

# World Baseball Classic: Pool D - Nicaragua vs Israel

Sunday, 8 March, 2026

Miami, Florida, USA

LoanDepot Park

## Team Israel

## Manager Brad Ausmus

### Postgame Press Conference

Israel 5, Nicaragua 0

#### Q. How big was Dean Kremer's performance tonight?

BRAD AUSMUS: I mean, Dean was great. He got a little tired at the end, but when you go out there four plus -- we really were only expecting four out of him, but he was good to go back out. He was outstanding, especially in the WBC where a lot of times guys are only going two or three innings to start a game.

#### Q. Noah Mendlinger, I think was 3 for 3 with a walk. What can that kind of performance do for a guy's confidence going into a major league season?

BRAD AUSMUS: Well, hopefully it has a snowball effect. He had outstanding at-bats. He's at the bottom of the order so he's getting on for the top of the order, which is huge, because that's where some of our regular big league players are.

He was a table-setter despite the fact he was hitting down low.

#### Q. Have you guys chosen a starter for tomorrow?

BRAD AUSMUS: Ryan Prager.

#### Q. You said before the game this was kind of like preparing for a high school game, not knowing the guys on the other side. Do you think that helped your guys. Not having to face guys like Acuña and some of the Venezuelan players helps, but do you think that helped to not have to worry about who was on the other side?

BRAD AUSMUS: Well, we did have information. We had reports on most of the pitchers, but still, the communication between hitters about the pitchers is huge.



Some of the information we have on some of the guys is a little dated, but we did have some information. But the communication was outstanding. You could see our guys, even when they made an out, coming back in the dugout, telling the guy on deck what he saw. It certainly helped.

#### Q. How different is the feeling walking off the field after a win knowing that there's a couple games left and you're still in this thing as opposed to last night you were still in it but walking off after that game?

BRAD AUSMUS: Yeah, when a tournament is set up like this where you play four teams one time each, every loss feels like a stab to the heart, so you've got to enjoy every win, as well.

#### Q. What does every win feel like?

BRAD AUSMUS: Taking the knife out of the heart for a minute.

#### Q. What was your thoughts on Cole Carrigg's performance tonight, and how important is it to have a player as dynamic as him that you can put up and down the lineup?

BRAD AUSMUS: Yeah, he had some good at-bats, had some good swings, hit that ball hard to center with runners on second and third. Covered some ground at short. Obviously you saw his speed go on display. He's a dynamic player. I can see why he was so highly touted coming out of school.

#### Q. Speaking of up and down the lineup, you had Spencer Horwitz leading off tonight. He was batting cleanup last night. What is it about him that makes him a candidate for both positions?

BRAD AUSMUS: Well, he really gets on base against right-handed pitchers, which they obviously started. So we just flipped him, simple as that. We felt like he'd get on base in front of Bader. Schreck had got on base as well behind Bader. Then Levenson who's been swinging the bat well behind him. We felt like that was the best setup



going into today's game.

**Q. With the win against Nicaragua, the worst the team can do is 1-3 and the best that Nicaragua can do is 1-3. That means Israel will not be relegated to the qualifying round in 2029. Is that on your mind? Is that a relief? Is that not a part of your thinking as you go forward?**

BRAD AUSMUS: It was certainly part of the calculus, there's no question it was. Who knows if I'll be around in 2029. But getting a win was important for the federation. That was part of the calculus.

**Q. Could you talk about your next game tomorrow when you face DR? What do you think will be the key to get the W?**

BRAD AUSMUS: Well, I mean, the DR is one of the best teams in the tournament, no question. I think there's nobody that would dispute that. Up and down the lineup, they've got All-Star caliber players. They've got very good pitching. But we're going to go out there -- until they beat us in nine innings or however long it takes, we have a chance to win, and we're going to go out there with that attitude. We've got to get a quick night's sleep, early game tomorrow, they're going to be well-rested, but we'll take on the challenge.

**Q. With Zach Levenson, was removing him from the game precautionary or purely to get a pinch runner in there?**

BRAD AUSMUS: He fouled off his foot so it didn't hurt to get a pinch runner in there. Like I said, he's been outstanding with the bat, but it just felt like that was the time.

**Q. He's good to go for tomorrow?**

BRAD AUSMUS: I think he'll be fine, yeah.

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