

World Baseball Classic: Pool D - Nicaragua vs Puerto Rico

Saturday, 11 March, 2023

Miami, Florida, USA

LoanDepot Park

Team Nicaragua

Melvin Novoa

Pregame Press Conference

Q. Sandor said it was not an easy task to select the players for this Classic, but as a player, what's the feeling of yours as a team, the brotherhood in the team, and the expectations you have? As Sandor said, many said that we are the underdog in the pool, but would one victory be the minimum goal of Nicaragua for this Classic?

MELVIN NOVOA: We are all very motivated and excited to start this game. For the manager and for the staff it's a difficult task to make the lineup, but we have to thank them for this opportunity and the confidence they put in us.

No, we are not the favorite in this pool, but we have a positive mindset. We are optimistic, and we are going to do our best. We are united, and that's key as a team, and we are going to give everything on the field.

Q. Greetings from the Dominican Republic. How do you see the Nicaraguan pitchers? How was the warm-up process, and at the same time, does it matter being the favorite or underdog because baseball is unpredictable?

MELVIN NOVOA: Yes, we have very good communication. We have game plans for each pitcher. We have talked a lot about the teams we are going to face. We tried to study all the hitters. We have a very good plan for today. Before the game we had a meeting early today. We are going to stress communication and the plan that we put together to win this game.

Q. No one considered Nicaragua the favorite in this pool, but Nicaragua has always played baseball. Baseball is unpredictable, as we all know. What should Nicaragua do in order to advance to the next round? What would be the strength of the team, hitting, pitching? What do you think?

MELVIN NOVOA: A very important strength is the union



as a team to work together, to play with the fundamentals, and to compete and to have fun in the game with no pressure and to do our best, give 100%, to do what we know to do.

Q. In the preparation phase we saw on the box score against Max Scherzer it said Mets 0, Nicaragua 2. Versus the St. Louis Cardinals, Nicaragua was six outs away from victory. So there's no way to see Nicaragua as a team that is going to be dominated in this WBC. What's the mindset of the players after those two practice games?

MELVIN NOVOA: There was a transformation in the mind of the players. Those practice games were key, you know, because now we are more confident. We were able to test the level of our game versus the Mets and Cardinals. Great games, yes. We are now more confident as a team, as a group.

Puerto Rico and the other teams of the pool are very strong teams. We are going to do our best. We are not going to be an easy team to beat, and they are going to do their best. We are going to try to give a good show to the fans here in the ballpark, play 100% and we have this positive mindset, like I said before.

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