

World Baseball Classic: Pool B - Brazil vs Italy

Saturday, 7 March, 2026

Houston, Texas, USA

Daikin Park

Team Brazil

Manager Daniel Yuichi

Matsumoto

Joseph Contreras

Pregame Press Conference



Q. Daniel, with so many young players on this Brazil roster, what are you most proud of them for so far?

DANIEL YUICHI MATSUMOTO: I'm very proud of these young players, such as Joseph Contreras, that went to the mound last night. No fear, you know, and played very aggressive. And I think that's the future of Brazilian baseball.

Q. Joseph, what's it like facing Aaron Judge with the bases loaded in that spot, getting him to ground into a double play?

JOSEPH CONTRERAS: Now that I look back I'm, like, okay, now I can see the magnitude of bases loaded, one out. In the moment I was just, I just have to execute my pitches and just hopefully just get him out somehow, fly ball, maybe ground ball, just force him weak contact.

Q. How do you attack Aaron Judge there?

JOSEPH CONTRERAS: The scouting report was just attack him hard in, and then if we go away on him make sure it's up and away. So I was just, like, okay, I'll throw the fastball up and away. After that, it was 1-1, need to win the count, so I decided to go two-seam hard on him.

Q. Joseph, we spoke yesterday, and I know you faced most of the MLB players last night. Were you able to rewatch or watch those videos again of the match last night, and what was your takeaway?

JOSEPH CONTRERAS: I did watch some footage after the game. I noticed that I was getting ahead of myself, wanting to do too much. And the nerves got to me. But I'm ready for the next match and want to put the team in the best position possible.

Q. What were some victories from last night that you can carry into today, and what were some things maybe you saw to work on last night that you can carry into today?

DANIEL YUICHI MATSUMOTO: The most important thing we learned from last night's game is that we cannot give away bases on balls and we need 27 outs in a game. And when we give base on ball, we don't get the out.

So today I spoke to my pitchers and I told them to be very aggressive and compete within the strike zone. So I don't want to see that situation anymore where players keep getting bases on ball over and over. So hopefully that was it for us.

JOSEPH CONTRERAS: I'd have to say a victory that we had yesterday was we went out there kind of no fear. And when we did attack the zone, it was pretty lethal, I would say.

And I would say the negative is we were all kind of nervous, I would say. And, like Coach said, the walks. But it's just knowing that they had some loud contact, but at the end of the day it was all fly balls. It was near the warning tracks, so it's just trusting the stuff and just let the game play out.

Q. Joseph, many games were played during the opening of the WBC here in town. But your interview was most heard and even went viral to some of us during the pool. Were you able to talk to your dad about any sort of advice that he can probably give you, given that you threw over 30 pitches, which means you're going to miss today's match?

JOSEPH CONTRERAS: My father told me to keep attacking the zone. And he also told me that I show no fear and that I should keep on working with what I've got because at the end of the day I need to get more outs or more strikeouts. And that is what's going to help me get to the next level.



Q. Joseph, I was talking to Lucas Ramirez yesterday and he mentioned just how much fun you all are having as a tight-knit group with such a young team. What are the vibes like kind of between y'all right now?

JOSEPH CONTRERAS: The vibes are pretty good. I walked in, I didn't really know anybody. And they just welcomed me with open arms. I'm really thankful for that. And just keep growing the team, keep getting together because at the end of the day we're trying to build something bigger than just baseball. We're trying to build a family.

Q. Your throws or throwing, most of them ended up being a wide pitch type of throwing. Was there originally, like, a forkball that you were trying to go for or a slider?

JOSEPH CONTRERAS: Yes, I was going for the forkball. Out of 11 pitches, I tried eight forkballs and three change-ups.

Q. What's your takeaway on the match, Joseph, given that it was your first starting at such a young age? And what did your family say back home, back in Cuba, about your performance?

JOSEPH CONTRERAS: My takeaway from the match will be to not try to do too much, just stay my ground and hope I perform well with that.

And back home in Cuba, I haven't spoken with them, but I hope they enjoyed the game.

Q. Joseph, have you heard from anyone, from any of your high school buddies and kind of their reaction to the outing, and just kind of what's going on in that front?

JOSEPH CONTRERAS: Yeah, my phone has been blowing up after the game. We have a group chat. It was just going crazy. It was, like, let's go, you're the man! And it was just really exciting and knowing that they were always behind me because this year went on and on and I could feel the presence of not just me but my whole supporting staff.