

World Baseball Classic: Pool D

Thursday, 5 March, 2026

Miami, Florida, USA

LoanDepot Park

Team Venezuela

Salvador Perez

Ranger Suarez

Workout Day Press Conference



Q. (No microphone.)

SALVADOR PEREZ: We are all workers. We are going to do our best. We are all captains.

Q. Salvador, your coach told us about your performance and work and that he was impressed by your performance. Do you ask him, what can I do in Milwaukee so that I can put into practice here, number one. Is Salvador working to improve something in his career? This team had a couple of games. What did you see as captain in the Venezuelan roster?

SALVADOR PEREZ: Yes, that makes the difference in terms of what kind of player do you want to be in the majors. Sacrifice, dedication, effort. You have to be willing to get better and better.

Some people say, well, Salvador has a couple of years left. Baseball is very different. I try to improve on a daily basis until I take off my uniform.

With the guys, well, yesterday we were being criticized because of the result in the preparation again, but it's very important to start well this tournament. Some people bought tickets to see the Venezuelan team, but it's very important to start from scratch. Yesterday we are in good shape. One of the players almost got injured, but he is okay. Many of the players are very excited. They are participating for the first time in the Classic, and we are all excited.

I know that they are going to do their best to win.

Q. Ranger, you have opened very important games, especially in the past season, from 2021 on. How do you evaluate what you are going to do tomorrow? You are going to pitch tomorrow in a different stadium.

RANGER SUAREZ: As far as I have seen, it's a different

team. I will try to be calm on the mound, to be confident, as I have done in this season and in the playoffs.

Q. I know you aren't going to play the Dominican Republic until later in the tournament, but how do you approach a lineup like that, that essentially looks like an All-Star team?

SALVADOR PEREZ: Look, I have always said, not only the Dominican Republic, any team in the Classic can be a surprise. We have to play strong. We have to do our best every day, no matter the team we are going to face.

Of course the DR is a great team with many talented players. We are going to wait for that day, and let's see what happens.

Q. Salvador, you have played Nicaragua in Kansas City. All the games are so important. What do you know about Nicaragua? What do you think about Dusty Baker as manager? How are you preparing for that kind of --

SALVADOR PEREZ: I've known him for a long time. Great guy. I respect all the Nicaraguan players. They have many players that have parents and families here. They are very good, and that's why we have to do our best on the field.

Q. Salvador, as one of the leaders of this team, how do you speak about favorite teams, Venezuela, the Dominican Republic? How do you speak about that on a daily basis?

SALVADOR PEREZ: I didn't understand your question, but anyway, we're all the same. It's just one game. You have to score runs. We're not better than anybody, but anybody is better than us. So we're going to have fun, to do our best, and let's see what happens.

Q. Politics and sports don't always mix. Sometimes in the world, they force them together. How do you guys handle all the noise from the outside right now? Does it affect you in any way? Should it affect you in any



way?

SALVADOR PEREZ: No, I don't try to pay attention to that, you know. I understand when fans buy a ticket, they want to see the team win. Win or lose, it's part of the game. If I give everything I have that night and I prepare myself for the game, I'll be back home happy.

Everybody knows how hard it is. I can control what I can control. The rest, God has control of that.

Q. Salvador, you started wearing the Venezuelan jersey as a young player. Taking into consideration your career as a whole, how are you taking advantage of this opportunity as a captain? And Ranger, what has it meant to you to have Salvador as captain in this Classic?

SALVADOR PEREZ: I said that a couple of days ago. When you play representing your country, it's different. It's a unique feeling. It's like a seventh game in a World Series. Something that players have to be there and to get excited when they hear the fans or the people from Venezuela supporting you, when you hear the National Anthem. In 2023 the greatest game was against the Dominican Republic. I saw the stadium. It was crowded. It was packed.

It is important to see the rivalry that we have on the field, and you are defending your country. This is something unique. And I thank God for 2013 I was there in that first Classic, and I have been representing my country for so many years now.

But the mindset is the same, to win, to do our best, to try to get the crown. Otherwise you'd better go back to your team and win playing with your team. It's like the start of the season; the goal is to win the World Series. If you don't believe in that, it's going to be tough for you to make it.

Come on, how do you feel having me as a captain?

RANGER SUAREZ: Well, having Salvador Perez as the captain of our team, the national team, and how he represents Venezuela, we are very proud to have Salvy catching for us in this tournament. I'm very excited for him and everything he has done. We are very happy. We are very proud of him, for his career.

SALVADOR PEREZ: Thank you. (Laughter).

Q. You are saying almost the same, that this is almost like a World Series game. Not all the players in the team know what a World Series game is, but you both know what it's been like to be in the postseason. How

do you speak with the other players that don't have that experience to get ready for this kind of tournament? It's only seven games.

RANGER SUAREZ: It's kill or be killed. No, your turn.

SALVADOR PEREZ: That's very important, those emotions, to do what you can. That's what we have been speaking about at the clubhouse. I have been in many important games here and in Venezuela. They have been in finals.

Seeing that packed stadium is not -- you have to calm down your emotions.

I have talked to them, and I told them it's going to be beautiful to sing the anthem, to hear the fans supporting us. They have to control their emotions and do what they know how to do.

Q. In terms of the game, do you think that you have good possibilities to get the win in each game if you get to the seventh inning?

SALVADOR PEREZ: Of course. The best pitchers are reserved for the eighth and the ninth innings if you are winning the seventh inning. The chances are going to be higher if you have good arms in the bullpen, you are going to have great chances to win.

They all speak about the Dominican Republic and how we are going to beat Nicaragua, Israel, and the others. It's impossible to speak about the Dominican Republic if we have to beat the other teams before.

We all know about that. I know that the fans are waiting for that game because of the rivalry, et cetera. But we have to focus on the other teams, as well, because all the teams have talented players.

It's a beautiful rivalry. I know when we are in these tournaments, we are rivals. I am very happy about the players in Kansas City, but I know that this game is very anticipated. But we have to win the first three games before facing the Dominicans.

You have to wait, as well. Everything, batting, pitching, errors. Everything is to be considered. This is a very short tournament.

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