

# World Baseball Classic: Pool D - Dominican Republic vs Nicaragua

Monday, 13 March, 2023

Miami, Florida, USA

LoanDepot Park

## Team Dominican Republic

## Manny Machado

## Juan Soto

### Postgame Press Conference

Dominican Republic - 6, Nicaragua - 1

**Q. Greetings, Manny. Good afternoon, and congrats for the victory. You're the only ones that hit homers today. How does that feel to be the first ones hitting the homers? Could this be a preview of the San Diego Padres season? Can you speak about that, please?**

MANNY MACHADO: We are hoping for that. We're expecting that. Thank God that we got the victory today. We needed it. We played well as a team. We hit some home runs homers today, but we have to continue playing the way we were doing today.

**Q. I saw you with a lot of enthusiasm. I couldn't believe it. You were enjoying what you were doing. You were on base three times, and Manny Machado almost hit two homers.**

JUAN SOTO: Every time I wear my uniform, I feel happy to represent my country. No matter against whom, I'm always out there enjoying every time, every second. That's the way I play. Everything went well on our side.

We got the victory that we needed, but I'm always trying to enjoy the game.

**Q. (Off microphone).**

MANNY MACHADO: Yes, I have to go to the gym after this.

**Q. I heard you were just a few plátanos away from hitting a home run. For both of you, who snuck back into the locker room to actually eat some plátanos and be able to get those home runs in the game?**



MANNY MACHADO: I should have. I was two innings too late or three innings too late. No, man, it's fun hitting home runs in the Classic. The environment that was there today was unbelievable. They've been bringing the energy every single day the last two days, and it's been awesome to play in front of them and in front of this home crowd.

**Q. Juan, you were very good at the plate and also running the bases. Rodney said you wouldn't be in the lineup tomorrow because of your organization. Can you work on that because you are playing so well and the way you are feeling?**

JUAN SOTO: First of all, yes, I'm feeling great. I'm feeling excellent. We had a great game today. I ran a lot.

I have tried. They gave me the authorization, but bottom line, at the end of the day they need me to be healthy for the season. So I tried to convince them, and they told me the best thing was to do it like that, but in the future we'll try to continue playing for the country.

**Q. We speak a lot about the game versus the Puerto Rico team on Wednesday. What are you expecting about that game knowing the rivalry between both countries?**

MANNY MACHADO: It's going to be a great game, but we have to think about tomorrow's game first. They have a great team, and we'll have to win both games. Tomorrow we are going to play the way we did today.

**Q. You had a great combination the first inning. Soto tried to steal a base, knowing your restrictions. Is that important for you?**

JUAN SOTO: Yes, to me that was very important. We needed the run. I always trust Manny. I know that he wouldn't miss a swing. They said that I should stop, that I shouldn't continue, but I trusted him. Then he hit the ball. The center fielder made a great play, however, but my mindset was to score no matter what.

**Q. You are great stars. People expect a lot from you, especially the Dominican people. Can you speak about dealing with that pressure? To Machado,**



**congrats for the home runs. We have to congratulate the guy in centerfield because he made a great play, and you as well.**

MANNY MACHADO: Yes, that center fielder had a great game today. Two great plays. But mentally speaking, we are playing pitch by pitch, out by out, and the game is not going to change.

It was a very important game today, but we played like that. Out after out, pitchers were great today. We were able to score the runs we needed.

**Q. Four very good at-bats, one homer. Did you do anything special for today's game, physically speaking? And the question for Soto, that celebration with the presidential sash, can you tell us a little bit about that?**

MANNY MACHADO: No, the same thing that I always do. We are in Spring Training. We are going to prepare ourselves for the season, but for this tournament as well I had the same routine.

JUAN SOTO: Oh, about the celebration with the presidential sash, we are all ambassadors of the Dominican Republic. So we celebrated like that, like an ambassador.

**Q. Would you tell the story about the presidential sash, like how did that happen, and whose idea it was? If you can, obviously, answer also for the Spanish media. Whose idea it was? Who got it? Did you steal it from the Dominican president when he was here?**

MANNY MACHADO: Nellie brought it out, and he said this is what we're going to do when we hit a home run. Obviously, we didn't hit one the first day. It took us a little bit to get one in there, but it started that day from the beginning.

JUAN SOTO: It's very difficult to steal the presidential sash when the president was here, but we borrowed it. Nelson brought that. That was a new celebration in the team. Thank God we could do it today, and we enjoyed that moment.

**Q. Can you speak about the at-bat when you hit the home runs, from on deck wearing the presidential sash?**

JUAN SOTO: The pitcher had pitched for several innings, and the guys had told me about the pitches he was throwing, his movement, et cetera. So I anticipated the play. I made a step ahead, and I tried to hit the ball before

the ball broke. He was not very fast. I was expecting that pitch, and I was successful. I hit the ball.

The run was great, you know. Getting to the base, the reaction of the crowd was a great experience. I wouldn't change it for anything.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports