

World Baseball Classic: Pool C - Korea vs Japan

Saturday, 7 March, 2026

Tokyo, Japan

Tokyo Dome

Team Korea

Hyeseong Kim

Pregame Press Conference

Q. What is in your mind right now? It's a big game coming. Your teammate Shohei Ohtani is an opponent. So what's your thought on this?

HYESEONG KIM: First, for the games, yes, the momentum, my emotions is always the same as every single game. Then secondly, Shohei is a great athlete, but today we play against him. He is one of our opponents.

So I don't focus only Shohei yet.

Q. I heard that you have a great preparation yesterday. Japan, Team Japan is defending champion. It's going to be a tough game. Previous 2023 WBBC championship games Shohei said, hey, we have a (indiscernible) but we don't admire too many not to get a win. In these kind of conversation, did you mention to your teammate yesterday?

HYESEONG KIM: First of all, regarding the baseball, the opposite result is happen a lot. I'm not saying Japan is better than us. I'm not saying that. But opposite can be happen at any time.

So I have nothing to say to my teammates. We are the same feeling, so all I can say is just play hard for tonight.

Q. Back in 2006 and 2009, WBBC Japan versus Korea is a die-hard serious game. At that time I think you were a kid. Do you have any memory on that? And today's match, if you have any specific thought to play against Japan.

HYESEONG KIM: Yes, when I was a child I had been watching in such WBBC and other international matches. I was watching my elder players playing. I had so much fun. I had a great memory. I'm always ambition of being part of a National Team, and here it happen.

Lately I've been watching the past highlight tournament



history and I learned a lot. So emotional.

Q. What about you guys scoring? You are doing (indiscernible) plus, some of the big homerun or the clutch hit happen. You guys have like gold statue. What are these meaning?

HYESEONG KIM: First, the performance, regarding the performance, all player were having a meeting. We had a meeting, hey, what kind of gesture, ceremony, performance we should do? One of our goal is flying to Miami, so that is the based meaning on that.

Q. How do you feel about Miami, where our quarterfinal is going to be held?

HYESEONG KIM: Well, this is the destination, must-go destination. Like previously I said, I've been watching the past WBBC and our elder player played hard. When I was a kid, Team Korea always went to at least quarterfinal, semifinal, so I'm trying hard to do my best and make it happen to go to Miami.

Q. Mr. Kim, previous WBBC you missed play, opportunity. You didn't play the game against Team Japan. This tournament you are going to have the very important key role of the team. Previously you played -- your stage has been changed to Major League Baseball and you played very hard in Dodgers. Tonight's content, let's talk about that generally. Team Japan is defending champion. Team Japan has been always a great reputation. How do you feel against playing Japan tonight?

HYESEONG KIM: First of all, previous WBBC, yes, I didn't play. I didn't have that much opportunity to play a lot. But this year I had an opportunity to play on daily basis. The huge difference is just my age. I'm getting older. But my passion is always equal as previous.

I'm trying not to have any regret to play.

And regarding Team Japan, yes, Team Japan is No. 1 prediction, but we are on the same pool, we are the Pool



C. I believe that this experience is going to be a great experience to me.

Q. Did you watch Ohtani's grand slam as you and Shohei were the same teammate? What was your thought watching Shohei's grand slam last night?

HYESEONG KIM: Yes, I was watch the game very seriously and he's so cool. Although the game is not the game against us and as an audience he's such a great and as a teammate I'm always cheering and supporting him.

Only for today he's an opponent player so whenever he hit the groundball I'm make sure to have perfect defense to make him out.

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