

World Baseball Classic: Final - USA vs Japan

Tuesday, 21 March, 2023

Miami, Florida, USA

LoanDepot Park

Team USA

Tim Anderson

Kyle Schwarber

Pregame Press Conference



TIM ANDERSON: Just really getting a chance to know these guys, also build a relationship with guys throughout other organizations, and also get a chance to see how they go about their business. Get to steal a few pointers from them, and also just learn how to be great because I'm around a bunch of guys that's great. So it's -- it feels great to be right in the mix with 'em.

KYLE SCHWARBER: Yeah, being able to be teammates with some of the best players in the game now and seeing the way that they work, seeing the way that they are as people, not just as competitors, I think that's been the fun thing. Obviously, we all kind of have a hint of how we are on the field, being able to play against each other pretty much throughout the whole year. But now when you're here, you see the way people prepare, the way that they're treating each other and the way that we're getting ready to go out there and strap it on. That's all you ask for. It's been a lot of fun.

THE MODERATOR: All right. We'll welcome Tim Anderson and Kyle Schwarber. Who has the first question?

Q. For either Kyle or Tim, or both, whatever. I'm wondering just -- there's been a lot of talk about just the passion from the fans throughout this tournament, and I'm wondering from you guys, what's been your sense to just how much this means to the players, and have you seen that sentiment kind of evolve as this tournament has gone on?

TIM ANDERSON: Yeah, you can see just from the way that we're playing, just bringing the energy, as you see the other night, Trea hitting the homer, when guys hit doubles. But just overall, it brings a lot of passion, brings a lot of energy, and I think this is helping the game grow for sure.

KYLE SCHWARBER: Yeah, this is kind of our Olympics. We don't get that opportunity to really play wherever the Olympics are at. So for us to represent our country and to see the way that, one, the fans have been reacting in our games to where you know what, this is playoffs before the season even starts. It's a great atmosphere for everyone, it's a great atmosphere for us as players, and this is the atmosphere that we all love to thrive in and be in. So it's great to be able to play against all different kinds of competition.

So it's been a lot of fun and the passion has been there throughout this whole tournament for us. I think it's been -- like Tim said, it's great for the game of baseball.

Q. What has this experience been like for both of you, coming into this team as players from different teams around the league, but then becoming true teammates during this tournament?

Q. Kyle, for someone who has won a huge World Series for the city of Chicago, someone who just played in one, what would winning a WBC championship mean?

KYLE SCHWARBER: Yeah, I mean, it's been kind of one of those bucket list items, being able to play in this and getting to experience it, and this is something that you want to continue to play in. Getting to the finals and seeing the way that the atmosphere's been, it's very relatable. Definitely different. It's definitely different from the World Series, but I think it's special in its own right, and that's something cool as well because this is a completely different experience that -- you're not experiencing some environments as you would be if you were playing Venezuela, Mexico, in the Big Leagues than you are right now. It's been really fun and exciting to be in those atmosphere.

And to be able to win this, I mean, I can't tell you now, we got to go out there and do it, but hopefully after, I can tell you what it means.

Q. Two quick ones for you: First, obviously, the atmosphere here is different and the intensity is different. So you have that. But when you come down



from this, win or lose, in a day or two, how do you feel going into the season about the quantity of the at-bats you have had? It's probably fewer than you might have had otherwise. And just kind of how do you feel about being ready for the season?

KYLE SCHWARBER: Yeah, I think we all kind of talked about this. This is like the best at-bats that you could ever get before a season. You're not really tiptoeing your way through a Spring Training at-bat. You're coming in, and it's competing, it's time to win. It's kind of like that regular season where you know what? You're getting your work done in the cage and you're competing in the game. There's no really trying to work on things in a Spring Training at-bat than you are right now. This is straight competition, go out there, compete, and the best man wins. So I don't feel like the quantity is a problem because I would say everyone's got really good quality.

Q. Also just wondering if you've heard from Bryce in the last two weeks?

KYLE SCHWARBER: Yeah, you know, I haven't got to. But I got to catch up with him before he showed up to camp. Heard everything's going well and looking forward to getting back there.

Q. For both of you, nobody doubts the passion and the engagement of any of the players who have committed to the WBC since 2006. So that's really not a question. But what do you have to say to the fans who don't get it, who think this is a distraction, that they don't need?

TIM ANDERSON: Really don't have a whole lot. Besides just, you know, just really watch and you can see the passion and you can see the energy and you can see what it really means to certain guys to go out there and put on that uniform for their country. But I think this is huge. This is huge. You're playing for the world. So it's huge for me, for sure.

KYLE SCHWARBER: Yeah, I think a lot of those people probably aren't here at the game watching the game. So, everyone's entitled to an opinion, but at the end of the day the opinions that matter most are probably the players that are out here playing for their countries and the people that are tuning in every single night that root on their country and their team. I'm sure there's a lot of people that are tuning in to all these different games watching, first time getting to watch probably a lot of guys who are playing in Japan getting to play in the United States for the first time, too. So that's a really cool opportunity for a lot of people.

Q. Were you surprised when they announced that

Darvish is not starting and how do you prepare to face a guy that you haven't, you never have faced?

TIM ANDERSON: I really wasn't surprised. We kind of thought that Darvish was going to throw. But we got a lot of report on the guy today. Really nothing to be nervous about. We got a plan, we're going to stick to the plan and see what happens.

Q. Some of the guys that have already left the WBC when the team's eliminated said what a letdown it is now being in spring training camp. Have you guys joked about in the clubhouse, like we still got another week until Opening Day?

TIM ANDERSON: Definitely. I'm definitely soaking up this time and enjoying the moment. Just going to continue to keep enjoying being around these guys until we get back. Just keep having fun.

KYLE SCHWARBER: Last day, so enjoy it. And then go back to your camp and get ready with the boys. So this has been an experience for everyone. I think everyone's been grateful for the experience and we want to try to finish this out strong. Then it's getting back to getting to compete with your teammates and try to get back to the end goal.

Q. A question for Tim. Tim, you're playing a new position, not on some back field in Arizona, but on the biggest stage in the world. How do you explain that you've been able to make that transition so seamlessly and how much pride do you take in that?

TIM ANDERSON: I mean, we had the shift going so I kind of worked over that way a lot throughout the shift. But just a matter of, I'm just one of the guys, just show me what to do and I'll be able to -- I can pick up on things quick. But it's just on the other side of the field, so it's really not too much. It's the same thing, just foot work is a little bit different. But I kind of enjoy it and I'm very thankful for the opportunity and definitely been soaking up every moment of it. Getting a chance to show the world, you know, what I'm capable of.

Q. Kyle, is it really as easy as he makes it sound?

KYLE SCHWARBER: No. (Laughing.) No. I mean, it's definitely not easy changing positions. I think everyone saw that when I was playing in Boston playing, trying to play first base. That sucked. (Laughing.) So it's pretty hard.

THE MODERATOR: Kyle from Waltham, if I remember correctly.



KYLE SCHWARBER: That's right. It ain't easy.
(Laughing.)

Q. Tim, Kyle, congratulations on getting to this point. We've heard from a lot of the players, probably most of the players on Team USA, that you're playing for your family. Is there anybody that's been like specifically on your mind over the last few days?

TIM ANDERSON: I mean, just really my main core, which is my family. They really been on my mind. They have been here with me. So I think that's the right answer, for sure.

KYLE SCHWARBER: Yeah, family members everything like that, all of our men and women who served, family members who have done that. So doing a lot of that for them.

Q. You mentioned before that it's cool for fans to see players who have played abroad and might not have gotten to see yet, like players who have played in Japan. How is it for you all as not only potential future teammates of some of these guys, but also just baseball fans yourselves, to see players who come from like a different background or come with a different set of skills that you might not have seen before?

KYLE SCHWARBER: Yeah, I think that's the exciting thing about this format as well for us is where you'll -- obviously the guys in the Big Leagues we played against each other a lot. We all see each other across the field, play against each other and compete. But to see some of the minor league guys that you might not know, where you're going, wow, this guy's nasty, or this guy's playing really good. Or we see a guy from Japan or whatever it is, Mexico, Dominican, Cuba, like guys who aren't even in professional baseball right now that are back in their countries playing baseball. Like that's exciting. I think that's cool. That's good for the game. It's great for fans to see that too, to see that, you know, it's not just here where there's great baseball, there's great baseball in a lot of places.

TIM ANDERSON: I think he said enough. (Laughing.)

Q. A lot people have been comparing the World Baseball Classic games to the World Series and to the MLB postseason. For both of you, I know Kyle you were just in the World Series. Tim, you were in the postseason in 2021 and 2020. Where does this compare to postseason baseball for Major League Baseball in your minds?

TIM ANDERSON: For me, just from the small sample I do

have, I think this is right there or right above it. I only have a small sample and I can't really speak for a World Series either so I guess this is kind of my World Series for the moment.

KYLE SCHWARBER: Yeah, I mean, I think that's the beautiful thing, right, is that this can mean a lot of different things to a lot different people. For me, like obviously getting to participate in this for the first time, this means a lot, right. It means a lot every time you are in the playoffs and you are in the World Series, but this is something different that it means to me, right. This could mean, like I said, it could mean a lot, something way more different to Tim than it does me. It doesn't change the level of how important this is to us, it just could mean something completely different to everyone, which I think is really cool.

THE MODERATOR: Tim, Kyle, thanks so much for being a part of this tournament. Best of luck tonight.

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