

World Baseball Classic: Pool C - Czechia vs Korea

Friday, 6 March, 2026

Tokyo, Japan

Tokyo Dome

Team Korea

Ji-Hyun Ryu

Postgame Press Conference

Korea 11, Czechia 4

THE MODERATOR: Let's start the press conference for Team Korea.

Q. Congratulations in the first-ever winning for WBC tournament. What is in your mind right now?

JI-HYUN RYU: Yes, it was not an easy game as an opening game of the tournament. We have pressure on it and also our opponent. We don't know -- well, no matter who we face against off, but the pressure is always on it, but on the first we've got a grand slam. That was a huge and it's positive signal for Team Korea.

I am going to repeat that at Spring Training in Okinawa and throughout the inner-squad games. Also, I had an opportunity to play at Osaka.

Our offense is keep swinging very hard. That's the main point for tonight's contest.

Q. Let me ask you about the pitching. You put the same pitchers. Is this the game plan as previously, I mean, as you thought?

JI-HYUN RYU: Jeong Woo Joo, the third pitchers of tonight's game, we could have Jeong Woo Joo later on at the fourth innings. When we put no -- the first hitters was the clean-up hitters, so that's how something we were planning. I was expecting him no to pitch for maybe one more innings. That's something out of the plan, but overall it's basically our game plan.

Q. At the Spring Training in Okinawa, Osaka, and Tokyo your offense is swinging very good, and Whitcomb hit two jacks, and Jones also hit a home run, too. How do you evaluate these two Korean-American players? Also, are you going to play against Team Japan on the same offense as well?



JI-HYUN RYU: Some of you may know already and the previous national team's lineup. We had good, solid left-handed hitters. I was a batting coach on the previous tournament. Then there was difficult at the time to make a roster. We didn't have that much depth of right-handed hitters. It has been our weak point.

But since then, last year's and February in 2025, that was something I would like to get through it. Some of the right-handed hitters, such as Jahmai Jones and Whitcomb as well, they swing hard and then they did a great job. So I think these two players showed us our depth deeply. I think now our roster have a great combination of right-handed hitters and left-handed hitters.

Our previous lineups we only have a good, solid left-handed hitters, so for the opponent teams it easy to face lefty pitching against us, but it wasn't. It is not right now.

For tomorrow, we're going to have a day off, and let's see some of the player got hurt for tonight. Regarding the starting lineup, the game against Japan, we'll see how our team goes for tomorrow's day off, then the practice day.

Q. A previous couple of tournament the first round was very difficult, but tonight you got ten double-digit base hit and 11 runs. It was a big game for winning. How do you evaluate for the next three games for the first round?

JI-HYUN RYU: Yes, before the game start, as I mentioned and also previous comment that I said, I have not much for saying about the offense. We have great momentum right now, and we also have a day off tomorrow, so we could fix. Also, we are going to have great preparation and get some rest, then be ready for day after tomorrow Japan's game.

Q. Your next game is going to be Team Japan. Can you describe any game plans, if possible, or if you could mention to us who the key player for the Team Japan. Also, if you could mention your probable



starting pitcher for Team Japan's game.

JI-HYUN RYU: Can you help me out who is going to be the starter for Team Japan's game? Well, it's just joking.

The important thing is we have a day off tomorrow. That's the key for the Team Korea. Currently we just finished the first game. Then it's not right time to mention to you guys that about our second game.

Today, once again, just finished the first game, so once we go back to the hotel, it's time to start preparing for the Game 2.

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