

World Baseball Classic: Pool A - Panama vs Canada

Sunday, 8 March, 2026

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Hiram Bithorn Stadium

Team Canada

Ernie Whitt

Pregame Press Conference

Q. Ernie, do you have a starter for Tuesday, or is that all dependent on what happens tonight?

ERNIE WHITT: We have a person in mind. It will be Jordan (Balazovic). At this point in time, we're scheduling him to start for us.

Q. As far as Jameson is concerned, obviously there's limitations and restrictions. Who do you foresee following him into the game tonight?

ERNIE WHITT: It all depends on the game situation, when it is, but Paxton is available for us if we want to eat some innings hopefully. We've got Dykxhoorn, Aumont, we're going to see how he is. We've got a whole lot of lefties we can throw one inning at a time, but we have to be cautious about it because some of the limitations we have put on us from the organization.

Q. If Jordan is going to go on Tuesday, that means Cal on Wednesday, or are you looking to piggy-back that?

ERNIE WHITT: That's our initial plan right now to go in that order.

Q. As you've been watching some of the other games, we talked a bit about this yesterday, but watching some of the other games, reinforced the importance of playing clean and avoiding those extra outs either defensively or not.

ERNIE WHITT: It's every tournament we play in. You give extra outs, you get the opportunity to score more runs. It adds onto our pitcher's count, which of course we're limited to anyway. It's important to play clean.

Q. It's more like a question of the atmosphere, especially last night, that unbelievable game. Any of the guys had a chance to experience that from the stands? I know it was a night off, but have an



experience like that? What's their comments in terms of the experience last night watching Puerto Rico to come back and win the game?

ERNIE WHITT: They're excited. I don't think any of them stayed here for the game, but we saw them on TV and watched it. Every game has been competitive right down to the wire. You make a mistake, and it costs you. Getting back to what I was saying about we have to play clean and not run the pitching counts up, don't give free passes, don't make errors. All the things that you need to do to win baseball games.

Q. As you see Cuba that was kind of underestimated by a lot of media outlets now being 2-0 and up that match or that final match against you guys, anything that would actually change in that game plan or anything you have actually seen from the Cubans, now that they've actually hit four home runs changes your game plan?

ERNIE WHITT: We know that we're going to face tough teams every game that we play. You can't take any team lightly. I know the media was saying that Cuba was not going to be as good as they are. You can't count out the Cubans. It's just they play quality baseball. They know how to play the game.

Again, we just have to play clean for the three remaining games that we have here in this bracket.

Q. Anything from the previous game last night that you would like to see your team kind of translate to tonight? Anything that stood out to you that you were really pleased with and you hope that continues tonight?

ERNIE WHITT: I think getting key hits with people running and in scoring position, it's big. We don't want to leave guys on base when we have the opportunity to drive them in. I think we just have to take advantage of any mistakes that Panama might make.

Q. Ernie, Otto obviously stayed in the game, but any ill



effects from getting hit in the head for Lopez?

ERNIE WHITT: No, he's clean. I saw him this morning. He says he feels great. There's no fracture of any type right now, and he's ready to go tonight.

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