

World Baseball Classic: Pool D - Nicaragua vs Netherlands

Saturday, 7 March, 2026

Miami, Florida, USA

LoanDepot Park

Team Netherlands

Manager Andruw Jones

Pregame Press Conference

Q. Your son is a player that is still growing. In your opinion as a baseball guy, what are the main strengths of Druw and the aspects to be improved?

ANDRUW JONES: He has to get better in everything. This is baseball, and every day he goes out, he has to learn. And I believe that he understands that. He's a young player. He loves learning. But he has to work on all areas. He's got to be consistent with the bat, and he's going to get better and better. He loves baseball, and he's been playing since he was three or four years old. He loves batting, and he loves the game.

Q. How about the starting pitcher today against Nicaragua? A very young pitcher, 18 years old. What did you see in him to define him as the opening pitcher today?

ANDRUW JONES: I have seen him pitching in Arizona. Like you said, he's a young pitcher. I love talking to everyone, and I told them that we have young pitchers, and I wanted to bring them to the team because we can see if they can do it or not looking forward. So the coaching staff and myself decided to send him to the mound to pitch at least for two or three innings.

Q. What's it like to put the jersey on and be a manager as a Hall of Famer now? And what's it like to look across the diamond and see a guy like Dusty Baker that you're managing against?

ANDRUW JONES: Putting this uniform on is always great, to be honest with you. You're representing your country. That's why we call it a kingdom. We don't go as one. Obviously some people like to call themselves one country. This is a big group. We're all like a big family, from Aruba to Bonaire to Sint Maarten to Sint Eustatius and Holland, Saba, all those islands.

If we could pick a baseball player that can come out there



that can do the job, he will be on the team, so as much players as we can. We can see now that we have a lot of pitchers from Aruba that's come out, that's doing this job, so we're proud about that. But putting this uniform on is always a great honor.

Obviously you said about the Hall of Fame. When I got that phone call, it's always a great honor to receive that phone call because a lot of guys don't get that. A lot of guys that have great numbers and that have a great career probably never got that call. So to get that call was a great honor, for me, for the kingdom, for the island of Curaçao, for my family, my fans that have followed my career. So it's a great honor.

Seeing Dusty on the other side, I know Dusty very well. He's a great friend. I played against him a lot, him being a manager. He always gave me a lot of crap about every time when he comes to town, where is the great soul food, and I always told him I don't eat that. He always gave me trash about that. He was like, what do you eat? Couple Big Macs. That's why you don't hit homers.

But every time I hit a home run, he's always mad and chewing his toothpicks on the side. Like, I should not tell him nothing about that.

But it's a great honor to see him on the side as a future Hall of Famer manager. He's a great friend, and can't wait to start the game against him.

Q. How important has been do you think the success of the Netherlands? You have been in the semifinals two times, Venezuela only one. To grow the popularity of baseball in Curaçao specifically.

ANDRUW JONES: Great question. I've been once as a player, once as the coach. To be honest, the chance that we had was when we played in Asia. The group was not as strong -- I mean, all the teams in this Classic are here because they're very good. I'm not saying anything against Australia, Chinese Taipei, Korea, Japan, no. But there are groups where you have more chances to advance to the second round.



In this group we are playing Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, the United States, Venezuela. But we have a good team. We had a good team. We had players that wanted to do their job. We had veterans, some young players that are playing today. Bogaerts, for example, he started back in 2013. He was a very young player. He was a rookie. He was not playing shortstop. He was on third base.

So you can see these guys that started playing from the beginning, and they made it all the way here. This is special.

In Asia, the chances to go to the second round is easier.

Q. With all the talent from Curaçao, do you think that you can represent Curaçao as an island soon, or do you believe that you are stronger representing the kingdom?

ANDRUW JONES: Excellent question. I have been asked that question many, many times now. It would be interesting to see that looking forward. But today, however, the kingdom is stronger than Curaçao by itself. Many players are going to play for the kingdom, but maybe in the future. But right now, yes, the kingdom is stronger.

Q. Is there anything that you've picked up about Dusty's disposition or the way that he handles things that you've carried into this tournament?

ANDRUW JONES: Well, managers is a tough job, to be honest with you, because now you have 30 guys, but normally you have 28, 25. You have to know how to handle 25 characters. I think what I admire of other managers that know how to handle 25 guys. But you interact with 25 players, and it's a tough job because you don't know which one you've got to kick in the butt or maybe this one you have to push or maybe this one you have to kiss. It's just a tough job.

I saw Bobby do it. I admired Ozzie Guillen when I played with him, Ron Washington, Joe Girardi, Joe Torre, guys that I admire and see from the other side. Like Dusty Baker, how he handled the guys. And you bond with them and you be one of them because you were in their shoes once upon a time. So you guide them that way. That's what I admire about them.

Q. Small sample size so far, but has there been one thing that's stood out that you didn't expect that has been a positive?

ANDRUW JONES: Everything is positive, to be honest

with you. Even though we lost yesterday, it's positive. These guys, in their mind they know what they did wrong yesterday, so they know what they need to do better today.

We just need to play better and make less mistakes, and we should be on top.

The positive is just being here, to be honest with you.

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