

World Baseball Classic: Pool D - Nicaragua vs Puerto Rico

Friday, 10 March, 2023

Miami, Florida, USA

LoanDepot Park

Team Puerto Rico

Francisco Lindor

Javier Baez

Marcus Stroman

Workout Day Press Conference



Delgado. Is he right? Do you identify yourself with that since you played in this practice in the fourth spot?

JAVIER BAEZ: It's Yadier's decision. It's Yadier's decision. I don't know if I'm going to be the fourth or the fifth hitter or ninth. It doesn't matter to me. I have been in different positions in the lineup, and wherever the manager puts me, I will be there.

Q. Francisco, I wanted to talk to David Ortiz, and he said he didn't like the Dominican Republic to be considered the favorite or as a dream team, things like that. You as baseball players, how do you see this? Do you prefer favorite to be considered the other team or what?

FRANCISCO LINDOR: We are not saying that we are the favorite team. We are going to show the world what we can do. We are here to play the game at the highest level, so we are moving forward. If someone says that about us, okay. If they don't, okay. We continue.

Q. Marcus, what has this meant for you to participate with the team, team Puerto Rico for your first time, to represent your raices, your roots?

MARCUS STROMAN: It's been amazing. Obviously, my mother is my best friend, so to be able to go out there and represent her means the world to me.

Being able to play with guys like Lindor, Baez truly two of my favorite players that I have ever been around when I was in New York. It just feels right. It just feels right. I feel like we have similar personalities, similar swag, similar on-field confidence. I feel like that confidence just kind of oozes from each person on this team. I'm excited to go out there and compete with these guys.

FRANCISCO LINDOR: I'm glad Stroman's mom is Puerto Rican (laughter).

Q. Javier, Carlos Delgado mentioned yesterday in Puerto Rico that Puerto Rico didn't have on their roster a good clean-up hitter. Yadier, made a comment on Instagram, about the comment made by Carlos

Q. Marcus, what does this mean for you to face Nicaragua? The first thoughts that you have about Nicaragua that you will face tomorrow? What do you think about that country that maybe you don't know too much to face tomorrow?

MARCUS STROMAN: I take the same approach into every game. I truly pitch off my strengths, off my confidence. I'm never too worried about who is in the box. I have an unbelievable catcher in Maldonado behind the plate, so I'm excited. He has been someone I've been looking forward to competing with and going out there and kind of strategically going through batters, and like I say, he has an unbelievable feel for everything when it comes to catching.

I'm going to go off him and pitch off my strengths.

Q. Paquito, you were chosen captain of the team. What's the message to the Boricua fans? Some of them are concerned after these two practice games that you played.

FRANCISCO LINDOR: Continue supporting us. Continue supporting us. These are the most important games, the ones that we are going to play now. We are going to have some ups and downs, but we are confident to win, and this is our goal. To win, to go to the second round, to win, and to continue all the way to the final.

Come to the games. Thank you for coming to the games. It was great. The music they played. It was awesome, impressive. We are happy. We are very excited. Continue supporting us. United we are stronger.

Q. Francisco, how is it different playing for Yadi, the



manager rather than having Yadi as your teammate for the last several of these?

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FRANCISCO LINDOR: The difference was Yadi would -- by the time we got to the field last time, Yadi was soaked in sweat. He had two workouts in, and then he disappeared, and then game time it was -- Yadi was game on. I haven't seen Yadi in full manager side, but I'm looking forward to it.

He definitely has the caliber to be a good manager. He listens to a lot of what we have to say, and as of right now, he looks like a player's manager. I'm looking forward to it. I'm looking forward to this experience. Yadi definitely has those two faces, so he is different. Yadi, game mode is a completely different Yadi than what we've seen so far.

Q. Javier, what are the strengths of the Puerto Rican team compared to the previous two editions where the team made it to the final of this tournament?

JAVIER BAEZ: Actually, the communication that we have, the union we have in the team, the way we play baseball and actually the communication we have. We enjoyed what we do in the clubhouse in 2017. We were younger, of course, and now we're more experienced, we're more veterans. We are supporting the young players. We want them to be themselves out there on the field. We are all very happy. It's about them.

And we are going to have fun. We are going to enjoy this. This is the most important thing.

Q. In reference to playing in Miami, what does it mean to you all to play in a place with such a large Puerto Rican community, in a place as well where a lot of people from Puerto Rico can come and see you play? What does it mean to be representing Puerto Rico in Miami?

FRANCISCO LINDOR: It means the world. It means the world. Whenever you hear the pleneros, whenever you see the flag all around the field, usually when I come here with the Mets, I see a lot of flags, but now it's completely different. It's a whole different vibe.

Whenever your teammates -- he said it. We all have similar backgrounds. We all do something that's like each other. It's truly one of the greatest experiences whenever you can listen to the same music, whenever you can relate on something like, oh, that makes sense why he does that. Oh, that makes sense why he walks the way he walks.

It's so different. It's in our blood. It's in our DNA. To me it's the greatest event.