GAME NOTES

TEAM BÉISBOL VENEZUELA

Venezuela (4-1) vs. Italy (5-0)

Monday, March 16, 2026 • loanDepot Park, Miami, FL • 8:00 p.m. ET

RHP Keider Montero (0-0, 0.00) vs. RHP Aaron Nola (1-0, 0.00)

Game #6 • Away #3 • TV: FOX/FOXD

WE'RE BACK AT SEMIS: Team Venezuela secured its return to the semi finals at the WBC after defeating Team Japan 8-5 in a monumental upset against the defending champions. The Vinotinto rallied in the sixth inning after a three-run home run by Wilyer Abreu to take back the lead, and outhit the 'Mighty Samurai' 10-7, having Ronald Acuña Jr. Maikel García, and Abreu in stellar role, supporting their peers from the bullpen who struck out eight batters out of the 12 SO they got collectively.

- Acuña Jr. went 1-5 with a solo home run. The 401 ft. blast was the first leadoff one ever by a Venezuelan player in the history of WBC (H/T Sarah Langs).
- García went 2-5 with a 2B and a home run, one run scored and a pair of RBI.
- Abreu turned loanDepot Park into a madhouse after sending the ball 409 ft. away from home plate towards the second deck in right field. The same player who broke a bat this spring training just by holding his swing gave the lead to the Vinotinto 7-5.
- The Venezuelan bullpen held the Nippon offensive to just four hits in 6.1 IP, having LHP Enmanuel De Jesus earning the W after tossing 2.1 IP, taking one hit and striking out three rivals, while carving his name into the All-tournament Team. The lefty earned his second win in WBC, which tied the all-time record for Venezuelan hurlers with two. Was that enough? Or should we mention that on Saturday he struck out Shohei Ohtani too?
- That was the first time Venezuela faced Japan at any WBC round.

L.A. BOUND!: After the historic win against Japan, the Vinotinto officially secured the second spot for the Americas at the Olympic Games 2028 in Los Ángeles. This will be the first time in the Venezuelan history in which the national baseball team clicks the ticket to fight for the Olympic gold.

VENEZUELANS FACE-TO-FACE: History will be made today no matter what. This will be the first time in WBC history that two Venezuelan-born managers face each other. Also, Manager Omar López and Francisco Cervelli will each play to earn their national teams a spot in the WBC finals for the first time in WBC history.

ÁLVAREZ JOINS VENEZUELA: LHP José Álvarez is the new face for Venezuela at the third round of WBC. The southpaw is substituting Yoendrys Gómez, who ended his participation with the Vinotinto after one outing. Álvarez returns to Team Venezuela after defending its colors in WBC 2017, tossing 4.0 IP, allowing four hits and one earned run, while striking out three batters in four games. In 2025 he played with Toros de Tijuana, and in 53 G he got a pair of wins and a loss, tossed 43.0 IP, earned nine runs and finished with 37 punchies.

OH CAPTAIN, MY CAPTAIN: C Salvador Pérez was designated as team Captain, taking the baton from current hitting coach, Miguel Cabrera. Pérez is wearing the Vinotinto uniform for the fourth WBC in his career and offensively has aged like a fine wine, hitting .200 in 2013, .286 in 2017 and .429 in 2023. In 2026 he is joining RHP Francisco Rodríguez and Miguel Cabrera as the only Venezuelan born players with at least four WBC tournaments in their resume. Among the active Venezuelan players, Pérez ranks second in MLB games played with 1,707 (14th all-time), second in home runs with 303 (4th all-time), 1st in RBI with 1,016 (6th all-time), and second with 320 2B (13th all-time). His performance in the tournament in 2023 awarded him being the catcher for the All-Tournament Team.

TEAM VENEZUELA ALL-TIME MANAGERS AT WBC

	W-L
Omar López (2023-current):	8-2
Omar Vizquel (2017):	2-5
Luis Sojo (2006-2009-2013):	10-7

Sojo managed the Vinotinto to the semifinals stage in 2009, earning bronze medal.

That has been the best performance of the Venezuelan national team in any WBC tournament so far.

VENEZUELA IN THE HISTORY OF WORLD BASEBALL CLASSIC

Venezuela:20-14
VS.
Australia: 1-0
Cuba: 0-1
Dominican Republic: 1-5
Israel: 2-0
Italy: 5-0
Japan 1-0
México: 0-1
Netherlands: 2-0
Nicaragua: 2-0
Puerto Rico: 3-3
South Korea: 0-1
Spain: 1-0
United States: 2-3

NAME PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

Andrés Giménez (he-**MEN**-ez)
Enmanuel De Jesus (enmanu-**EL** de Je-**SUS**)
Jackson Chourio (**CHO**-ooh-ree-oh)
José Buttó (boo-**TOH**)
Keider Montero (**KAY**-der)
Luinder Ávila (LU-**EEN**-der)
Maikel García (**MICHAEL**)
Ranger Suárez (**RAN**-her)
Ronald Acuña Jr. (ah-**CUHN**-ya)
Salvador Pérez (**PEH**-rez)
Wilyer Abreu (**WHEEL**-yurr)
Yoendrys Gómez (yo-**EN**-drys)

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 Vinotinto = Venezuela.

"Y MAÑANA... ¡AY, MAÑANA!"

While we find out, please search on your favorite music app the following:

- Simón Díaz
- Tambor Urbano
- Guaco
- Rawayanna
- Oscar D´León
- Aldemaro Romero
- Serenata Guayanesa
- Adolescentes Orquesta
- Billo´s Caracas Boys
- Amigos Invisibles
- Servando y Florentino
- Elena Rose



Starting Pitcher #54 RHP Keider Montero
HT 6'1" WT 213
Age: 25
Born: 7/6/2000
Birthplace: Santa Teresa del Tuy, VZ
MLB Team: Detroit Tigers

Pitching repertoire and usage in 2025: Fastball 31%, 93.9 mph. Slider 22%, 84.1 mph. Sinker 20%, 93.7 mph. Curveball 15%, 79.0 mph. Changeup 13%, 86.8 mph.

- Per Statcast, his Curveball spin was above 91% of the league pitchers, finishing the 2025 season with an average of 2,935.2 RPM.
- Today, he is making his second outing (first start) with the Vinotinto at a WBC tournament. On 3/9 he toed the rubber for 3.0 IP, allowing a trio of hits and striking out two Nicaraguan batters.
- Made his Major League debut in the second game of the doubleheader on 5/29/2024 vs. PIT, allowing four runs on five hits with one walk and five strikeouts in 4.1 innings.
- Finished last season with 5-3, 4.37 ERA (44 ER / 90.2 IP), and 72 SO with DET in the big leagues.
- Despite a few trips to the minors, Montero ended the 2025 season in fifth place among the Tigers pitchers on strikeouts, following Tarik Skubal (241), Jack Flaherty (188), Casey Mize (139), and Will Vest (75).
- Had a 4-3 record in 12 games started (2 QS), throwing 58.0 IP and allowing 24 ER (3.72 ERA), while striking out 46 batters. As a reliever he tossed 32.2 IP, allowing 38 H, 20 ER, and finished with 26 punchouts for a 5.51 ERA.
- The righty has seen Playoff action with the Tigers in 2024 and 2025. In 5 G (1 GS) has been on the mound for 8.1 IP, allowing 2 H, 1 R, 0 ER, and striking out 5, adding 1 save.
- Finished second in 2025 among the Tigers pitching squad with 66.7% strike pitches (min. 90.0 IP), just behind Tarik Skubal (70.3%).
- Among the pitchers 25 y/o or younger in the AL with at least 50.0 IP, Montero finished 22nd with 1.390 WHIP, 14th in IP, 17th with 95 ERA+, 18th in ERA, and 16th in SO.
- In 2025 with Toledo (AAA) ended up with 4-4, 5.91 ERA (28 ER in 42.2 IP), with 43 strikeouts.
- After the 2025 season, Montero is ranked 77 among Venezuelan-born players in history with 149 SO, just one shy of Team Venezuela´s teammate Ángel Zerpa.
- Threw his first career complete game shutout on 9/10/24 vs. COL, facing the minimum 27 batters and giving up three hits with five strikeouts on 96 pitches. Keider became the first Tiger to face the minimum in a complete game since Justin Verlander's no-hitter on May 7, 2011, at Toronto. Montero was the first Tiger to throw a complete game in less than 100 pitches since David Price on June 12, 2015, and the first rookie to have a sub-100 pitch complete game while facing the minimum since pitch tracking began in 1988. Became one of the 28 Venezuelan-born players with at least one career shutout in MLB.

NUMERICAL ROSTER

#	Name	POS
0	Giménez, Andrés	2B/SS
1	Chourio, Jackson	CF
2	Arráez, Luis	1B
4	Sanoja, Javier	OF
7	Suárez, Eugenio	3B
8	Parra, Gerardo	1B Coach
11	García, Maikel	3B
13	Pérez, Salvador	C
14	Tovar, Ezequiel	SS
15	Córdova, Jorge	Bullpen Coach
16	Abreu, Wilyer	OF
19	José Álvarez	LHP
20	Guzmán, Carlos	RHP
21	Acuña Jr., Ronald	OF
22	López, Omar	Manager
23	Contreras, William	C
24	Cabrera, Miguel	Hitting Coach
25	Torres, Gleyber	2B
28	Chirinos, Robinson	Bench Coach
29	Palencia, Daniel	RHP
30	Machado, Andrés	RHP
32	Valles, Rolando	Analytics Coach
34	Senzatela, Antonio	RHP
35	Molina, Antrhony	RHP
37	De Jesus, Enmanuel	LHP
38	Méndez, Carlos	Hitting Coach
40	Contreras, Willson	1B
41	Martínez, Víctor	Assistant Manager
52	Rodríguez, Eduardo	LHP
53	Odor, Rouglas	3B Coach
54	Montero, Keider	RHP
55	Suárez, Ranger	LHP
57	Santana, Johan	Pitching Coach
58	Ávila, Luinder	RHP
59	Graterol, Juan	Bullpen Catcher
61	Zerpa, Angel	LHP
64	Sánchez, Ricardo	LHP
70	Buttó, José	RHP
73	Suárez, Christian	LHP
74	Díaz, Jhonathan	LHP
83	Bazardo, Eduard	RHP
85	Bracamonte, Javier	Bullpen Catcher
99	Corredor, Néstor	Coach

VENEZUELAN ALL-TIME LEADERS AT WBC

Pitching:

GS: Martín Pérez..... 4
W: Félix Hernández/José Ruiz/Enmanuel De Jesus.. 2
ERA: (min. 11.0 IP): Enrique González..... 0.00
IP: Carlos Silva..... 18.0
SO: Félix Hernández..... 17
SV: Francisco Rodríguez..... 5
WHIP: (min. 11.0 IP): Enrique González... 0.77

Hitting

AVG (min. 15 AB): Maikel García.... .421
H: Miguel Cabrera..... 22
2B: J. López, S. Pérez, M. Prado..... 6
3B: Gregor Blanco, Endy Chávez..... 2
HR: Miguel Cabrera..... 6
R: Miguel Cabrera/Ronald Acuña Jr. .. 13
RBI: Miguel Cabrera..... 15
BB: Miguel Cabrera..... 11
SB: Ronald Acuña Jr. 5
OBP: José Celestino López..... .481
SLG (min 30 AB): Luis Arráez..... .778
OPS: (min 20 AB): José Celestino López 1.398

Para "echar un pie"... What are we listening here?

Tambores Venezolanos:

Yes, those drums you're listening at the ballpark are "Venezuelan drums", which were originated from the musical and cultural traditions from enslaved African people that were brought to Venezuelan coasts to work at the cocoa and coffee plantations. The three main tambores are the "cumaco", the "culo e'puya", and the "tamboras", and together they make a combination of sounds hard to stand still and not dance.

Venezuelan heritage is a mix of cultures, the native indigenous, the African and the European, and each has its deep roots in Venezuelan culture. The tambores are the legacy of the African people still present since the colonization period.

Con todo y para llevar... And one for the road...

Arepas:

It´s a corn flour round patties, crispy outside but soft and doughy on the inside. A meal that dates from the pre-Columbian times and originally was named "erepa" by the native tribes in Venezuela.

It can be stuffed with anything you'd like, from ham, any kind of cheeses to shredded chicken or beef, including scrambled eggs, octopus, quail eggs, black beans and plantains… you name it.

The most famous one is the "Reina Pepiada", which it's stuffed with a mixed paste made of shredded chicken, avocado and mayo. It's dates to the 50's when the owners of an arepera (arepa restaurant) in Caracas paid homage to Susana Duijm, who became the first Venezuelan and Latin American woman crowned Miss World, by naming a special arepa after her. "Pepiada" is an old slang that referred to a beautiful woman.