in the inaugural event in 2006. In 2009, Ubaldo Jimenez set a new record for strikeouts by a starter during Round One against the Netherlands when he struck out 10 batters over four innings in Team Dominica's 2-1 loss to the Netherlands, however the Dominican Republic was eliminated in the opening round. The team bounced back in 2013 and went on to win its first ever World Baseball Classic after defeating Team Puerto Rico 3-0.
In 2017, defending champion Dominican Republic was eliminated in the second round. After falling behind 5–0 in the sixth inning, Dominican Republic rallied to defeat the U.S. 7–5 in their second game. On the last day of the pool, Colombia tied their game against Dominican Republic 3–3 in the eighth on a Jorge Alfaro home run, and had a chance to win in the ninth inning, but Oscar Mercado was called out at home trying to score on a sacrifice fly. The game continued into extra innings, where Dominican Republic scored 7 runs in the 11th to win and finish the pool undefeated. Manny Machado of the Dominican Republic was named MVP for the first-round Pool C bracket of the WBC, after batting .357.
In 2023, the Dominican Republic finished with a record of 2-2, suffering a first round elimination by way of a 5-2 loss to Puerto Rico. Juan Soto was a standout in his World Baseball Classic debut. Soto finished the tournament with a .400 batting average with two home runs.

**MEET THE MANAGER**: Three-time MVP (2005; 2008-09), 11-time All-Star, two-time World Series Champion, and member
of the 700-Home Run Club...entering his fourth season as Special Assistant to the Los Angeles Angels...made his managerial debut with Leones Del Escogido, leading the team to Dominican Winter League and Caribbean Series Championships in 2025...named the manager of Team Dominicana in March...a six-time Silver Slugger award winner and recipient of the 2001 Rookie of the Year Award, the Dominican Republic native amassed a .296 batting average, 3,384 hits, 2,218 RBI, 703 home runs, and 1,914 runs scored, over a 22-year Major League career in which he split time between the St. Louis

Cardinals (2001-2011; 2022), Angels (2012-2021), and Los Angeles Dodgers (2021) organizations...finished his career ranked in the top 10 in several categories on baseball's all-time lists, including hits (9th), doubles (5th), home runs (4th), RBI (2nd), games played (5th), average (10th, min. 12,000 PA), and slugging percentage (6th, min. 12,000 PA).

**Game 3 Recap:** The Dominican Republic continued its dominant run in the 2026 World Baseball Classic with a convincing 10-1 win over Israel in Pool D at LoanDepot Park in Miami on March 8. OF Fernando Tatis Jr. delivered the game's biggest moment in the second inning, launching a grand slam as part of a five-run frame that quickly put the Dominicans in control. He finished with six RBIs, a team record for the Dominican Republic in the tournament, while OF Oneil Cruz also added a home run to extend the lead...On the mound, RHP Brayan Bello dominated Israel's lineup, allowing just one hit and striking out seven over five innings pitched.Israel's only run came on a solo home run by Spencer Horwitz in the fourth inning... The victory improved the Dominican Republic to 3-0 in pool play, clinching a spot in the quarterfinals, while Israel dropped to 1-2 and was eliminated from advancement.

**The Dominican Difference:** The Dominican Republic run differential is the highest of the tournament (29)... the Dominican team has scored 34 runs and allowed only 5 runs in three games played.

**Game One Result**: The Dominican Republic kicked off the 2026 World Baseball Classic against Nicaragua on Friday, March 6. Team Dominicana starter LHP Christopher Sanchez started off the contest striking out Chase Dawson, but he reached on a wild pitch. With the bases loaded, no outs, and down 1-0 in the first inning, struck out three consecutive batters to end the threat, becoming the first pitcher in WBC history to strikeout four batters in one inning. The Dominican's responded taking a 2-1 lead on a RBI double by Ketel Marte and fielder's choice RBI by Vladimir Guerrero Jr. Nicaragua added two more runs in the second-inning to make the score 3-2. Dominicana would drive in runs in the 3rd (1 run), 6th (2 runs), 7th (1 run), and 8th (6 runs) innings backed by home runs from Junior Caminero (go-ahead 2-run HR, 6th inn.), Julio Rodriguez (solo HR, 8th inn.), and Oneil Cruz (3-run HR, 8th inn.) en route to a 12-3. Additional notes below:
• The 12 runs scored by Team Dominican are the most in the team's history in the WBC.
• The home run hit by Cruz was the longest and hardest-hit home run in the last two WBC's. The only two harder-hit batted balls of any kind were two doubles hit by Shohei Ohtani. (source: Sarah Langs). The D.R. used eight relief pitchers on Friday holding Nicaragua scoreless over 7.2 innings.

**TEAM NOTES:** This 2026 version of Team Dominican Republic features 16 players born in 1997 or later, ensuring that more than half of the roster is Gen-Z.
There are eight players who have won the Silver Slugger award, five who have won Gold Gloves, and 10 who have been selected for at least one All-Star game.

**ISRAEL**



**WBC HISTORY:** Team Israel returns to the national stage for the 2026 World Baseball Classic, marking the country's third ever, and third straight appearance in the tournament. Israel is one of the five teams in Pool D at loanDepot park in Miami, Fla., joining Team Dominican Republic, Team Netherlands, Team Nicaragua, and Team Venezuela. After first qualifying for the 2017 WBC with a 3-0 record in the 2016 qualifiers, Israel finished atop Pool A with a 3-0 record, defeating Chinese Taipei, South Korea, and the Netherlands before ultimately falling in the second round and finishing sixth in the tournament. Although a

rule change secured spots in the 2021 World Baseball Classic for all 2017 participants, the tournament was postponed and eventually held in 2023. Israel was placed in Pool D and finished with a 1-3 record, defeating Nicaragua to clinch qualification for the 2026 tournament.

**MEET THE MANAGER:** Team Israel will be led by Manager Brad Ausmus, who was appointed the role in November 2025, returning to the helm for Israel for the first time since he managed the 2012 team during the World Baseball Classic qualifying tournament. The New Haven, Conn., native and 18-year Major League veteran previously managed the Detroit Tigers from 2014-17 and the Los Angeles Angels in 2019. Ausmus also served as Team Israel's Bench Coach for the 2023 WBC, the role he also currently holds with the New York Yankees (2024-present). His Major League career included stops with the San Diego Padres, Detroit Tigers, Houston Astros, and Los Angeles Dodgers, where he was a one-time All-Star (1999) and three-time Gold Glove winner at catcher (2001-02, '06).

**GAME THREE RECAP:** Team Israel dropped game three against Team Dominican Republic, 10-1, on Monday afternoon at loanDepot park. DH **Spencer Horwitz** (1x4, 1 R, 1 HR, 1 RBI, 3 K) hit his first WBC home run in the 4th inning for the team's lone run of the game. Accounting for one of Israel's other two hits was 2B **Noah Mendlinger** (1x3, 1 2B, 1 K), who doubled in the 7th inning. Mendlinger leads the team through three games with four hits, batting .444 (4x9) with a .500 OBP and 1.056 OPS. Through seven career WBC games, Mendlinger owns a .368 AVG (7x19), .455 OBP, and .876 OPS. His seven hits rank third in Israel WBC history, trailing only C Ryan Lavarnway (nine) and INF Ike Davis (eight).

**GAME TWO RECAP**: Team Israel secured its first win of the 2026 World Baseball Classic over Team Nicaragua, 5-0, marking the first-ever shutout victory for Israel in the WBC.

- RHP Dean Kremer earned the victory (W, 4.1 IP, 2 H, 1 BB, 4 K) as he became the third Israel starter to toss at least 4.1 innings in a WBC game and the second such scoreless outing in Israel's WBC history.
- RHP Josh Mallitz (1.2 IP, 1 BB, 1 K), who took over for Kremer with one away in the 5th, induced the inning-ending double play to strand the bases loaded.
- 2B-LF Noah Mendlinger (3x3, 1 R, 1 RBI, 1 BB) reached safely in all four of his plate appearances while opening the scoring for Israel in the 2nd inning with an RBI-single to plate SS Cole Carrigg (2x4, 1 R, 1 RBI). Carrigg had singled to lead off the inning and stole both second and third base.
- In the bottom of the 5th, Israel plated four runs on five hits, tying the second-most runs and marking the second-most hits for the team in a WBC game, and the most since the 2017 run. LF Zach Levenson (1x3, 2 RBI, 1 BB, 1 K) drove in two of the four runs in the frame on a single to right field.

**GAME ONE:** Team Israel dropped its opening game of the 2026 World Baseball Classic to Team Venezuela, 11-3. Highlighting Israel's offense on Saturday night were three players who made their WBC debuts: RF RJ Schreck (1x4, 1 R, 1 HR, 1 RBI, 1 K) and CF Harrison Bader (1x4, 1 R, 1 HR, 1 RBI, 1 K) who both hit solo home runs, and LF Zach Levenson (2x4, 2 K) who collected the team's only multi-hit game. C Garrett Stubbs (1x4, 1 R, 1 3B, 2 K) drove in the team's first run of the game with an RBI-triple in the 5th inning, now owning a .333 AVG (3x9) in two career WBC games.

OF Harrison Bader and OF RJ Schreck both homered in their WBC debuts. Schreck (Toronto's No. 9 prospect per MLB Pipeline) became the first Israel player to homer in the WBC since INF Nate Frieman on March 13, 2017 vs. Netherlands (no Team Israel player hit a home run in the 2023 WBC). With both Bader and Schreck homering in tonight's game, it marked only the second time in Israel's WBC history

that two players have hit a home run (also, Nate Frieman and Ryan Lavarnway on March 7, 2017 vs. Chinese Taipei).

**HOW THE TEAM WAS BUILT:** Team Israel's 2026 World Baseball Classic roster is made up of 30 total players, including 17 pitchers (15 RHP/2 LHP), two catchers, six infielders, and five outfielders. Of these 30 players, 24 of them are represented within 15 MLB organizations, including three players from the New York Mets (RHP Jordan Geber, RHP Ben Simon, and RHP Robert Stock) and two players apiece from the Colorado Rockies (INF Cole Carrigg and OF Troy Johnston), Philadelphia Phillies (RHP Max Lazar and C Garrett Stubbs), St. Louis Cardinals (INF Noah Mendlinger and INF Zach Levenson), and Toronto Blue Jays (C CJ Stubbs and OF RJ Schreck).

**NICARAGUA**



**WBC HISTORY**: After qualifying for the first time, Nicaragua was outscored, 22-4, and lost all 4 games in the 2023
World Baseball Classic under manager Sándor Guido...the pitching staff ranked eighth among all tournament teams
with a 4.91 ERA, and its hitters' .499 OPS was third-lowest after scoring just 1 run in each game...Guido and Nicaragua
advanced to the 2023 WBC by winning the qualifier in Panama City with a 3-1 record.

**MEET THE MANAGER:** Johnny B. Dusty Baker Jr., 76, is managing in the World Baseball Classic for the first time...in October, he attended Nicaragua's gold medal performance at the 2025 Central American Games in Guatemala...in December he is eligible to be considered for the Contemporary Baseball Era/Managers-Executives-Umpires Ballot for inclusion in the National Baseball Hall of Fame's Class of 2027...in 26 seasons as a Major League manager he went 2,183-1,862 (.540) for the Giants, Cubs, Reds, Nationals & Astros...is 1 of just 13 managers with at least 2,000 wins and ranks eighth on that all-time list... 10 of the 13 managers with at least 2,000 wins are in the Hall of Fame, except Baker, Bruce Bochy & Terry Francona...3 times was National League Manager of the Year (1993, 1997, 2000)..as a manager won 10 division titles, 3 pennants (2002 Giants, 2021 & 2022 Astros) and the
2022 World Series (Astros)...led all 5 of his clubs to division championships...won 2 World Series, as a player for the 1981 Dodgers and as manager of the 2022 Astros...in 1968 made his Major League debut at 19 years old...in 2,039 games over 19 Major League seasons hit .278 with 242 HR and 1,013 RB| while stealing 137 bases for the Braves (1968-1975), Dodgers (1976-1983), Giants (1984) and Athletics (1985-1986).. was a National League All-Star in 1981 and 1982...3 times received votes for Most Valuable Player (1972, 1980, 1981)...won 2 Silver Slugger Awards (1980, 1981) and 1 Rawlings Gold Glove Award (1981)...played winter ball in Venezuela, Mexico and Puerto Rico...his son, Darren, was drafted by the Nationals out of Jesuit High School (Carmichael, CA) in the 27th round of the 2017 first-year player draft and again by the Nationals out of the University of California in the 10th round of the 2021 draft.... Darren went 7-for-14 with 2 doubles in his 9 Major League apps, all for the Nationals in 2024...on Valentine's Day 2026, Darren was signed by the White Sox to a minor league contract.

**MONDAY'S GAME**: Will be the second meeting in World Baseball Classic competition between Nicaragua and Venezuela, including Venezuela's 4-1 win in Game 4 of the 2023 event in Miami.

**GAME THREE**:

Ismael Munguía has reached base safely in 8 of his 13 plate appearances.
Christhian Sandoval has reached base safely in 5 of his 9 plate appearances.

**CONNECTIONS TO DUSTY:**
• Four members of Nicaragua's coaching staff played for or coached under manager Dusty Baker.
Bullpen coach Daniel Firova from 2016-2017 was the Nationals' bullpen coach and from 2021-2023 was the Astros' quality assurance coach.
• Outfield coach Jacque Jones in 2006 played for the Cubs and from 2016-
2017 was an assistant hitting coach for the Nationals.
• 3B coach Gary Pettis from 2020-2023 was a coach on the Astros' staff.
Hitting coach Randall Simon in 2003 played for the Cubs.

**TEAM NOTES:** Roster includes 5 players with Major League Baseball experience: IF Cheslor Cuthbert (2015-2020), RHP Erasmo Ramírez (2012-2025), RHP JC Ramírez (2013-2019), IF Mark Vientos (2022-active) and RHP Carlos Rodriguez (2024-active).
Roster includes 4 players born outside Nicaragua...OF Chase Dawson (Chesterton, IN) established residency in Nicaragua in 2025...the mothers of 3B Mark Vientos (Norwalk, CT) and OF Juan Montes (Guatemala City, Guatemala) were born in Nicaragua...father of IF Jeter Downs (Isla San Andrés, Colombia) was born in Nicaragua.
OF Juan Montes, born in Guatemala City, while on Nicaragua's roster in 2023 became the first player from Guatemala
to appear in the World Baseball Classic.
Roster features 13 players who appeared in the 2023 World Baseball Classic: Osman Gutiérrez, Duque Hebbert,
Ronald Medrano, Dilmer Mejía, Erasmo Ramírez, JC Ramírez, Carlos Rodriguez, Carlos Teller, Benjamín Alegría,
Cheslor Cuthbert, Brandon Leyton, Juan Montes and Melvin Novoa.
Infielders Mark Vientos, Jeter Downs and Freddy Zamora grew up and played together in the Miami area.

**NETHERLANDS**



**WBC HISTORY:** This is the sixth World Baseball Classic for Team Kingdom of the Netherlands...in 2006 WBC, pitcher Shairon Martis no-hit Panama to give the Netherlands 10-0 win in mercy rule shortened game (7 inn.) and lone victory of tournament (1-2 record; 11th place finish)...in the 2009 tournament, the Netherlands advanced to Round Two of WBC defeating Dominican Republic twice in dramatic fashion (2-4 overall record; 7th place finish...the team reached the Championship Round in 2013 and 2017, but was eliminated in the first round.

**MEET THE MANAGER**: Team Netherlands will be led by Field Manager Andruw Jones...Jones was elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame on January 20, 2026...Jones burst onto the Major League scene in 1996 with the Atlanta Braves and hit home runs in his first two at-bats in that year's World Series against the New York Yankees, for whom he would finish out his career in 2011 and '12...in between he also played for the Los Angeles Dodgers, Texas Rangers, and Chicago White Sox and slugged 434 home runs while batting .254 with 1,289 RB| and an .823 OPS...among the most graceful center fielders, Jones earned 10 Gold Glove Awards in leading the league in putouts six times and assists three times...in 2005, he led the National League in home runs (51) and RBI (128) and won the Silver Slugger Award... he

finished second to Albert Pujols for the NL Most Valuable Player Award...in 18 postseason series combined with the Braves and Yankees, Jones hit .273 with 43 runs, 10 home runs and 34 RBI in 76 games..Jones was born in Willemstad, Curacao...represented the Netherlands in the 2006 and 2013 World Baseball Classic, and the 2015 Premier12...has been on the coaching staff since 2016 and will manage the team for the first time during the 2026 World Baseball Classic.

**OZZIE WALKS IT OFF**: Down to their last strike - Ozzie Albies hit a 3-run walk off home run to give the Netherlands a 4-3 win over Nicaragua yesterday...it was the first-ever walk off home run in World Baseball Classic history and just the 10th walk off in tournament history...the Kingdom owns a WBC best FOUR walk off wins...here is a list of the four walk offs:

2009 vs. Dominican Republic - Error (ball hit by Yurendell De Caster)
2013 vs. Cuba - Sac fly (Kalian Sams)
2017 vs. Chinese Taipei - walk (Jurickson Profar)
2026 vs. Nicaragua - 3-run home run (Ozzie Albies)

**ROSTER RUNDOWN**: The World Baseball Classic 2026 roster for the Kingdom of the Netherlands features a strong blend of established MLB talent, veteran international contribu-tors, and emerging prospects, continuing the country's reputation as one of the premier programs outside the United States, Japan, and the Dominican Republic...the lineup is anchored by proven Major League stars including Xander Bogaerts, Ozzie Albies, Chadwick Tromp, and closer Kenley Jansen, giving the team elite field production and late-inning bullpen credibility...position player depth is a clear strength, highlighted by athletic defenders such as Ceddanne Rafaela and a high-upside prospect in Druw Jones...the roster also maintains the traditional Curaçao and Aruba pipeline that has fueled past Dutch success...on the pitching side, the staff relies more on organizational depth and international experience rather than frontline MLB starters.

**TOURNAMENT DEBUT**: Outfielder Ceddanne Rafaela is set to make his WBC debut...another very talented player to sign out of Curaçao...like many others before him he represented Curaçao in the Little League World Series (2012) before signing a professional contract with the Boston Red Sox in 2017...a versatile player who can play both middle infield as well as center field, made his Major League debut in 2023 and has grown into his role as center fielder in Fenway Park....he won the AL Gold Glove Award for center field...first joined Team Kingdom of the Netherlands for the 2022 Kingdom Series in Curaçao.

## THE VENUES

**POOL A, San Juan, Puerto Rico:** Hiram Bithorn Stadium has previously hosted pools in the 2006, 2009 and 2013 tournaments. In the 2006 World Baseball Classic, the stadium was the only venue to host more than one round during the inaugural event, with both Rounds 1 and 2 of the first installment being played at the stadium. In the 2009 World Baseball Classic, Hiram Bithorn Stadium played host to Pool D in the first round and in 2013, it played host to Pool C in the first round. The stadium, built in 1962, was named after the first Puerto Rican-born player in the AL or NL, right-handed pitcher Hiram Bithorn, who played for the Chicago Cubs and Chicago White Sox from
1942-47.

**POOL B, Houston, Texas:** Daikin Park will host WBC action for the first time. It opened on April 7, 2000. Originally known as Enron Field and later Minute Maid Park from 2002-24, in 2025, to coincide with its 25th anniversary, the ballpark entered a new era with its current name, Daikin Park, under a 15-year naming rights partnership. With Daikin Park hosting 12 contests in this year’s edition of the World

Baseball Classic, the stadium is the eighth Major League venue to host games in the tournament, joining Angel Stadium (Los Angeles Angels); Chase Field (Arizona Diamondbacks); Dodger Stadium (Los Angeles Dodgers); loanDepot park (Miami Marlins); Oracle Park (San Francisco Giants); Petco Park (San Diego Padres); and Rogers Centre (Toronto Blue Jays).

**POOL C, Tokyo, Japan:** The Tokyo Dome, nicknamed the "Big Egg," will host WBC action in the first round. It is the sixth time that the building has hosted WBC games. Opened on March 17, 1998, the Tokyo Dome was the first domed stadium in Japan and serves as the home of the Yomiuri Tokyo Giants of the NPB. There's a little bit of WBC incentive inside, too – the dome is the home of the Japan Baseball Hall of Fame and the trophy from Japan's victory in the first WBC in 2006 resides there.

**POOL D, Miami, Florida:** loanDepot Park is hosting WBC games for the fourth consecutive tournament. Miami will host WBC action in each round of the tournament, as it did in 2023. This will be Miami's second time hosting the championship round. In addition to the 2013 and '17 tournament games at this ballpark, the city also hosted a WBC second round in 2009 at Dolphin Stadium, the former home of MLB's Miami Marlins.

## MEDIA TOOLBOX

**LOGISTICS:** There is no media access to the clubhouse during the World Baseball Classic. However, managers and players will be made available postgame. There is pregame media field access until batting practice has concluded. Following each game, the losing manager, winning manager and 2-4 players from the winning team will appear in the formal interview room. Additional players from each team will also be available in the informal media mixed zone in the tunnel areas adjacent to each Clubhouse (or in the dugout).

**MLBPRESSBOX.COM:** All media information regarding the 2026 World Baseball Classic, including game notes, press releases, press conference transcripts (provided by ASAP Sports), statistics, rosters and rules, are posted online at www.MLBPressBox.com, the official media website of Major League Baseball.

**STATCAST DATA:** Can be accessed live during games at https://baseballsavant.mlb.com/gamefeed. Change dropdown from 'MLB' to 'World Baseball Classic'.

**WBC PRESS OFFICERS:** Each team has an assigned Press Officer who can help with your coverage. Here's a list.

*Pool A — San Juan*
**Team Puerto Rico:** Franco Garcia (franco.garcia@braves.com)
**Team Cuba:** Francisco Campo (ranciscoolympics@outlook.com)
**Team Canada:** Adam Morissette (media@baseball.ca)
**Team Colombia:** Melissa Strozza (melrod0815@gmail.com)
**Team Panama:** Jorge Merlos (jmerlos@padres.com)

*Pool B – Houston*
**Team USA:** John Blundell (john.blundell@mlb.com)
**Team Mexico:** Danny Sanchez (dsanch18@gmail.com)
**Team Italy:** Jason Zillo (jzillo@yankees.com)
**Team Great Britain:** Kyle Brostowitz (Kyle.Brostowitz@nationals.com)

**Team Brazil:** Mariana de Paula (mdepaula@sfgiants.com)

*Pool C – Tokyo*
**Team Japan:** Shingo Horie (shingo_horie@me.com)
**Team Australia:** Mike Passanisi (mpassanisi@sfgiants.com)
**Team Korea:** Eugene Koo (Eugenekikoo@gmail.com)
**Team Czechia:** Rob Livingston (Robert.livingston@rockies.com)
**Team Chinese Taipei:** Richard Wang (boston1918@gmail.com)

*Pool D – Miami*
**Team Venezuela:** Carlos Guillen (carlos.guillen@tigers.com)
**Team Dominican Republic:** Daveson Perez (dperez@redsox.com) and Elvis Martinez (emartinez@raysbaseball.com)
**Team Netherlands:** Dustin Morse (DustinMorse@TwinsBaseball.com)
**Team Israel:** Gali Sharoni (gsharoni@marlins.com)
**Team Nicaragua:** Rob Butcher (rbutcher673@gmail.com)

## Upcoming Press Schedules

**Please see the links below by venue. All schedules subject to change**
Pool A LINK
Pool B LINK
Pool C LINK
Pool D LINK

## Press Conference Links

Media outlets who would like to access press conference footage from the 2026 World Baseball Classic may click here to access a document which will populate each day with live and archived streaming links for press conferences from each site during the World Baseball Classic.

For technical troubleshooting relating to the stream links only, media members may reach out to MLBNMMSupervisors@mlb.com.

Transcripts for all WBC press conferences can be accessed at www.mlbpressbox.com or https://asaptext.com/orgs/mlb/

## Photos

For press photos, please contact mlbphotorequest@mlb.com.

## Media Guide

LINK

## Credential Distribution Schedule

**San Juan, Puerto Rico — Hiram Bithorn Stadium**
*Media Tent Credential Pick-up Window*

Thursday, March 5th: 8:00 a.m. - 6:00pm*

Friday, March 6th: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.*
Friday, March 6th: 2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.*
Saturday, March 7th: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.*
Saturday, March 7th: 2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.*
Sunday, March 8th: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.*
Sunday, March 8th: 2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.*
Monday, March 9th: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.*
Monday, March 9th: 2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.*
Tuesday, March 10th: 12:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.*
Wednesday, March 11th: 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.*

**Houston, Texas — Daikin Park**
*Box Office on Texas Street Windows 15 & 16*

Thursday, March 5th: 8:00 a.m. - 6:00pm*
Friday, March 6th: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.*
Friday, March 6th: 2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.*
Saturday, March 7th: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.*
Saturday, March 7th: 2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.*
Sunday, March 8th: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.*
Sunday, March 8th: 2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.*
Monday, March 9th: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.*
Monday, March 9th: 2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.*
Tuesday, March 10th: 2:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.*
Wednesday, March 11th: 12:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.*
Thursday, March 12th: 10:00a.m. - 6:00 p.m.*
Friday, March 13th: 1:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.*
Saturday, March 14th: 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.*

**Tokyo, Japan — Tokyo Dome**
Please connect with Jeff.Lantz@mlb.com

**Miami, Florida — loanDepot Park**
*West Plaza Ticket Windows 1-2* (next to Team Shop)

Thursday, March 5th: 7:30 a.m. - 6:00pm*
Friday, March 6th: 7:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.*
Friday, March 6th: 2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.*
Saturday, March 7th: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.*
Saturday, March 7th: 2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.*
Sunday, March 8th: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.*
Sunday, March 8th: 2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.*
Monday, March 9th: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.*
Monday, March 9th: 2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.*
Tuesday, March 10th: 12:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.*
Wednesday, March 11th: 2:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.*
Thursday, March 12th: 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.*
Friday, March 13th: 12:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.*
Saturday, March 14th: 3:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.*

Sunday, March 15th: 1:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.*
Monday, March 16th: 1:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.*
Monday, March 16th: 1:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.*
Tuesday, March 17th: 1:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.*
***All times are subject to change. All are local times.***

## WORLD BASEBALL CLASSIC RULES

The 2026 World Baseball Classic will be played under the Official Rules of Major League Baseball. All Tournament games shall be played according to the provisions of the 2025 Official Baseball Rules, as supplemented by these Rules:

**Pitch counts:** Pitchers are limited to 65 pitches per game in Round 1, 80 pitches per game in the Quarterfinal Round and 95 pitches per game in the Championship Round. Pitchers are allowed to exceed the limits to complete a batter. Pitchers who throw 50 or more pitches in any game cannot pitch again until a minimum of four days have passed. Pitchers who throw 30 or more pitches in any game cannot pitch again until a minimum of one day has passed. Pitchers cannot pitch three consecutive days.

**Early Termination Rule:** In the first round, umpires shall call a regulation game whenever one team is ahead by 10 or more runs after any complete inning, starting with the seventh inning, or if a team is ahead by 15 or more runs after any complete inning, beginning with the completion of the fifth inning.

**Extra Innings Rule:** For any inning beginning with the 10th, the team at the plate will start with a runner on second base. The hitter will be the one scheduled to lead off the inning. The runner at second will be the one preceding the hitter (or a substitute for such player).

**Three Batter Minimum:** For the avoidance of doubt, the “Three Batter Minimum” rule contained in Official Baseball Rule 5.10 shall be enforced during World Baseball Classic games.

**Pitch Timer, Base Sizes, Restriction on Shifts:** The Official Baseball Rules adopted beginning in 2023 regarding the Pitcher Timer, base sizes and restrictions on defensive positioning are adopted for Tournament Games.

**Automatic Ball-Strike (ABS) Challenge System:** The Automatic Ball-Strike (ABS) Challenge System will not be used during 2026 World Baseball Classic games.

*For more, please consult* [https://www.mlb.com/news/world-baseball-classic-rules-rule-modifications-2026](https://www.mlb.com/news/world-baseball-classic-rules-rule-modifications-2026)

