

World Baseball Classic: Pool D - Israel vs Dominican Republic

Tuesday, 14 March, 2023

Miami, Florida, USA

LoanDepot Park

Team Israel

Ian Kinsler

Postgame Press Conference

Dominican Republic-10, Israel-0

Q. What did you see in Jacob Steinmetz in the last week or so that made you think he could start tonight, and what did you make of his performance?

IAN KINSLER: You saw the talent that he has tonight. It's a good experience for him. It's the loudest environment he is ever going to pitch in. He is a young age right now. He is still learning. So that's really going to help him moving forward.

But, you know, stuff-wise, he really showed up. He was able to calm himself down, keep his composure and throw the ball well against an obviously all-star lineup. I think it was a big confidence-builder for him.

Q. Off of that question, did he have any restrictions? Because I know you took him out in the first inning, and he had struck out Machado, Peña, and Sanchez.

IAN KINSLER: Yeah, I took him out in the second inning. He had a pitch count. He is still a young pitcher. The Diamondbacks just invested some money into him. I think a third-rounder or second-rounder, something like that. You know, we want to get him back. Obviously, enjoy the experience and learn from this, but also get him back healthy.

Q. What did you think about the players from the Dominican Republic?

IAN KINSLER: I've played against a lot of those players in the past, with some of them. You know, this tournament is special for the WBC when these guys get together with their country. It seems like they go to another level.

They played a great game tonight, and a tough team to beat.



Q. Any plan for starting pitcher tomorrow?

IAN KINSLER: Robert Stock will start for us tomorrow.

Q. With Israel eliminated, but with a game tomorrow versus Venezuela, what is the plan for tomorrow?

IAN KINSLER: Well, we're starting Robert Stock, so that's part of the plan. The other plan would be to get runners on base. You know, the last two games we've struggled offensively to get anything going, so that's something we need to do if we're going to win tomorrow.

Q. Your last time you faced Dominican was in the Olympics, and then it was a more competitive game. They didn't have their superstar lineup. What was the difference between then and now? How do you feel also about facing your former teammate Nelson Cruz? And can you talk a little bit about the strategic cooperation, which you signed on today with Dominican, the event you had today?

IAN KINSLER: Yeah, you answered the first part of your question. The second part of your question was what? Because you asked me three questions.

Q. (Off microphone).

IAN KINSLER: Him and Robinson Canó got huge ovations. They've been part of this tournament for a long time playing for their countries. You obviously see the reaction of the people when they get to pinch-hit or get to play. That was a lot of fun to see. Nothing but respect for those guys.

Today we had a little white rose ceremony. I don't know if you guys saw it on the scoreboard in the middle of the game, but, you know, just a friendly gathering to recognize the relationship between Israel and Dominican, and what has been happening with baseball with the Dominicans' help, trying to foster baseball in Israel and help grow it. So it's been a great relationship, and hopefully it continues to grow.

Q. With Nicaragua's loss earlier today, Israel will probably be in the next WBC in 2026. Obviously, your



focus is the current tournament, but what does that accomplishment mean to the team knowing that there is a future for Israel baseball on this stage?

IAN KINSLER: Yeah, I think that's big. We will be in the next tournament, and that's big for the organization because the qualifiers -- MLB doesn't represent the qualifying tournaments. They don't put you in nice hotels and get all the buses and put you in a big league ballpark in Miami, so the qualifiers cost the association a lot of money.

So to be able to skip that and qualify for the WBC is big for us.

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