

World Baseball Classic: Pool D - Nicaragua vs Venezuela

Tuesday, 14 March, 2023

Miami, Florida, USA

LoanDepot Park

Team Nicaragua

Duque Hebbert

Pregame Press Conference

Q. How was the call after the game? Did you talk to your mom? What did you tell her? How was her reaction?

DUQUE HEBBERT: Well, my mom and my grandma were watching the game. My mom was busy. My grandma as well. I mean, they were not watching the game, but the rest of the family was watching the game, and they told them about the game, and I called my mom, my grandma.

I cried because I was emotional. My family is proud of me.

Q. Congrats for your performance yesterday with the national team. Actually, you were famous wearing our jersey. How many times have you seen the video?

DUQUE HEBBERT: Orlando Valle told me today that he had received so many calls.

Q. How many calls have you received? Can you make a comment of where you come from because I read today, you were a fisherman until recently until you became a pitcher.

DUQUE HEBBERT: Like I said, the team I play for, their name is Pescadores. We are known as pescadores, fishermen. We have a beautiful culture, multi-cultural with several dialects, and I'm Miskito, I represent my people. I'm very proud for that.

I have received, yes, many calls, and I haven't slept. Deep emotions. I have seen the video many, many times.

Q. Have any other organization approach you to offer a contract?

DUQUE HEBBERT: No, only (Luis) Molina. I have heard some rumors that other people were there, but no one talked to me. Only Luis Molina after the inning talked to me because he had seen me pitching versus the St. Louis



Cardinals, and he told me that I had potential, that I should continue working and have a good outing, and he could give me an opportunity, and I did it. We are in the process.

Q. For your culture, for your people, can you say in Miskito what you are feeling right now after the great performance you had yesterday?

DUQUE HEBBERT: (Speaking in Miskito).

What I said is, I thank them, and I send my blessings for following me, for supporting me, for being there always for me. You that have always supported me in the bad and good times.

Q. I would like to congratulate you. In what stage of your career do you think you are to get this opportunity? What pitches did you throw yesterday to strike out those hitters?

DUQUE HEBBERT: I always wanted to sign to be part of an organization. I had this opportunity. It's a great process. It's been a great experience.

And the pitches that I used was a changeup and sinker. That's what brought me here to the Nicaraguan team because I played with Tren del Norte, and I did my best, and I was disciplined, and I was Rookie of the Year with them, and that's why the manager and the coaches selected me to be here.

Q. Congrats again, Duque. I understand that there was an emotional moment when you got to the bus and you learned about Detroit Tigers approaching you. How did you feel at that time?

DUQUE HEBBERT: My team knows that I'm humble, that I did my best to develop my career. It was a very happy moment for me, for my family. They all know that I work, that I'm a disciplined guy.

Q. Duque, you were asked about how many times you had seen the video, but it was viral. On your IG account many fans of the Dominican Republic made comments. Do you have the notifications? Have you seen the comments by the Dominican fans?



DUQUE HEBBERT: No, I haven't seen that yet. I mean, there are so many emotions that I'm feeling. I haven't seen it myself on social media. I'm focused on what I am doing, and maybe when I have free time, then I will get onto social media and see the video again.

Q. I want to know who taught you the changeup?

DUQUE HEBBERT: Well, it's a long process. I learned how to throw changeups from my friend. He gave me the opportunity to get into the academy. He taught me a lot.

But the one who helped me to improve the pitch is Leonardo Crawford. He also comes from Puerto Cabezas. When I made it to the professional league, Julio Raudez told me that my main pitch was the changeup. And also, Anibal Vega, he gave me the opportunity to join Tren del Norte. He told me, believe in yourself, everything can go well for you if you trust yourself.

Q. We saw a picture with Juan Soto. Who looked to take the picture, you or him?

DUQUE HEBBERT: I did.

Q. What did he tell you? Were you able to speak a little bit?

DUQUE HEBBERT: No, he just told me, good job, continue working like that.

Thank you.

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