

World Baseball Classic: Pool B - Great Britain vs United States

Saturday, 7 March, 2026

Houston, Texas, USA

Daikin Park

Team United States

Manager Mark DeRosa

Gunnar Henderson

Kyle Schwarber

Postgame Press Conference



USA - 9, Great Britain - 1

Q. Kyle, you have hit a lot of homers in MLB stadiums. What makes this a different kind of homer for you in the emotional side?

KYLE SCHWARBER: I think the emotional side of that is what we're wearing across our chest, USA. And obviously the guys we have on our team, that we've done a really good job of coming together and really feeling like that this is a team. We know that it's short, but for us to go where we want to go, we all need to play together and go from there.

So to have that little spark -- it started with Ernie there, a big hustle play to get to first base. He makes a heck of a dirt-ball read after the PCA double. And I was able to get a good piece on it and got it out.

But we kept the inning going too. I think that was the big thing. It wasn't just a one-and-done. We kept the inning going. And Gunnar with a big hit here. And it just kept going from there.

Q. Kyle just mentioned the spark that Ernie provided. Mark, what role did you envision Ernie playing on this roster? And just how have you seen him kind of demonstrate his value over the course of qualifiers?

MARK DEROSA: Kind of the utility role, exactly that. I mean, the guy got 30 hits last postseason, set a postseason record.

So he's deserving of being in that room. And wanted to get Gunnar and him in the lineup. I felt like coming out of Arizona, I felt like everybody was worthy of a start. And wanted to get these guys rolling, and they deserve it.

Q. Now that Mexico is next, you remember '23 and just your respect for that team that's played so well over the past few years.

MARK DEROSA: No question. The U.S. has had their hands full with them in this tournament the last couple of installments of it. I certainly haven't forgotten about it. I know Kyle probably the same.

So got the right guy on the mound in Paul Skenes, a stacked bullpen, awesome lineup, and we'll get after it.

Q. Kyle, you've been in the playoffs, World Series a lot. Does that atmosphere against Mexico last time rank right up there with the atmospheres you've been in?

KYLE SCHWARBER: Yeah, I won't forget that game. That was a pretty cool one. Never seen Arizona stadium sold out and sold-out electric stadium electric feeling. Looking forward to our next match-up here.

Q. It took a little while to break through against a GB team yet again for the second time. Why do you think that was? And what changed that allowed you to move on from --

MARK DEROSA: I think they had some good arms. The hitters up here could probably attest to that. After their starter came out, he gave them a little bit of length, had a guy throwing 97 miles an hour. Then brought in Scrubb, and Kyle was able to pop one, a big three-run homer.

And then they brought in a little side-arm guy -- not little -- side-arm guy throwing about 94 to 96. So they were running some arms out there, no question.

Q. Benji Gil hasn't defined a starter for Monday's game. Is your game plan, could your game plan change, make a big difference depending on that decision?

MARK DEROSA: Honestly, I think we have the best 30



players in the world in that clubhouse, and they're coming together as a team. I don't really think it's going to matter who he starts. We're going to put a lineup out there and get after it.

Q. Kyle, you were in Arizona for the '23 WBC. Then you were there again that fall for the NLCS. Which one was louder?

KYLE SCHWARBER: That's a great question. A lot of good moments on both sides, in the WBC and in that postseason, too.

The WBC sticks out most just for the fact that that was the first time I've ever seen that stadium full, obviously playing for our countries. And it felt like there was a lot more fans there from Mexico than there were for the U.S.

Q. Gunnar, can you talk about maybe how the guys that have played in the WBC before -- like Kyle; Paul Goldschmidt, who's played in three now -- and how they carry themselves differently because of that?

GUNNAR HENDERSON: Yeah, I mean being able to lean on them because, like you said, they've played in past ones, being able to just hear about their experiences, just how they went about their business each and every day and just how to approach different pitchers different plans and stuff.

So it's been really cool to lean on them and learn as much as I can.

Q. Should we expect even more changes in the lineup for next game? A lot of players that were starting the first game played great, like Gunnar here.

MARK DEROSA: Yeah, I'll get with our coaching staff. But at the end of the day, I honestly, I have trust in the 14-position players that we have brought in. They have come together.

I was able to move the lineup around a little bit tonight. Kyle's hit fourth first game. I know he's hit lead-off for the Phillies before. I knew it wouldn't be big.

Gunnar was deserving of getting a start. Bottom line, then he shows up, gets four knocks, blacks out on second base after that double. (Laughter.) Just some big moments.

I just think it's interchangeable parts. I think that starts with the camaraderie of putting the right guys in the room.

Q. Gunnar, what went through your head when you hit that double? You were really expressing a lot of

feelings?

GUNNAR HENDERSON: Not much, honestly. As soon as I rounded first, not much went through my head after that. But I was just fired up because just following up his home run, I mean, you live for that kind of stuff as a ball player, just those high-emotion moments. And being able to come through and that was pretty cool.

Q. When they made that error at third base, Matt makes it, do you think, okay, here we go, this is the break we need?

MARK DEROSA: Yeah, I was thinking that. I was sitting on a top step with Dino Ebel the inning before. He goes, we just need something, just a walk, something, and explode.

I also think that when their reliever turned and looked in our dugout and had a couple of choice words, I think that lit the lineup up as well.

Q. Mark, a lot of fans have been asking in what scenarios can Clayton Kershaw pitch in this WBC. And they think these very first two games have been a great scenario for him to come out on the mound. What can you tell us about that?

MARK DEROSA: I think the situations we ran into in 2023, with the starting pitchers in that Mexico game, we had to use five or six relievers in that game.

We just didn't have the manpower to cover the next game, the Canadian game. I wanted to have someone down there who could give us 60 pitches if something -- he would be used in an emergency situation to kind of reset our bullpen. That's why I wanted him here.

If you're going to get somebody -- it's tough to get somebody who is getting ready for a season, to ask a parent club to come and not know if they're going to throw. So if you're going to go out and find someone, it's got to be someone that is probably retiring or a minor leaguer or something, that ilk, and I felt like I wanted to try and get the best guy in there that these guys could feed off of, the Paul Skenes, the Skubals could learn from and all the pitchers could learn from and give Clayton an opportunity to put just a tremendous bow on a Hall of Fame career.

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