

World Baseball Classic: Pool D - Dominican Republic vs Israel

Monday, 9 March, 2026

Miami, Florida, USA

LoanDepot Park

Team Dominican Republic Manager Albert Pujols

Pregame Press Conference

Q. Could you give us a summary or an update on the health or physical condition of the players for this game against Israel and any changes that you might have made in the lineup?

ALBERT PUJOLS: You haven't received the lineup yet? Guerrero will be off today, Wells and Julio Rodríguez. Those three players will be replaced with Arnold Cruz, Santana and Ramírez.

Regarding the physical condition of the guys, thank God they are all doing okay. Perdomo once again is in the lineup. It's a virus around, and I think that we all got that virus in the DR, but we are all feeling better.

Q. Yesterday you spoke about Pedro Martinez' job with the pitchers. Could you give us a summary regarding that advisory committee with Pedro Martinez, Encarnación, Adrián and others, the job they have done. And since we are seeing that victory inside the clubhouse, can you give us some ideas about their job?

ALBERT PUJOLS: As you all know, these players have been successful -- those guys have been successful in their careers, and the federation put together the team that is representing our country today, and they are doing a great job. They motivate the guys. They are there for the players. Those players were respected and are respected by them, so being part of that team, being part of that committee that is writing history, we are very grateful to them.

Up until now, they have been doing a great job.

Q. The day before yesterday I talked to Miguel Cabrera about the relationship he has with you. He told me something beautiful. He told me that Vladimir Guerrero Jr. is his favorite player, not even Venezuelan player. From the Venezuelan team in your opinion,



what's the player that you like to see play?

ALBERT PUJOLS: Acuña and Tatís. Those guys are talented, and they make a difference in any team. If I had the chance to put together a dream team, he's one of the players that I would choose, Tatís Jr. He's one of the best players in the majors, as well as Acuña. I respect the way they play ball, how they enjoy the game, and they bring so many things to baseball.

Q. Is there any story behind the drippy watch that you have on your wrist? It's very stylish.

ALBERT PUJOLS: It's a company that they make the watches for Roberto Clemente. I believe player of the week, also. They used to but not anymore. They contacted me, and a couple of guys, I think, that are in this tournament if we want to wear, and why not. I like it. It's comfortable. They gave me like three or four watches and I gave them away.

I think a couple of guys, I believe, in this tournament are also wearing it.

I got in contact with them through Ollie Marmol. I believe he's one of the managers in the Big Leagues. Aaron Boone also is wearing it.

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