

# World Baseball Classic: Pool C - Czechia vs Korea

Thursday, 5 March, 2026

Tokyo, Japan

Tokyo Dome

## Team Korea

## Ji-Hyun Ryu

### Pregame Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

**Q. The previous past three WBC tournament there was defeated back-to-back-to-back. That was the first thought. Today you are going to have the first game of the new tournament. What is in your mind right now?**

JI-HYUN RYU: Yes, the previous three tournament was -- the opening game of the previous three games were very tough. That caused the result.

So when we make a roster of the 2026, that we're eyeing is trying to win the first tournament -- the first game of the tournament. Winning tonight's contest is very meaningful.

Then we have a variety of assimilations, and we have bunch of different preparation. So I think we are going to play as with our plan.

**Q. Did you watch the first game Chinese Taipei against Australian, and how do you feel about today's opening game?**

JI-HYUN RYU: Well, at that time we were scheduled some scouting reporting, so I didn't watch the entire games. We watched the first couple games, and then I missed some innings.

Of course, I know the result. This tournament itself has a very high pressure, and anything could happen. That's how I felt by watching the first game.

So whenever you have to put the concentration, that's how we have to do, and our first game is coming in very soon, so we have to go for it.

**Q. You are going to have the big game. What's in your plan for this starting lineups? If you could name some key players for tonight's game, please tell us.**



JI-HYUN RYU: Today's contest starting lineup, it's similar to the one when we played against Orix at Osaka, which is lineups -- today's lineup is exact same as the last previous game when we played at Osaka against Orix.

When we had a game that night, we have some new additional roster joining from U.S. Since then, we have some meeting and what's most effective lineups of the opening games and how we give an impression for the opponents.

The result is for tonight's game we are going to have the exact same lineups. Just switching the clean-up hitters and the hitting six hole. That's only minor change, but most of the members were the same. Do I have to mention all the lineup from top to bottom?

**Q. Regarding lineups, lead-off in the third spot is a very high potential starters. What else you are trying to expect for your lineups offense?**

JI-HYUN RYU: Yes, that's a good question as well. We have another option of who is going to be the lead-off spot and the third spot. We could have them switch batting first and batting third holes, but I am going to ask Lee Jung Hoo hitting third, because he has a great career among our depth, and from the top to the third, I think this is the best order of us as of now. So that's how we learn from the previous game against Orix.

Our clean-up hitters are very good at lefties. Then, also, we expecting the starter for the Chinese Taipei game. The righty is probably going to be the start. We also maintain that we have a good balance of righty and a lefty, as well.

**Q. You just mentioned a while ago that you are going to try to get a win as planned. On the other hand, just a while ago you mentioned that anything could happen. Let me ask the question about the starting pitcher. You mentioned that starting pitcher already, but who is going to pitch secondly as a second starter and third starter, if you could mention name, please?**

JI-HYUN RYU: Yes, yesterday I -- these two pitchers were



the only two pitchers who hasn't pitched here in Japan, but rest of the two pitchers, all I can say is it all depends on the situation.

I think I'm going to give you some -- well, all two pitchers, all two started and the second starter pitcher is limited to pitch count of 50. They are not going to pitch above 50 pitches.

**Q. The first question you mentioned how important for the first game of the tournament, and you are about to start the opening games. What exactly do you expect for your clubhouse and each individual players? Your team has worked hard from the Saipan training camp.**

JI-HYUN RYU: Yes, I have spent a very long time with my team from the time has been started from the Saipan training camp. We had a great communication. We talk, talk, talk, and I share my thought, and I share the team strategy to my teams, and I can say clearly that our team roster is probably the best team in Korea's history.

We already communicated enough, and I truly trust full for my players, that the player is going to play the best, their best.

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