

World Baseball Classic: Pool D - Netherlands vs Venezuela

Friday, 6 March, 2026

Miami, Florida, USA

LoanDepot Park

Team Venezuela

Luis Arraez

Wilson Contreras

Postgame Press Conference



Venezuela 6, Netherlands 2

Q. Luis, there are so many comments on the capability to take bases compared to the ability to swing and hit. What was your mindset to take that base?

LUIS ARRAEZ: I was just doing what I know to do. I saw Acuña on the base, and I said, well, I'm going to wait for my good pitch. Thank you, Wilson, for that, and everything was fine. The pitcher was okay. Fastball, but I was able to take the base.

Q. Luis, how do you feel about being the third bat in your team? You did a good job. How did you feel?

LUIS ARRAEZ: I'm very proud. I'm very proud to be in the lineup, especially representing my country, Venezuela. Whatever Omar needs me, even if I have to bring water to the guys, we are living a dream. This was a dream as a child, and we have to thank God, and here I am.

I'm emotional because I'm hitting after Acuña and Wilson Contreras is hitting after me. I'm very proud of that, and I'm just going to do my job.

Q. A question for either. There was a rally in that big inning. We know that you are very good at hitters. What went well there? We saw how Sanoja came in. Is it important for you to see those players that come in and perform like that?

WILSON CONTRERAS: The most important thing in that inning is we were able to identify the pitches. He was working out of the zone, and we were patient in the key moments. Five hitters scored hits, and then we were able to continue hitting. We were able to solve that inning, scoring good hits, and increase the difference.

Regarding Sanoja, he's great. He hits a lot. He's very

impressive. He's a very talented player. We trust our teammates. No one has to have a big name. No one has to be No. 1. We have to take into account just details. We have to play for the next player. Everything is going to be all right like that.

Q. Luis, baseball is so different for many. Baseball today is different from baseball before. But now you are representing your country. You have a personality; we know that you play representing your country. Is that important to you? You said that baseball is different.

LUIS ARRAEZ: I don't think so because I continue hitting hits. As long as I have the opportunity to help my team and to play baseball the way we used to play it, that's very important. I just want to be healthy and ask God to give me new opportunities to take.

WILSON CONTRERAS: Baseball has been evaluated a different way. I don't take it personally, but I don't think it is fair for a player such as Arraez not to take advantage of what he deserves. It is important that the players playing in the majors are part of our team. Arraez is a great player. He was born, I would say, in the wrong time, but it's true. Luis Arraez is a great hitter. I just wanted to say that, to vent it out.

Q. Wilson, recently you spoke about wearing the Venezuelan jersey. How did you feel when listening to the National Anthem and being the fourth bat? Is that important to you?

WILSON CONTRERAS: It's a dream come true to be here, especially with the whole team, all my teammates. I said that in 2017. 2023 I was not able to come. But God's timing is perfect, and I'm here for a reason. I try to control my emotions, adrenaline, because a Classic is different from the majors. It feels different. My mindset is not to have a big name or a small name. Just my mindset is just to help the team. Try to control my emotions. Many people know that I'm very emotional, and I did a good job in that sense today.



Having Venezuela on my chest is very important to me. I have defended my country in many occasions. I love my family. I love my country, the country I was born and raised. And I have done many things for Venezuela, and I will continue doing many things for Venezuela. I will never regret that.

Q. Omar López spoke about your timing, that you looked very well today, and in West Palm Beach you were playing with a lot of intensity. Did you feel pressure as a fourth bat? And the emotions that you mentioned, maybe you vented out when things started to go well, right? And the presence of your brother in terms of emotions, does that impact you?

WILSON CONTRERAS: Speaking about my brother first, I saw my brother, very calm. That helps me a lot. Seeing him play helps me a lot because I wish to be as calm as he is. But I'm not. I'm very proud to be in the Venezuelan team with my brother and the other teammates. This is a dream come true. We always dreamt as a child to be in the national team. We haven't been able to represent Venezuela in other international competitions, and we have this opportunity now.

Regarding the timing, I accepted the commitment when I was invited to come to this Classic. I'm ready in terms of mindset. I've tried to do my best. That's why the exhibition games to me are very important, because you have to be well-positioned for the competition. That's what I tried to do in West Palm Beach.

Regarding my position as the fourth bat, I was kind of surprised, to be honest, and it is a responsibility to be in the middle of the lineup. But you have a reinforced lineup in the team, from the first to the ninth, but if you fail, you have great hitters behind you such as my brother, Abreu, Salvador. You're playing for the team. You don't think about yourself.

That's what we showed today as Venezuela. Miakel Garcia, for example, was great. That was the spark, then Arraez on base in a key moment and that's our key -- the details in those important moments and to pay attention to the details.

Q. Arraez, we were lucky enough to see you practice in the DR. How do you feel about that? Do you feel that that makes the difference, to train in DR with Nelson and all the people supporting you and the expectations for Friday to face the DR?

LUIS ARRAEZ: We love you, by the way. We all know that. Nelson has supported me all the time. He's my mentor. When I have a bad day, he calls me and he asks,

what's going on, what's your routine. I went to the DR to train with him. He started training with me, and I told him, old guy, are you getting ready for the Classic? No, that's your stuff.

I have to thank God, and I have to thank Nelson. He brought me to the DR. The country opened the doors to me to eat rice with corn and pork. I have to thank God I have to play against the Dominican Republic. Well, we have to respect the team and to go out and enjoy it.

Q. Talk about what it's like being back here in Miami playing in front of these fans and being in the World Baseball Classic in general?

LUIS ARRAEZ: I'm back to my house, especially here. Miami gave me a lot of opportunity to play in front of a lot of fans, Latin people. Did you see a lot of Latin people to support us? You want to do something good for them. I'm really excited, and especially to represent my teammates, my city, and go out and enjoy together.

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