

World Baseball Classic: Pool D - Netherlands vs Venezuela

Friday, 6 March, 2026

Miami, Florida, USA

LoanDepot Park

Team Netherlands

Coach Andruw Jones

Pregame Press Conference

Q. 16 years ago something happened. The Dominicans -- remember that was when the Netherlands beat twice the Dominican Republic. You were not in that team, but you saw the impact of that defeat. Could you describe that experience? What do you think of present team for 2026?

ANDRUW JONES: Like you said, that was 16 years ago. I don't remember what I did yesterday, so...

I've seen those games, but you don't know what can happen in baseball. We scored more runs, and that's why we won that game.

This is a very short tournament, and we all know that we need a good team to win. But there is the rivalry between the Dominican Republic and other teams. The United States is very strong as well, because there are many players from the majors in that roster.

But like I said yesterday, we are going to play baseball, and the team that makes less errors is going to win. So no one in the team today remembers that. Sharlon Schoop and Shairon Martis are the only players in that team at that time.

We don't speak about that. We lost to them in 2013, so we still remember that. We have to pay attention to the game, and let's see who wins.

Q. What made you want to take on the responsibility of managing this team, and how did that come together before the tournament?

ANDRUW JONES: I think an opportunity opened when they didn't bring Hensley Meulens back. I talked with some of the guys that was on the team now, and they were like, hey, Andruw, if you're going to be the manager, I want to be on your team. So I started talking with the federation, and then after that, everything started like that.



I've been part of it as a player. I've been part of it as a bench coach. I still treat it like I'm a coach. I said before, yesterday, I'm just a title. I'm just a coach that's going to try and help these guys and put them in the right situations so they can go out there and perform and help us win.

Q. I think so many guys on this team have looked up to you when they were growing up or breaking into baseball. What's it mean to you to represent Curaçao and the Netherlands throughout your career?

ANDRUW JONES: I mean, it's big. You see how baseball in Curaçao has grown. I'm so proud that I could lead some of these guys to believe in themselves, to go out there and chase their dream. Now that they're all here and helping us try to win this tournament, it's awesome.

I tell them all the time, take advantage of the opportunity they're going to give you, and I can see a lot of them are doing it, so I'm very proud of that.

Q. Coach, when you were a kid, did you ever imagine that after all the Golden Gloves you've won and the accolades you've gotten, did you ever imagine you would lead a team representing your country?

ANDRUW JONES: When you chase your dream that you want to do -- and I started since I was a little kid at six years old, I played around in the backyard -- you want to play on TV. I never thought I was going to play professional baseball. So when I turned 13, the opportunities started rolling around, and then you start thinking, oh, maybe I want to be a Major League Baseball player.

When I got the opportunity at 16, I signed as a professional.

You don't think about those things or being a coach when you're trying to chase a dream that you always dreamed about being it. You kind of coach yourself because you have to know yourself so you know what you can do, what you cannot do. That's when the coaching already started a



little bit.

But I think when you're done from the game and you're trying to lead a bunch of young guys that obviously they look up to you growing up, it's fun. It's really fun. You can see they're all excited, and they're ready to represent the country.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about your catcher and what it means to have a guy like Tromp, a veteran, leading a young staff?

ANDRUW JONES: I mean, that's a good question. I think I put a lot of trust into him because every time when I tell him, I say, hey, Tromp, you run the show. I can't put everybody in the right position to be successful, but he's the one that sees the game right in front of him. So I give him a lot of trust into him and say, hey, you lead them.

He's a great catcher. He knows how to call games. He knows how to study the game. I give all the trust with him and the coaching staff that he can go out there and lead this young staff and to put them in the right spot to win.

Q. We know there's a saying that the catchers make the best managers, and now that you're a manager and you were just talking about how great your catcher is, do you think you could see Tromp having those qualities?

ANDRUW JONES: I could see him 100 percent being a manager. He's very vocal. He talks a lot. He's always involved in everything.

Like you say, a lot of the catching you see back in the day coming through, you can see a lot of catchers that turn into great managers because they actually see the game so much.

I think for me, from my standpoint, playing center field, I saw the game a lot. I saw a lot of pitchers, the way they go about the batters and stuff like that. So I studied the game a lot to help defensively. I think most times guys that study the game and try to learn and learn positions and stuff like that, can turn into a great manager.

But I think Tromp, I think in the future when he's done playing, I think he's got a good future to be a manager.

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