

# World Baseball Classic: Pool D - Nicaragua vs Israel

Sunday, 8 March, 2026

Miami, Florida, USA

LoanDepot Park

## Team Nicaragua

## Jeter Downs

## Ismael Munguia

### Pregame Press Conference



way you lost, do you believe that you just flip the page and Nicaragua is going to be excited and able to get the first win in the Classic? You almost made it yesterday, but you couldn't. Is the team ready to beat Israel today?

**Q. Jeter, a lot of emotions yesterday in terms of the ups and downs for the team. Can you talk about what that game was like in terms of the experience you've had in baseball and everything?**

JETER DOWNS: First of all, I'd like to say God is good, and without him none of this is possible, and I'm super blessed and honored to have the opportunity to play here in front of my friends and family back home.

Yeah, it was a pretty cool moment. Pretty wild game, to be honest. It's one of those games where baseball has a way of, like, breaking your heart sometimes. But yeah, we fought, we competed, put a good game together. Ball hitting the bag at the end of the game there, as well, just kind of unlucky.

But that's just the game we play, and that's why we come out here, because it's such a tough game to, one, get 27 outs, and just to compete at the highest level like we are here.

**Q. You're one of a handful of guys that's competed for two teams in this tournament. What's it been like bonding with your teammates this time around in terms of who you're representing?**

JETER DOWNS: It's been an honor. It's been an honor. These guys are amazing. I didn't really know many of them. I got here kind of late from Japan and all that, and they've welcomed me with open arms. The group we have in there is pretty special.

We've all clicked like we've all known each other for a while, and I think Nicaragua should be proud because we're building something special here and just for baseball in general.

**Q. After the loss yesterday, especially considering the**

ISMAEL MUNGUIA: Just like you said, it was a very tough game yesterday. It was painful to all the Nicaraguans because we lost and the way we lost, but that's in the past. We have a fresh mindset, and that is to beat Israel. This is what we are going to do today, beating Israel.

**Q. Do you think the experience you've had in the last years in the Dominican league with the he's Estrellas Orientales team, how has that experience been for you to be a hitter in the Nicaraguan team?**

ISMAEL MUNGUIA: It's a great experience. You learn from the teammates in the Dominican Republic such as Tapia and many others. I think that has been great. I stay really calm and focused.

We faced major league pitchers, talented players, and of course that helped me a lot for the springtime or for this tournament to stay calm, to control my emotions, and to control the game itself.

**Q. Coming back to the national team, is it any different from 2021? Do you feel that you are a leader now? It is your turn now to calm down the guys, that this is baseball today? Is it any different from the Munguia 2021?**

ISMAEL MUNGUIA: Like I said before, now I am more experienced. I have been close to very experienced players in the national team such as Downs, Vientos, Zamora. I have learned a lot with them.

Leadership, well, leadership comes from the heart because we are helping our homeland. We are wearing this jersey to represent our family, as well. Yes, I have been improving and getting more and more experienced on this journey.



**Q. For both of you, how did you process the loss yesterday? We have seen Nicaragua's reaction in Nicaragua. Many people cried. They are still sad because of yesterday's loss.**

ISMAEL MUNGUÍA: Yesterday I felt like I was in a dream I couldn't believe after I saw that Albies homer. I felt kind of disappointed, let down. Someone frustrated me. It hurt. It hurt, because I'm representing my homeland and many fans, my family.

Like I said, it was painful, but today we are excited and we are willing to win.

JETER DOWNS: I don't know how to describe it. I just can't believe what happened. But it's baseball. Sometimes these things happen, things that we don't want. But God has his reasons. Everything happens for a reason.

But today our attitude is different. We are willing to compete. We are going to try to win today, and that's what we can do day after day. From day one, we try to give our all to win every single game when we wear this jersey or any other jersey. You just want to compete and win.

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