

World Baseball Classic: Pool A - Panama vs Canada

Monday, 9 March, 2026

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Hiram Bithorn Stadium

Team Panama

José Mayorga

Rubén Tejada

Miguel Cienfuegos

Enrique Bradfield Jr

Postgame Press Conference



I believe with Bradfield, we know his speed. Of course things happen to be able to get on bases several times.

MIGUEL CIENFUEGOS: To me, it's simple, God is great. All glory goes to God. He has a plan for me. He had a plan for me definitely today, which is the day I've been waiting for anxiously the last few months. I've been getting ready. A lot of emotions to be able to go out on the field and do my job for Panama.

Not only for myself, but for the team, the country that is looking at us. Simply the emotions that come out, the pride. That's it.

Q. One for you, José. Considering the pitching, who is going to start tomorrow for you against Colombia? For you, Tejada, I don't think I heard the Panamanian fans call out the name of somebody when you were at-bat. Tell us about that important moment and how you felt when they were yelling your name in the stadium.

JOSÉ MAYORGA: Paolo Espino for tomorrow.

RUBÉN TEJADA: I've earned it with a great effort of many years and many opportunities. I thank God for everything that has happened. I've been given the chance of putting my name and setting my name within a country and a team. It's something that I have to thank a lot of people for and also the team that support me. I've given the most that I have to be here tomorrow.

Q. This question is for all four of you. How does it feel to be the stars of Panama's first victory in the history of the World Baseball Classic?

JOSÉ MAYORGA: For my part, happy to be part of the reason we can give Panama a victory and do things right for the people.

MIGUEL CIENFUEGOS: On my part, glory to God. The preparation, everything that has been behind the clubhouse that we've been getting ready as a team. We have lots of faith, and we were able to put our faith forward.

Panama 4, Canada 3

Q. First of all, excellent job. Did you adjust and make the necessary movements for this victory? Obviously you did make the adjustments with the criticism that you had, and you were able to move all the pieces, like bring in Rubén Tejada, who was away from the team. How did you make that change, and how did you make that adjustment for Rubén? And then for you, Rubén, being there and trying to get the runs?

JOSÉ MAYORGA: I think that in the end that's what it's all about, to go out the next day and try to do things better than the day before.

Yes, Rubén had been prepared. I believe that he was there yesterday before going in to bat. We know the experience that he has of everything that he's done, and I believe he came in at the right time and did the right job to give us the victory.

RUBÉN TEJADA: We know this is a quick tournament where opportunities will come. For my part, I've got to get ready when the time comes to do as best as possible and to help the team win, which is the key. And that's the main thing.

Q. José, with the decision, to move Bradfield to lead off, what led to that? Cienfuegos, I would like to ask whether you had a special pitch to Canada? I saw that in the third inning you were beating your chest? A lot of patriotism, like "I'm here."

JOSÉ MAYORGA: Yes, we have made a few changes, as you know, to try to have the best matchup with the batters.



RUBÉN TEJADA: After so many bittersweet moments we had, thank God we had the chance. This time to give this excitement and the voice of support to the whole country is something that's very wonderful.

ENRIQUE BRADFIELD JR: Thank God also, I am happy for the group. We are all fighting for it.

Q. This is to Rubén Tejada. Congratulations for that wonderful at-bat you had. A lot of people were asking where was Tejada? I want you to tell me, what happened in your mind? What were you thinking in that at-bat when you were behind on the score with such an important game for Panama to go forth? What did you think at that time?

RUBÉN TEJADA: Well, with so much baseball that I've been able to play, thank God, and so many stadiums, well, those are the moments that fill me, and these are the moments that make me feel and make me show my lineage where I came from playing as a kid. That is what I have concentrated the most on that moment.

I've been lucky, and I thank God that I've been given these chances and I've been able to take advantage of them.

Q. José, that bunt by Bradfield with two outs, was it a strategy? Was it ordered, or was it voluntary? For Rubén, to come back to Puerto Rico, you were here with the Senadores and now with your country getting that important hit, how does that feel?

JOSÉ MAYORGA: Yes, all credit to Bradfield. He knows that he has the right to do that whenever he wants to. We know his speed, and I know there were conversations with the other coaches about that matter. Thank God it came out at a good time.

RUBÉN TEJADA: You know I was here two years ago with the Senadores, and it's something that is familiar to me. It's something where I know this is a stadium where there's very few home runs, very few hits. So I try to concentrate on the middle of the field, especially with a lefty, which was what was going on at that time.

So I concentrated only on trying to put the ball in play and try to make the proper adjustments according to the count.

Q. José, congratulations for your victory. In your philosophy with runners on second with two outs, generally it's a matter of tying at home, especially when you're facing a pitch. You as a manager, what are the optics of those two plays, yesterday's as well as today, where you have a runner at home plate that

you as a manager have, was it to make that decision according to your philosophy, or do you have something on those decisions?

JOSÉ MAYORGA: Not at all. I believe that it was a hit that we needed to have that advantage. Bradfield was running, so we couldn't risk something happening. I think the play was close. Obviously we did see he was out, but it was a good job to try to get that advantage.

Q. Enrique, how does it feel to be part of the first win for Panama, in San Juan after 20 years playing in the World Baseball Classic. Rubén, you're still hitting the ball. I believe the country does value your determination to keep on playing baseball. I want you to tell me how ten years post that play against the Dodgers.

ENRIQUE BRADFIELD JR: It means a lot to me. I was born in the U.S., but my family's heritage is Panama. To represent the country, para representar el país, is everything to me. I want to play hard. I'm doing it very much for the entire group. I'm doing it for the people of Panama. That's just it. I'm incredibly proud. I'm very happy, and that's it.

RUBÉN TEJADA: Well, I think that enough years have happened to leave that behind. I believe it is something that I turned the page a long time ago. I can't do anything with that unfortunately.

The other thing is I took it on myself to do the best that I could for myself and for my country, which is the best thing at this time.

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