



WORLD BASEBALL CLASSIC 2026 NEWS & NOTES

March 15, 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.

The 2026 World Baseball Classic has already set the all-time tournament attendance record. This year's tournament also set new attendance marks for an individual pool (Tokyo) and a U.S. pool (Houston).

Previous records were all from 2023: Total Attendance (1,306,414), Individual Pool (Tokyo: 361,976), U.S. Pool (Miami: 295,850).

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: Pool A Runner-up vs. Pool B Winner, at Daikin Park, March 14

Quarterfinal: Pool B Runner-up vs. Pool A Winner, at Daikin Park, March 13

Quarterfinal: Pool C Runner-up vs. Pool D Winner, at loanDepot Park, March 13

Quarterfinal: 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

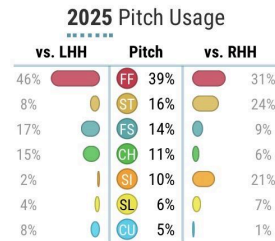
Sunday, March 15

United States vs. Dominican Republic, 8 ET, loanDepot Park

UPCOMING PITCHERS

United States vs. Dominican Republic: RHP Paul Skenes vs. RHP Luis Severino

- Selected first overall in the 2023 MLB Draft by the Pittsburgh Pirates.. made Major League debut with Pittsburgh in 2024... named National League Rookie of the Year in 2024 after an All-Star season in which he went 11-3 with a 1.96 ERA in 23 starts...won the 2025 National League Cy Young Award after another All-Star campaign...enters the 2026 season with a career 21-13 record and a 1.96 ERA with 386 strikeouts in 320.2 innings of work. Baseball Savant page [LINK](#)



- Competing in his first World Baseball Classic... career 73-55, 3.92 ERA (1072.0IP, 467ER) with 1,073 strikeouts in 201 games (182 starts) with two complete games in past of 10 season with the New York Yankees, New York Mets and Athletic....is a two-time All-Star (2017, 18)...has pitched in the Postseason in six of his nine seasons and is 2-5 with a 4.62 ERA in 14 games, including 13 starts. 2025: Went 8-11, 4.54ERA (162.21P, 82ER) with 124 strikeouts in 29 starts... made his MLB debut on August 5, 2015 vs. Boston.. signed by the New York Yankees as a non-drafted free agent, December 26, 2011...native from Sabana de la Mar, Dominican Republic. Baseball Savant page [LINK](#)



QUICK FUN FACT CORNER!

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

Tonight's matchup

Friday night's USA / DR starting lineups plus today's SPs: 17 players who have already been All-Stars

That would be the most All-Stars (in career entering that WBC) starting in a WBC semifinal or final, surpassing the 11 in 2017 USA / Puerto Rico final

h/t Brian Murphy

Leadoff homer Saturday

-We just got leadoff home runs from Ronald Acuña Jr. and Shohei Ohtani, each of whom has won MVP

No game in MLB history has featured leadoff homers from two players who had already won MVP in their careers

h/t @EliasSports

-Shohei Ohtani's leadoff HR is the 14th in WBC history, joining:

3/14/26 VEN Ronald Acuña Jr. (same gm)

3/14/26 PUR Willi Castro

3/7/26 GBR Nate Eaton
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

-This is the first game in WBC history with two leadoff home runs!!

With Willi Castro earlier, this is the first day with three

There have now been 5 leadoff home runs this WBC, 2 more than in any other edition

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

-Most RBI at single World Baseball Classic:

2023 Masataka Yoshida, JPN: 13
2017 Wladimir Balentien, NED: 12
2026 Fernando Tatis Jr., DOM: 11
2026 Bo Gyeong Moon, KOR: 11
2023 Trea Turner, USA: 11
2009 Taekyun Kim, KOR: 11

Homer happy

-We are up to 92 home runs this WBC (through Weds)

That's the most in a single World Baseball Classic

Previously: 85 in 2023 and 2009

-Most home runs in a single World Baseball Classic:

2026 DOM 14
2009 MEX 14
2009 VEN 13
2026 ITA 12
2023 USA 12
2009 USA 12

-There have now been six games this WBC where a team hit 4+ home runs

That's the most in a single tournament (previously 2009 (4))

The Dominican Republic is the first team to do it twice in a single WBC

-There have now been 8 individual multi-homer games this WBC

That's the most in a single WBC, prior record was 6 in 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:

3/13/26 DOM Austin Wells
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 the first Saturday

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

-Entering that 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

Scoreless

-There have already been 10 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

-Fastest pitches, last 2 WBCs (tracking history):

3/13/26 Mason Miller: 102.4 mph
3/13/26 Mason Miller: 102.4 mph
3/13/26 Mason Miller: 102.4 mph
3/13/26 Mason Miller: 102.1 mph
3/13/26 Mason Miller: 102.1 mph
3/10/26 Mason Miller: 102.1 mph
3/13/26 Mason Miller: 102.0 mph
3/16/23 Shohei Ohtani: 102.0 mph
3/11/23 Guillo Zuniga: 102.0 mph

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

-Drew 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

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).

POWER PITCHING: U.S. pitchers have struck out 68 batters in 45.0 innings on the mound at the World Baseball Classic, more than any other nation. The 68 punch outs set a Team USA WBC record in that category, as the stars and stripes previous best was 64 in the 2017 Classic.

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.

YESTERDAY'S NEWS: The Azzurri defeated Mexico, 9-1, in their final game of pool play on Wednesday at Daikin Park and advanced to the Quarterfinal round of the 2026 WBC as winners of Pool B. RHP Aaron Nola (5.0IP, 4H, OR/ER, 1BB, 5K 69P/45S) started and earned the win. 1B Vinnie Pasquantino (3-for-4, 3R, 3HR, 3RBI, 1BB) recorded a 3HR game, hitting a solo shot in the first inning, a solo HR in the sixth inning, and a solo homer in the eighth inning. 2B Jon Berti (2-for-3, 1R, 1HR, 1 RBI, 1BB) hit a solo HR in the fourth inning. 3B Andrew Fischer (1-for-4, 1 double, 1KBI) hit an RBI double in the eighth inning. RHP Gabriele Quattrini (1.1IP, OH, OR/ER, THP (17P/9S) who was born in Potenza Picena, in the Marche Region of Italy, tossed 1.1IP scoreless innings in relief.

KNOWN TERRITORY: Wednesday's victory against Mexico clinched Italy's third appearance in the WBC Quarterfinals (also 2013 and '23).

PASQUATCH FOR THREE: 1B Vinnie Pasquantino's (3-for-4, 3R, 3HR, 3RBI, 1BB) 3HR game in Wednesday night's victory against Mexico marked the first three-homer game in World Baseball Classic history. Pasquantino's historic performance also moved him into a tie for first in Italy's all-time home run list.

ESPRESSO SHOTS: The Azzurri have hit 12 home runs through their first four games of the 2026 World Baseball Classic, tying 2009 Team Mexico for the second-most home runs through the first four games of a single WBC, trailing only the 2026 Team Dominican Republic (13HR) [credit: Elias].

- Also matched its WBC single-game-high against Mexico with 4HR (also 4HR vs. Mexico on 3/9/17).

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 Azzurro 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.

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.

BACK TO QUARTERFINALS: Team Venezuela reaches Quarter Finals for second WBC in a row. Previously, the Vinotinto clicked the ticket in 2023 after finishing undefeated the first round. Facing Team USA in an exciting match, Venezuela held the lead until the top of the eighth inning when Trea Turner hit a grand slam to give USA the lead and later the win.

- Venezuela has reached second round (round robin style) in the 2006, 2009, and 2017 contests.
- In the first round in 2026, Venezuela defeated NED 6-2, ISR 11-3, NIC 4-0, and fell against the DR 7-5, to earn a spot in the quarter finals.
- In the first round of WBC 2026, the Vinotinto collectively outscored its rivals in the following stats: BA .278 vs. .218, R 26 vs. 12, H 37 vs. 29, TB 59 vs. 50, 2B 7 vs. 1, RBI 25 vs. 12, BB 19 vs. 9, SB 7 vs. 0, OBP .365 vs. .281, SLG .444 vs. .376, OPS .809 vs. .657, ERA 2.75 vs. 6.09, SHO 1 vs. 0, HLD 4 vs. 0, IP 36.0 vs. 34.0, ER 11 vs. 23, BB 9 vs. 19, SO 36 vs. 22, W 3 vs. 1.

LUIS THE MENACE: IF Luis Arráez ended up putting his name among the top on the offensive categories in the first round of WBC 2026. Luis was a driving force within the Vinotinto lineup, as numbers show: 6 XBH (1st), 17 TB (1st), 7 H (T-1st), 4 2B (T-1st), 9 RBI (2nd), 6 R (T-2nd), 1.214 SLG (6th), 1.743 OPS (8th). And let's not forget that a couple days ago he became the only hitter in WBC history to collect at least two career multi-homer games.

- SS Ezequiel Durán hit for .600 AVG (5th), .667 OBP (6th). OF Ronald Acuña Jr. scored 8 runs (1st), drew 6 BB (2nd).
- On the pitching side, RHP José Buttó held his rivals to hit for .000 (1st) and had 0.00 WHIP (1ST). LHP Enmanuel De Jesus had 8 SO, all in the same outing (T-3rd), and 0.40 WHIP (6th).

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 García: .667 (2-3), one run scored.

Ezequiel Tovar: .400 (2-5).

UN AÑO 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 García (3.8.2006 vs. Italy), RHP Luis García (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 loanDepot 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 Rodríguez (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 5 Recap: On March 13, the Dominican Republic shutout Korea 10-0 via knockout, to improve its overall tournament record to 5-0. The deciding blow came from the bat of C Austin Wells who lifted a 3-run home run in the bottom of the 7th inning to complete the knockout and secure the win. LHP Cristopher Sánchez threw 5.0 scoreless innings, allowing 2 H and 1 BB, while striking out eight batters on 63 pitches to earn his first win of the tournament. With his performance, Sánchez became just the second Dominican-born pitcher to strike-out 8+ batters in a WBC game (also Ubaldo Jimenez, struck out 10 batters on 3/9/2009 vs. Netherlands).

Fiesta de Jonron: The Dominican Republic enters today's contest having totaled 14 home runs in the tournament, tying Mexico (14 in 2009) for the most ever in a single World Baseball Classic.

Game 4 Recap: The Dominican Republic improved its record to 4-0 in the 2026 World Baseball Classic with in a hard-fought 7-5 win over Venezuela. OF Juan Soto started the scoring off early, launching a 2-run home run to give D.R. a 2-0 lead in the first inning. After Venezuela responded with a run in the bottom of the first, 2B Ketel Marte and 1B Vladimir Guerrero Jr. both add respective solo shots in the top of the 2nd inning to make the lead 4-1. With two on and two outs with the D.R. up by one run in the 4th inning, OF Fernando Tatis lifted a 3-run home run to left field to give D.R. a 7-4 lead. For Tatis, it was his second consecutive game with a home run (last: a grand slam on 3/9 vs. Israel). He has logged an 9-RBI over the last two games. On the mound, Dominican Republic started RHP Sandy Alcantara earned the win tossing 3.0 IP, allowing 5 H, 3 ER, and 2 BB, while striking out 3. RHP Elvis Alvarado earned the first save of the tournament for D.R. getting out of a bases loaded jam in the 9th inning.

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.

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.

THE VENUE

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.

Team USA: John Blundell (john.blundell@mlb.com)

Team Italy: Jason Zillo (jzillo@yankees.com)

Team Venezuela: Carlos Guillen (carlos.guillen@tigers.com)

Team Dominican Republic: Daveson Perez (dperez@redsox.com) and Elvis Martinez (emartinez@raysbaseball.com)

Upcoming Press Schedules

Please see the links below by venue. All schedules subject to change

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

Miami, Florida — loanDepot Park

West Plaza Ticket Windows 1-2 (next to Team Shop)

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>

