

World Baseball Classic: Pool D - Puerto Rico vs Dominican Republic

Wednesday, 15 March, 2023

Miami, Florida, USA

LoanDepot Park

Team Puerto Rico

Francisco Lindor

Pregame Press Conference

Q. Lindor, first question for you, today it's win or go home game. What have you discussed in the clubhouse? If you lose, you go home. If you win, you move on.

FRANCISCO LINDOR: We're united and focused on the day, like you said, it is a decisive game for us. But at the end of the day, the most important thing is that we do our best. Go out and to compete at the highest level. We have to be united. If we help each other and if we do our job, we're going to be okay.

Q. The Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, every time you play it's a classic, especially in baseball. Is there something additional to face the Dominican Republic rivals in this tournament?

FRANCISCO LINDOR: We are brothers in the Caribbean. That rivalry always existed. That competition always existed. It's a pride to share the field with the Dominican Republic brothers.

The most important thing today is that the fans come to the ballpark and have fun. Have fun. This is going to be a very, very, very important game for the history of the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. This game is going to be spoken about in the next 30 years, even when I'm no longer here. That would be a great dream. To me that's extremely important.

Q. Yadier Molina said that he had a meeting with you and he talked to you. Can you share what he told you?

FRANCISCO LINDOR: No. (Laughter.) It's a secret. Little secret.

Q. You're going to be facing Cueto, a veteran. You have faced him. What do you think about this opponent as a pitcher?



FRANCISCO LINDOR: He's a veteran, he's been competing for a long time. Yes, I have faced him and he's a very good pitcher.

Q. A follow-up question about the rivalry between the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico in baseball. Puerto Rico has been paralyzed for one week, but especially today because the Dominican Republic community in Puerto Rico is huge. Do you have a message for these Dominican fans in Puerto Rico and the Puerto Rican fans?

FRANCISCO LINDOR: My people, Dominicans and Puerto Rican fans, we're going to have fun today. Let's have fun today in a healthy way. We're going to set an example to these children on how to have fun in an event such as today's. And in Puerto Rico, you can bring all the music, instruments, drums, bring everything to the streets because we're going to have fun today in both islands.

Q. My question was asked previously. How about Cueto, the starting pitcher today. You know him. But the relievers on the Dominican team are a mix of veterans and younger pitchers such as Cabrera, for example, among others. How is the offense from Puerto Rico, that has been performing very well, how are you feeling facing that pitching?

FRANCISCO LINDOR: Yeah, we have had a good pitching performance in this Classic. Dominican pitchers are great. They play very well in the majors. I think the whole roster is in the big leagues. They have a very good team. But Puerto Rico has also a very good team. It's going to be a great game and God willing we're going to be successful.

Q. You spoke about Dominican brothers, when you spoke about the brotherhood between the Boricuas and the Dominicans. When the Dominican Republic beat Puerto Rico, after the game you hugged each other. Can we see something similar today no matter who wins?

FRANCISCO LINDOR: I don't see why not. I get along with all the people that I know. It's a huge game and once



again this is not only for us but for the countries we come from and for the youth. There will be Puerto Rican shortstops that are growing up and I know he will be here and he will be a captain of the team. So I have to do my best so that that child grows up and knows how to behave on the field.

Q. When you saw the change of rules for the second round to the sudden death, is it more complicated, easier or what?

FRANCISCO LINDOR: I like it. I like it because the game is going to be more intense, you know? The Classic for me is a playoff every day. But when we play with this sudden death rule, we have to be more intense.

Q. The crowd will be full today. Do you think it will have an influence on the Puerto Rico team?

FRANCISCO LINDOR: It influences a lot. We play for them. Since we were little children we took all the instruments to the games and we heard our parents and families singing those songs.

Q. On March 15, 2006 Puerto Rico lost versus Cuba in the second round. Today it's March 15th. Is that pressure for you? Being the same date?

FRANCISCO LINDOR: On March 15th I didn't care about anything.

Q. Does the team know that it's the same date?

FRANCISCO LINDOR: When was it, 2006? I was, what? 19. No, brother, it's a new day. Come on. No, no, forget about it. I'm not superstitious, so I don't think about that. I didn't know there was a Classic in 2006.

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