

World Baseball Classic: Pool C - Korea vs Japan

Saturday, 7 March, 2026

Tokyo, Japan

Tokyo Dome

Team Japan

Shohei Ohtani

Postgame Press Conference

Japan 8, Korea 6

Q. What a close ballgame. What is in your mind right now?

SHOHEI OHTANI: What a great game and we could win or with could lost. That's so close game.

Q. At the bottom the third you hit back-to-back games home run. What was in your mind when you had second at-bat tonight? How do you feel right after you hit?

SHOHEI OHTANI: That was one run behind -- oh, my second at-bat? So when he had an at-bat I'm trying to have a good swing, try to have a good at-bat, then I think I swing very good.

Q. Your teammate Sukuki hit back-to-back homerun. How do you feel good Suzuki having Suzuki with your teammates?

SHOHEI OHTANI: He's so great. His first jack and second jack, both of them are very nice. His swing mechanic is great.

Then also he took the walk I think at his fourth at-bat. Everything is great by watching him. He's great.

Q. Tonight a lot of players did their role on their own. Looking back to today's game, when was the time you thought, oh, maybe we're going to be a winner?

SHOHEI OHTANI: Probably the biggest moment was Seiya's first jack, first two homeruns. That gives us confidence back. Seiya's first homerun early, that was early in the game, we gave up three runs first, but his first jack meant a lot to me. I think the first two homerun was huge to us.



Q. Today after your homer you say Yusei Kikuchi came up to you and you hugged at the dugout. Since you and Yusei were from same high school, by watching Yusei, how do you feel about?

SHOHEI OHTANI: Well, I guess he was a bit -- he has a bit pressure on it and as a starter with such a big games, always the first inning starting of the game is always difficult.

So when we score tied, then if the tied score helped him, I am pleased. Then I was told by Yusei, thank you to being tied game.

The atmosphere of the dugout was such a great.

Q. Yesterday and today before the game start, before the game, pre-game you have BP on the field, which you usually don't back in the states. What was the point? What do you do on the field?

SHOHEI OHTANI: Yes, it is just early in the season. Sometimes I hit outside during spring training. I feel my body and my swing mechanic is not yet, and I have something that I only can confirm by hitting outside.

So these are the things. Although it is during the WBBC tournament, I swing outside to confirm my condition and swing.

Q. When you hit the homerun, you guys have been doing the matcha whisking. This time you told your dugout to calm down and you didn't do it. I would love to know what you were thinking and why you did that?

SHOHEI OHTANI: Yes, we gave up run, are ahead, and the momentum of our dugout was kind of be rushed.

But after we made tied, so I am trying to send a message to dugout, hey, calm down. Let's go. Game is still tied. So that's what it means.

Q. Yesterday someone asked the manager if he thought there was something different between you in



Osaka and you and the way you played here because you didn't have any hits. Wondering can you tell us has there been a difference in your approach that you've been able to flip the switch here and have the performances you've had over the past two games?

SHOHEI OHTANI: Well, first of all, the previous two games in Osaka is just squad game. It's not an official game. So I was still under the condition. Every at-bat I face a lot the different pitchers in order to prepare for the first game of the WBBC.

So I think I had a great time. I had a good at-bat. When we had two games in Osaka. That's how I look back to my previous at-bat, previous game.

Q. As a ball player you are probably the top of the top from all over the world. As a top elite athlete, looking back the previous two games how do you feel? How do you think about Team Japan's previous two games?

SHOHEI OHTANI: Yes, we have some -- let's we only play two games, some hitters are hot. Some hitter don't. All in all, we are very concentrate on whatever the result is, and that's why we have a great two result, 2-0 result.

So does Team Korea. They have a very good, solid at-bats, so it's a very tough competitors that Team Korea was. Very tough competitors. It was such a good game tonight.

Q. To come through a tough game like this what kind of momentum does it give Japan for the rest of the tournament?

SHOHEI OHTANI: Yes, the previous WBBC 2023 we had a very tough game, and this is kind of -- the winning today's game is meant a lot. I think each, every player had a great job so that's how we won.

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