

World Baseball Classic: Pool B

Thursday, 5 March, 2026

Houston, Texas, USA

Daikin Park

Team Mexico

Manager Benji Gil

Randy Arozarena

Javier Assad

Workout Day Press Conference

(Note: This document was translated from English to Spanish. The translation may not be fully accurate.)

Q. Good afternoon, Benji. This year has been very positive for you. You won in Mexico. You won the Caribbean Series, and you have the possibility to compete and win this World Cup Classic. What would this mean to you to win it all?

And, number two, are you aware that if Mexico were to win the whole tournament, you would be the second Mexican to win the Caribbean one and the Classic?

BENJI GIL: Well, ultimately, nothing is personal. What we have obtained has been through hard work from our players more than anything. Every part of the coaching staff and the directors have done a lot to win the Classic Cup. It would mean -- it would mark a historical event to Mexico.

No matter what has been accomplished before, including the Winter Tournament accomplishment or the Caribbean, this one is the biggest one. So more than anything, winning the Classic World Cup would be our primary goal, and what it means to Mexico, and what it means to Mexican baseball and its growth within the sports in Mexico. And we are focusing on giving it all and have that shot at winning.

Q. I have a question to each of you. First for Benjamin, we were talking during the Caribbean Series, so the question would be who is going to be pitching against the U.S. the first game from Mexico, right? What does that mean to you? At this moment in your career what goes through your veins?

And for Randy, 2023 was historical. You are one of the pillars from the Mexican sport. How are you arriving to this



tournament knowing that you are already known in Mexico, and the people hope that you may repeat at that level?

RANDY AROZARENA: I feel very happy and excited to represent Mexico in this Classic World Cup after 2023. I feel mentally ready. I feel like I have more experience now and to keep attributing to the team and be able to move on to the next round, which is our next step and give Mexico a sense of happiness which they deserve.

More than anything I'm just thankful to the national team for giving me this chance. I feel good, happy. I think I'm ready. I have been working hard since last summer. There wasn't much activity, but I was able to go back home and train hard, so I feel ready and good for these types of moments.

BENJI GIL: The game against the U.S. has not been defined yet, but I can promise what a Mexican will do.

Q. Benji, what is the quality or strength, that thing that will make a difference with the Mexican team regarding the one that played in 2023, knowing there are some players back then, similar players. There was a change, right? There was a shift. What can we expect for 2026?

BENJI GIL: I think that -- even they can give their own opinion in the matter. But about three years ago the outside expectations from our team were just like, okay, let's see how it goes. Let's see how it goes for them. There is not that many known players that play in the major leagues.

If you recall I would say every opportunity we have knowing that we have really good players, even though they are not renowned in the world, that team, the players that were known in the world of baseball was Randy because of the playoff he had with Tampa Bay. He became a star in the postseason a few years back.

Perhaps since like July, Julian, Duran, Thomas, those were players that were not known, even though they play in the major leagues they were not known. The biggest



difference in our team, possibly, could be that knowing there are bigger teams out there, we have a player that has gone to two All-Stars for the home run. And Duran, back then he was not even a starter with us. Now he went to the All-Star Game. He was MVP of one.

Alejandro wasn't able to participate last time, but he has already went to two All-Stars. Aranda, back then he wasn't a starter. Now he went to the All-Star Game. We have four players within the lineup that have attended an All-Star Game, that have turned into stars in the major leagues -- not just Mexican stars, but also in the major leagues.

That causes a difference from what we have done in the past couple years has made every team player.

If it is still not convincing, that's their problem. But we are a team that is up and is ready to take the stage, to fight for this competition, not just be here.

Q. This is a question for all three starting with Javier. Mexico has never won the first game in the world cup match. Are you ready to break that streak? And, Benji, one of the things that we know from the Mexican fans is that they love soccer. Since baseball is not a national team. Randy, what about you? Do you feel more Mexican now?

RANDY AROZARENA: Yeah, I am older, but I will always feel like I'm a Mexican. Since 2013, Mexico opened the doors to me. I have a lot of Mexican friends. My daughter is Mexican. I feel like, throughout the years my love towards Mexico has grown a lot. I do feel grateful for all of the love, all of the opportunity the country has given me. And I feel really good.

JAVIER ASSAD: Obviously we all go after the win when we go after it tomorrow. We have a great team. And I think we are going to be able to get it.

BENJI GIL: Definitely we know that soccer is the sport that is most watched in Mexico. And so now I have a chance to speak through the media to you all and to our fans, right? I don't ask for the fans to stop watching soccer but to pay attention to baseball.

I think we have the best fans in the world -- boxing, soccer. They follow the teams everywhere and that's really good. But we also have really good pillars in different sports, but also in baseball.

I was also sharing this in a different interview. You know, in our soccer world, they even interview great grandmas all of the players. How about we start doing the same for the baseball world so that we can get our Mexican crowd more

aware of our sport, major leagues, minor leagues and now be able to go after a tournament for the sake of our country? It is not about getting rid of soccer, but baseball being an addition.

Yes, I just want the fans to watch the games, and sometimes it can be more exciting than a penalty shot. The thing about this beautiful sport is that after every pitch, you know something could happen. So in baseball you cannot just blink. You cannot take a break, like you can in soccer. In every pitch, something else can happen that you have never seen before. So, thank you.

Q. Benjamin, I know you are very mythological. You have been studying the rival. What have you noticed, what have you seen about them for what's to come?

BENJI GIL: When I come with Javier Assad, he is going to give us a great chance to win, right. And a great offensive weapon that we have.

And of course we have studied our opponents. And we are going to keep on doing that tonight, to be able to come ready as much as possible. And within baseball, with the tenant we have with our players, the commitment and their heart to play, and if we go out on the field and we give it all, we will get the result, we will get a positive result.

And of course, we study, we check our strengths verses their weaknesses, but at the end of the day, even if there is a difficult moment, which they are, they truly are, if we play our own baseball, we will come up -- we will have the upper hand.

Q. Javier, many things have changed since 2023. You became one of the pillars from Mexican baseball. You are an ace, basically in the game. You are going to get the ball for the first -- during the first match. What do you think has changed in the last couple of years?

JAVIER ASSAD: A lot has changed. I am learning more. I have been pitching more in the great leagues. And currently I am very grateful, very happy with the opportunity I have been given after all of the hard work, trying to get a spot in the major leagues.

And now I have this chance to give my very best, and God willing, give it all and go after that win that we are always going after.