

# World Baseball Classic: Pool D - Nicaragua vs Netherlands

Saturday, 7 March, 2026

Miami, Florida, USA

LoanDepot Park

## Team Nicaragua

## Manager Dusty Baker

### Postgame Press Conference



Netherlands 4, Nicaragua 3

**Q. Was there any thought to walk Ozzie in that situation? Can you talk about the effort? You guys made a heck of an effort today bouncing back from yesterday.**

DUSTY BAKER: Yeah, it was a heck of a game. No, I didn't think about walking Ozzie because you don't put the winning run on base. The ball just caught too much of the plate. Obando, he did a heck of a job for us. Big play is when that ball hit the bag. And started with a flare with two strikes, two outs, and then the ball hit the bag. So no, I wasn't thinking about -- I thought about possibly turning it around, but Ozzie, I think he's a better hitter right-handed than he is left-handed.

**Q. After that crushing defeat, how do you see the team for the rest of the tournament?**

DUSTY BAKER: Well, you have no choice. It was a crushing defeat, not only for us but for the whole country of Nicaragua. You've got to lick your wounds and then come back tomorrow.

**Q. Erasmo going to the dugout, what did they tell to you?**

DUSTY BAKER: Yeah, he did a heck of a job. He just came over to me and said that, hey, man, don't worry about the runners stealing off of him because he holds the runners pretty good.

**Q. We see at the final game all the guys stay in the dugout with obviously sad faces. You have a lot of experience with that situation; we know it's a short tournament. How do you come back from this situation, and also a message to the fans?**

DUSTY BAKER: Yeah, it hurts. Like I said, it hurts for our

team and it hurts for the whole country. It's a very difficult situation, but it's a situation where you not only deal with the joys of winning, but you've also got to deal with the agonies of losing. It hurts, and it hurts a lot.

**Q. It looks like Jeter Downs thought he hit a home run in the seventh, started pointing to the dugout, and a little bit of an embarrassing moment. Then he comes back and makes that great play on the field and hits the home run. What can you say about him being able to come back?**

DUSTY BAKER: Yeah, he played a great game. He saved a run out there on defense. I didn't think that he really got the first one because this park is deep. I know he got the second one. I just hoped that it went out of the park and didn't hit off the top of the wall.

**Q. I'm going to speak as a fan of the team. This is a very painful defeat. I want to ask you about the last moment, Obando had been working for a while, runners were warming up. What kind of evaluation did you do in order to keep Angel on the mound?**

DUSTY BAKER: Well, he was throwing good. It's not like he was tired. He's a starter. He's not just a reliever. He was throwing the ball good. He was throwing hard. Like I said, they flared one into right that you can't help and you can't do anything about hitting the bag.

If I take him out in that situation and the next guy gives it up, then you're going to ask me how come he came out of the game. There is no right answer. There's only a right or a wrong outcome.

**Q. As a Nicaraguan I feel hurt because of this defeat. Did you ever think of sending a left-handed pitcher to face this hitter who is a very strong batter like that?**

DUSTY BAKER: I think he's a better hitter right-handed, at least he was last year. So I really didn't want him facing a left-hander. He's a good hitter both ways, and he's a dangerous guy. But I thought that we had our better chances with him hitting left-handed.



**Q. I think that the teammates went to the mound to talk to the pitcher because he was sad. You are a very experienced manager; you have a lot of experience and you have faced many situations. Now you have to talk to the guy and tell him that not everything is over for him and that Nicaragua is not eliminated. How are you going to work with the confidence with that pitcher?**

DUSTY BAKER: Well, he's a guy that works hard all the time. His future is very bright. We're not giving up on him at all. Anybody that's played this game has been the hero and also been the guy to give it up.

Hopefully it's a learning experience, and we learn from it. He threw the ball in an area where he didn't want to throw it. And anytime you're throwing a baseball, you can't always throw the ball exactly where you want it.

**Q. The details make the difference in a baseball game. Speaking about the seconds or minutes before the tragedy, I would like to ask you about Bogaerts, the hit to third. Do you think Chase could have done something else. And then not to face Albies?**

DUSTY BAKER: No, I don't think so. That was bad luck for us. They say it's a game of inches, and that ball just hit the third base bag and bounced over.

We had chances to score more runs earlier in the game. We left bases loaded a couple times. We only see the outcome and the end of the game, but there were a lot of things that happened during the game and before where we could have scored more runs, too.

**Q. You said that you didn't wait for him to hit the first opportunity but the second pitch. Did you tell Obando to throw that pitch to Albies?**

DUSTY BAKER: No, I didn't tell him to throw that pitch. He threw the ball in an area where he did not want it to go. There's no way you're going to throw it right down the middle. I'm going to tell him no. Like I said, that was a mistake.

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