

# World Baseball Classic: Pool B - Mexico vs United States

Monday, 9 March, 2026

Houston, Texas, USA

Daikin Park

## Team Mexico

## Manager Benji Gil

## Andrés Muñoz

## Jarren Duran

## Pregame Press Conference



**Q. Benji, to win against the U.S. today would that transcend 2023's victory?**

BENJI GIL: No, it would be just the most recent one.

**Q. Benji and all of you, how did you feel being received the way you were today, with people recording, filming, saying "Mexico," everyone chanting all of your names. This game feels different for everyone and you guys as well. Were you feeling the same thing in the bus?**

ANDRÉS MUÑOZ: Yes, it was a great feeling, the Mexico people cheering us up. Even when I wasn't in this scenario, I want to put Mexico at the very top.

JARREN DURAN: Seeing all these Mexican fans out here, it was great to go out there and play hard for them. I mean they show a lot of respect for us and a lot of love for us no matter what happens. And I'm very grateful.

BENJI GIL: Yes, of course, it makes us feel really good to see their support, their love. And the fact that they're here because we know a lot of people that are present, travel, whether it was from Mexico or other parts of the U.S. to come cheer us on, cheer for their national team, their idols.

**Q. Jarren, what's the best thing you have taken from playing the World Baseball Classic?**

JARREN DURAN: Definitely seeing my teammates. It's been an honor to share the field with these guys Kirk, Aranda, Muñoz. I know he wasn't here for the last one, but getting to know him and talking with him on the way over, it's honestly been one of the best experiences to get to know them and connect to them.

**Q. Do you recommend playing in the World Baseball Classic?**

JARREN DURAN: Absolutely, it's some of the best baseball I've been a part of.

**Q. Jarren, how does it feel to be around a lot more like Mexicans, Mexican-Americans? And how does that help you connect more with your culture or that side of the culture of yours?**

JARREN DURAN: I spend a lot of time with my dad and his side of the family. So I get a lot of the Mexican culture with them. It's just really eye opening to see how loyal and loving these fans are. You don't get to experience it a lot. In the MLB, I feel like we're just so spread out.

But getting to see everybody together rooting for one team has been a great experience. Honestly, it's one of the best honors I've been able to do is represent my father and his side of the family for Team Mexico.

**Q. I'm curious as to what you think, which anthem is going to be sung louder tonight?**

BENJI GIL: I would expect both. I think by nature, Mexican people are a little louder. So even if it's 50/50, I think they're going to be pretty loud.

And I guess that will be the first contest of the day, right? So hopefully Mexico wins that, too.

ANDRÉS MUÑOZ: Louder, to be honest, it's going to be something great, A great experience for us. We're going to take advantage of it all.

JARREN DURAN: I think Mexican people are just naturally a little bit louder, just experiencing it from my dad's side of the family. So, I think they'll be a little louder tonight.

**Q. Jarren, we talked to your uncle and dad yesterday. They mentioned how much pride they had in seeing you rep the Mexico jersey. How does that make you feel, and what does it feel to be able to represent your**



**other country?**

JARREN DURAN: Like I said, I feel like this is one of those things that I don't get to do a lot. I represent my dad's last name on my jersey every time I play, but being able to represent where he's from and the hard work that he's come over here and where his nature's from as being a Mexican, it's one of the greatest honors I've been able to do for him. It means a lot to me.

**Q. You practice baseball in Mexico, summer, winter, and that experience out there, how does that affect or impact your career?**

BENJI GIL: It's a baseball full of passion, fully devoted to the game. I feel that the baseball in our country has been changing the last few years. And I can testify, whenever I started to coach in Mexico, their baseball started to change more and more.

It's more analytic to be similar to the U.S. one. I've been more aggressive. When I went in the league there was no shifts and barely anyone ran. It was more laid back. But now it's more like rivalry, pride, intense, aggressive on each base.

And that helps us mentally and physically, but it all starts mentally. To be able to compete against other teams, internationally speaking. And also with the amount of foreigners that we have in the league, the Mexican player still stands out with its own way of playing ball.

**Q. Benji, in regards to Aaron Judge, the U.S. captain, do you think he's the best batter right now?**

BENJI GIL: Yes, I think he could be. I think he's been more consistent in the last, what, five years. But there's also a batter in LA that's extraordinary. In the last three to five years, it's them two, that they have the right to say they have in the last few years. But Shohei, I think he's the best baseball player in the world.

**Q. Speaking about things outside the field, things maybe young players don't see, players both in United States and Mexico, what's your approach like in this morning, approaching this particular game? What kind of activities do you do to mentalize yourself, get you in the right mindset towards this game?**

JARREN DURAN: Honestly, these kind of games are so fast and so sped up -- getting to the field, there's a game before; it kind of reminds me travel ball when I was younger. Honestly it doesn't give me a lot of time to think. You know, I just kind of try and enjoy the moment and be, like, I get to be with some awesome teammates that I'm not

going to get to play with again, maybe.

So being at this tournament, I get to embrace it as much as possible and just have fun. Honestly, just keeping it simple is the most important thing for me.

**Q. Your thoughts tonight of the game with USA. You have beaten them for the last three out of four games. Your thoughts as a team going into this game, what does it mean for all of you to play this game tonight?**

JARREN DURAN: I think it's going to be a really, really loud atmosphere. I'm super excited about that. So that's kind of the one things I've been focusing on is how loud it's really going to be, because, like Benji said earlier, the Mexican fans are really loud when we played Brazil. I know it's going to be twice as loud tonight. So I'm really excited.

BENJI GIL: Have fun. Enjoy it.

**Q. Andrés, on the pitching side today, hypothetically speaking, to be the receptor, one of the best receptors in the Major Leagues, what will you assume could happen?**

ANDRÉS MUÑOZ: I really haven't been thinking -- like whoever is on the bat, just to be ready for each and every one of them and for any situation that the manager may want me to step into. I think that's the most important thing. We have to be ready whenever the coach needs us or however he wants to use us.

We all need to be ready for any sort of collision. So I know I'll be throwing them whenever it's my time. But just attack them with the best pitches I've got and to hope for the best.

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