

# World Baseball Classic: Pool A - Panama vs Canada

Sunday, 8 March, 2026

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Hiram Bithorn Stadium

## Team Panama

**José Mayor**

**Luis Castillo**

Pregame Press Conference

**Q. Good afternoon, José. The pressure you have today of winning this game because remember the Classic of the previous location not to lower the good image of the Classic. It was also good. Luis, how are the rest of the players for today's game, the positions for today's game? How is it?**

JOSÉ MAYORGA: I think it's a great game that we're going to have to come out and play and get that victory any way we can. Like you say, to win the next games, to get the same results that we had before.

LUIS CASTILLO: The truth is that everyone is at ease thinking about today's game. Yesterday's game we turned that page already. We couldn't do anything in that game. So we have to have a mindset for today. We have a mindset of coming in to fight and to get that result.

**Q. Please talk about Allen Córdoba. What is his status after the game when he came out with discomfort?**

JOSÉ MAYORGA: He hurt his shoulder at first base against Cuba. He's improving. We're trying to get the X rays and see how he is, but he's not going to be playing today.

**Q. Good afternoon, José Mayorga and Luis. First, congratulations for playing yesterday. You showed what you did. In 2023 I remember that game and the two catches. Unfortunately, the game was lost, and you had mentioned yesterday about that you trust the closer, in this case, Baldonado, but there are other pitchers that could do the job at that time. I want to ask you why -- you know we can't turn the page, but I do know that there are Panamanians that ask what happened at that time?**

LUIS CASTILLO: The truth is that I've always tried to be ready at any time that the manager needs me. It's



something that I've always focused on that part, and I always try to help my team as much as I can.

Unfortunately, we weren't able to get that victory yesterday, but as I said, we are ready for today, and we have a mindset for today's game. We want to get that victory.

JOSÉ MAYORGA: As you say, I asked you whether you guys did not trust Baldonado because that's what you guys were saying, whether we would take him out. You mentioned him several times.

For me I looked at what pitchers I would choose in difficult situations, and Baldonado is the one to close that game. We trust him as he's been the closer many times. He's been at a high level in baseball.

Like you say, there are a lot of pitchers in the bullpen, but our idea was for Baldonado to end that game.

**Q. How do you feel about Jaime Barria facing the Canadian lineup? I think you've faced some of these guys before in either the Major Leagues or Minor Leagues. How does he feel going into this?**

JOSÉ MAYORGA: Pretty comfortable. Barria has the talent. He's been in the Big Leagues as well. I think he's pretty well prepared for this. It's a great lineup, like you said. I think he understands that. He has a game plan, and I'm pretty sure he's going to have a good outing.

**Q. I still have to ask a question. Yesterday you have six coaches with you, seven coaches. Have any of them at any time given you different advice regarding the situation with Alberto Baldonado, or was there no communication? Was it your decision alone? The second, going to the Big Leagues, he should know him, whether you know him, whether you've talked about facing him?**

JOSÉ MAYORGA: We were on the same page. We got together. We had a plan, and the plan was for Baldonado to finish that game at that time. As I say, many factors, they had MJ Melendez on the bench, a left-handed batter



who kills right-handed pitching. And we were trying for Baldonado to finish that and get to that moment.

We were all on the same page, all of the coaches, we had a plan, and we were trying obviously to have that. Unfortunately, things did not come out the way we wanted. Baldonado ended up walking them for them to tie the game.

And Barria knows James very well. He's pitched many times of course when he was there, and he's also given me information about that about the game for today.

**Q. Colombia lost. You may think, do we keep on looking for the qualification, or do we prevent falling into last place? I know that tomorrow you're going to face Colombia early on, but did you already define who your starter is for tomorrow? Are you thinking only of today? Even if you have to use tomorrow's starter as a substitute? I don't know if you have a scenario if you're waiting for a couple runs and think this is a chance to get a first victory.**

JOSÉ MAYORGA: Correct. We have not announced a starter for tomorrow. The idea is to come and win today's game.

**Q. I'm sorry that I was a little late. I don't know if you talked about what you all talked about in the clubhouse after last night's game. Did you have any meeting this morning? How is the mood now after such a difficult defeat?**

JOSÉ MAYORGA: Yes, we did meet this morning, and we talked. We talked how difficult yesterday's game was. Obviously there were a lot of emotions yesterday. I believe it was better to have it today.

We are focused on this game today.

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