

# World Baseball Classic: Pool C - Australia vs Japan

Sunday, 8 March, 2026

Tokyo, Japan

Tokyo Dome

## Team Japan

## Masataka Yoshida

### Pregame Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Yesterday you won such a tough game. Throughout last night's competition, did Team Japan get more bonding, team harmony?

MASATAKA YOSHIDA: Last night we led three run ahead. I think previous last game against Korea, same thing happened. We gave up run earlier, but the atmosphere of the dugout is not rush. We have like nine inning to play, and everybody know that we know how to score, and we score more than we had confidence. So we had a great atmosphere.

**Q. As of now, before tonight's game Team Japan secured the quarterfinal to Miami.**

MASATAKA YOSHIDA: I just realized. Thank you for letting me know.

**Q. In tonight's contest the Emperor of Japan is attending. How do you feel about?**

MASATAKA YOSHIDA: As a citizen of Japan, it is such an honor. I am trying to do my best to make the day brighter. It is going to be a wonderful day today.

**Q. Previously you were hitting number four spot as clean-up hitters. What's in your mind?**

MASATAKA YOSHIDA: Not only the player, but all the coaches, the staff are excellent. I don't care who is hitting the number four hole. I'm trying to think on who is going to, which numbers, but as one unit, I'm trying to focus the Team Japan's offense as one line.

**Q. This is an undefeated match against Australia. What is your impression of the Australian's offense?**

MASATAKA YOSHIDA: Impression... well, the Olympics and the Premier12 and the WBC, Team Japan has many games play against. Fortunate enough, we won, but no



one knows what's going to happen at the game until the last inning.

All we are aiming is take 4-0, advance to Miami, so that's where we are going for tonight.

**Q. Their lead-off guy is a US Major League No. 1 draft pick, Bazzana. If you could name some of the players you would like to pay attention, let me know.**

MASATAKA YOSHIDA: Yeah, probably, Mr. Bazzana.

**Q. Now, once again, congratulations to moving forward to the quarterfinal to Miami. What's on your mind to play against Australia tonight?**

MASATAKA YOSHIDA: As I mentioned previously, this is the game the Emperor is watching, so I wish all the best not only the players. Then also, I do my best to bring the win for a lot of fans and supporters.

**Q. Since you got home here in Japan, your condition has been great according to Mr. Ibata. Previously you played at a national team. What's the key to succeed to maintain your condition?**

MASATAKA YOSHIDA: Yes, last year I think looking back to that 2025, probably maybe the second half of the season my condition got better. Then day by day I am staying healthy.

As of now, my condition has been great. That's what I can say to myself.

**Q. During the Spring Training, what was your theme to work out?**

MASATAKA YOSHIDA: This is going to be my fourth year playing for the Major League Baseball, so I try to build up my strengths and conditionings as a body. As a player, I'm trying to keep the higher condition. I think I just spend good time at the Spring Training.

**Q. Regarding your time condition, the time you**



**spending by for more career you're spending as professional baseball player, is there something changed once you get older and older?**

MASATAKA YOSHIDA: Well, I am going to be 33 this year. I don't get feel, oh, I'm getting old, or I never feel like a weakness, but how would I describe? I think everybody has to go through the weakness of the condition, so what I focus is I'm doing my daily routine day by day.

**Q. Previously you mentioned Team Japan's offense as one unite, one line. Looking back at Orix's offense, any time you play, is there any differences in the way of thinking?**

MASATAKA YOSHIDA: Basically, all I am trying to do is swing hard every single at-bat, of my AB. Of course, it all depends on the situation and the run differences, if we have a runner on base or not.

There is something we have to adjust, and it all depends on the situation. Basically, I'm trying to focus to swing hard.

**Q. Ibata just mentioned last night's game, your potential is probably No. 1. Whenever it's in clutch situation, you are so focused in these clutch situations.**

MASATAKA YOSHIDA: Yes, I'm always trying to swing hard, and at last, if I could make Mr. Ibata smile, that's something I'd like to do.

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