

# World Baseball Classic: Pool B - Italy vs Mexico

Wednesday, 11 March, 2026

Houston, Texas, USA

Daikin Park

## Team Italy

## Manager Francisco Cervelli

### Pregame Press Conference

**Q. Now in Italy it is 9:00 p.m. All the day has been dedicated to Italian baseball. Baseball broke the news today. It broke also in the parliament. I think this is the first time. What does it mean?**

FRANCISCO CERVELLI: It means a lot. That means we are making noise and noise in a positive way. I got a specific question yesterday about, if we win this tournament, it will help the national team. And I say the national team is a religion. But the religion, probably before the 1900s, was not a religion.

So probably this is the start of a new religion, baseball in Italy. I don't know how we can do it, but I think we make it happen. It's a good start. And I'm glad in Italy a lot of people are talking about baseball.

**Q. What's it like going into a game where, win and you're in, but also there's a mathematical scenario and you're paying attention to the runs maybe in a different way?**

FRANCISCO CERVELLI: I'm taking today like another game. I'm not telling you this is easy. But we came to play against Brazil knowing that we have to win, against Great Britain, knowing we have to win, and the United States. No one expected it. We came with we wanted to win it.

So today is nothing different. We have to win. We cannot think about math right now.

**Q. What can you tell us about your catching situation with Teel unavailable now? Is it what you said last night about the bullpen catcher?**

FRANCISCO CERVELLI: Teel is out. And we've got D'Orazio. And we received today Gasper from the Red Sox, I believe. He just got here and we're okay. We're in good shape now to play.



**Q. As a manager, you're always planning things out, but then the game will dictate what happens next. So have you been able to decide to start your best openers like Nola?**

FRANCISCO CERVELLI: I'm very happy about that. Just the fact of having him here means a lot to the Italian team. I've been speaking to his brother. I was his coach, a former coach of his. And now having him here, it's delightful because I know it's been hard to beat him.

As a hitter, he's been one of the best hitters in the league. He's always been doing everything we asked of him. So we hope that everything goes well with Nola.

**Q. Is Sam available to pitch for you today as well if needed?**

FRANCISCO CERVELLI: Aldegheri?

**Q. Yes.**

FRANCISCO CERVELLI: I don't think the days are -- I don't think so. I don't think he's available. He's available for tomorrow.

**Q. Did you celebrate last night, or you wait for celebrating?**

FRANCISCO CERVELLI: No, we celebrated for 30 minutes, and that's it. I went to my room. I couldn't sleep last night. It was incredible. My phone never stopped ringing.

But no, no celebration yesterday. We have to do it the right way. And we'll see what happens.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

