

# World Baseball Classic: Pool A - Colombia vs Panama

Monday, 9 March, 2026

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Hiram Bithorn Stadium

## Team Colombia

### Jhonatan Solano

#### Pregame Press Conference

**Q. I know that you're very focused on what you have to do today, but I want to ask about what has happened in Tokyo where two teams that were 2-2 faced each other. The Korean team won, and Australia was eliminated after having a great tournament. Talk to me about the blessings and the complicated parts of this format and how to explain to fans how challenging it is to get from this group to the next round or from any group.**

JHONATAN SOLANO: Good morning. Yes, the truth is it's a little tricky, right? The way the format of the tournament is. But since we come every day, focus, we have a great chance for our country, for our team, which is to stay into the next Classic, and that's what we came here to do today.

The kids know about everything. They're very motivated about this opportunity that we get, having lost the three first games, but we're looking for today's victory any way we can. We hope God gives us a chance to get a victory today.

**Q. Panama won yesterday, and has a chance to advance with a victory over Colombia. Colombia can't lose because it has to assure the qualification in the next World Baseball Classic. What did Colombia do from last night until today to reinvent itself to avoid that situation?**

JHONATAN SOLANO: You know this game, in my opinion, is 90 percent mental and 10 percent physical. I think that the guys, as we said, are very motivated. Yesterday the whole team saw last night's team waiting for the result, and we have a challenge again today. Our starter is very prepared, and we need to work on a lineup that is competitive in terms of the pitching that they're going to start.

We trust God, first of all, and for the guys to be able to



make that mental adjustment that is needed. We'll try to win the game.

**Q. Good morning, Jhonatan. We know that obviously the results have not been what was expected, but one positive aspect for Colombia has been the performance of Michael Arroyo, the prospect in this tournament, one of the best batter in terms of OBP, that he's gotten on base in every game. What is the feeling of Colombia for Michael and this whole generation like that, and Frias?**

JHONATAN SOLANO: We see not only those two who are young, but also Lorduy, one of the prospects for Cincinnati. We are very positive for the future of the team, the franchise for Colombia. We have a generation coming in that's very interesting.

In my humble opinion, if God keeps those kids healthy, we will soon have the Big Leagues representing our country. I hope they stay focused. I know this is a wonderful window for these kids, and they're taking this seriously with professionalism, even though they're very young, but I think that's the most important thing for them.

The message to Colombia is for them to keep on supporting us. We have generations. It's really interesting for us, and we hope God gives them the chance and gives them the chance to play in the Big Leagues.

**Q. Focusing on the Colombian league, what can you do with the league especially to develop baseball more in Colombia maybe in the north and maybe in other parts of the south, for example? What do you think about that?**

JHONATAN SOLANO: Well, I have heard that there are projects, plans. Right now in Colombia we have only four teams that are participating. I've heard that they're trying to create two more teams. I think that would be a great possibility of developing our Colombian talent.

I think it's something that's so important, that point, because the Colombian league is one of development,



even for ourselves.

For example, José Quintana, Solano, myself, and the whole staff of coaches that are here, we were born in that league and helped us with our development to continue in our careers. So we hope to work on it together with the Federation and for us to be willing to support where we started to develop the new talent that's coming in.

**Q. Along that same line, what do you think you're taking from this experience, and prospectively what is needed concretely to develop the talent to the level of Colombian baseball that you guys would want?**

JHONATAN SOLANO: Well, the experience of the guys, this is an area for them that is large and very important, we feel that the game against Puerto Rico was like the playoffs in the Big Leagues.

I feel very proud of all the guys we have, facing such an interesting and such a competitive team as is Puerto Rico, just like with Canada.

We take that with us. We take that attitude that those young players put in. They never had a chance to play in a tournament like this, and the pride of representing our country and to be able to take this victory, to be able to take it home.

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