

World Baseball Classic: Pool A - Colombia vs Canada

Saturday, 7 March, 2026

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Hiram Bithorn Stadium

Team Canada

Ernie Whitt

Michael Soroka

Bo Naylor

Owen Caissie

Postgame Press Conference

Canada 8, Colombia 2

Q. Ernie, you talked about playing complete games, playing your style of games. How did that rate the games to what you'd want to see from your team?

ERNIE WHITT: I was happy with the way we played. We grinded some at-bats out, some real good at-bats. Our pitchers threw strikes. That's what we want to do is just -- we had a little hiccup on the ball in center field that we'll clean up and make sure that's taken care of.

It was a good game for us. Again, it was a close game through seven or eight innings.

Q. Michael and Bo, can you guys both describe maybe some of the momentum you felt change with the outs you were able to get on the first bases there in the first couple of innings?

MICHAEL SOROKA: We kind of knew coming in this team was going to run a little bit. They were going to play small ball and push the ball the other way. We talked about this last night and again this morning, and just had to kind of give them a chance. I knew they were going to leave, and I think the three times they did leave the first couple times was on a curveball too.

Bo did a good job getting rid of it and finding those outs, which was huge. So good job.

BO NAYLOR: It's just the team had emphasized taking care of the baseball, taking care of the little things because over the whole game, those things add up, and they make the difference through nine.



It's just a matter of playing the game the right way and continuing to play the game that we know how to play.

Q. Ernie, when were you notified that Julio Teheran would not be starting this ballgame?

ERNIE WHITT: At home plate. The manager apologized. He hurt himself warming up.

Again, sometimes you see in international play the little trickery that goes on, but I wouldn't think that from José. It was honest.

I'd have probably been more upset if they would have changed to a lefty against us at this point in time, but they didn't. Whoever it was they brought in, and we know what we have to do.

Q. Bo, I asked Owen this afterwards. I'd like to ask you. What kind of a challenge is it when you're game planning for one pitcher and they make that switch last minute?

BO NAYLOR: Yeah, in many different parts of the game, there's adjustments that need to be made, and that's just one of them. It's just really being adaptable in any moment and really just trying to minimize ultimately going out there with a plan, understanding what you have, and trying to make the most of it to try to get the best result.

Q. Owen, how did it feel to kind of give your team that early lead like that with the home run? I don't know if you saw the home run, but it landed right in the Canadian flag. Did you notice that at all or see that?

OWEN CAISSIE: No, I didn't notice that. Give the boys a little push start. It never really hurts. And really just get on the board first in these tournaments really matters.

Our game plan was short, but it worked, I guess.

Q. Bo, tell me why playing alongside your brother in a tournament like this representing Canada, what it



means. Ernie, you guys never made it past the first round in the tournament. You guys have a good chance in this one. How do you guys feel how your hopes are?

BO NAYLOR: Playing with Josh, I'm always grateful to be able to share the same side of the field with him in any chance that I get.

Had a little bit in the past with Cleveland, and being able to get that chance again, it's always special. I know the type of leader that he is in the clubhouse. It's always special to be able to see it firsthand and get an up-close view.

He's a great ballplayer, but he's an even better brother. The type of impact that he has on the game and on everyone in that clubhouse, it can't be overstated how much of an impact it is.

Yeah, to be able to call him my brother, to be able to enjoy this game with him, enjoy these moments with him, it's always amazing.

ERNIE WHITT: He's a great teammate. As far as Josh, he's a good leader. He's grown up over the years, and it's been fun watching him. It really has.

And as far as our -- we're very fortunate to have a good schedule. I think we're excited about it. I think it's going to help us out in the long run.

Q. Owen, could you tell me about the experience playing in Puerto Rico, being in the WBC as well, playing in different countries. How much do you enjoy travel to these different countries? And what do you think about Puerto Rico specifically?

OWEN CAISSIE: Playing in the last WBC definitely prepared me for this one. When you walk into a new country, you have to be ready for it, especially a place like Puerto Rico, it's a different atmosphere.

It's crazy to see how many places baseball really takes you. I'm just grateful for it.

Q. Owen, when you see the pressure you guys put on all game for the lineup, what do you think of how that allows the offense to play and eventually get to damage.

OWEN CAISSIE: Our lineup 1 to 9 is deadly. The pitchers never get a break. Eventually we're going to break through, and we showed that today.

Q. Michael, you've waited a long time to get this

outing. For you out there, I'm sure you would have loved to go another inning, but how did that go for you today?

MICHAEL SOROKA: It felt great. The last time I got to be out there and wear the Canadian flag, it was kind of a junior program. Obviously you're looking at the draft, and it's kind of a different process.

This is the first time where you really get to go let it rip, and this is all that matters is really get a win. These guys really showed up. It's a great atmosphere, a great culture, a bunch of guys I've gotten to play with in the past.

It was a great group, and I got to roll with Bo and the whole team, and they made some good plays. Again, it's nice to be able to do that for not just us, but for the entire country.

Q. When your last second- and third-to-last pitches are 97, is that telling you where you want to be from a physical perspective?

MICHAEL SOROKA: Yeah, for sure. Again, over the last couple years, I kind of found some stuff. Right at the end, that's what it's all about. It's the situation that you dream of. They've got the 3 hole hitter up. It's just bats and balls and your stuff versus theirs at that moment. Just enjoy the opportunity to be able to represent the country and do them justice with how you want to battle.

I felt like we let it rip early and often. Yeah, just again continue to do it hopefully in the next round.

ERNIE WHITT: I'm looking forward to his next start in Houston.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

