

World Baseball Classic: Pool D - Israel vs Netherlands

Tuesday, 10 March, 2026

Miami, Florida, USA

LoanDepot Park

Team Netherlands

Manager Andruw Jones

Ozzie Albies

Pregame Press Conference



Q. So with everything kind of locked up in this game already, what are you guys playing for in this game?

ANDRUW JONES: Just pride. Trying to go out there and win one more game. These guys have a lot of pride about winning. Obviously we didn't play good enough to pass for the second round. Everybody in that room knows why we didn't do good, so we try and do it to nine games and see if we can get a W.

Q. Ozzie, same thing?

OZZIE ALBIES: Yeah. Definitely. You've got to go play for the W tonight.

Q. You both can answer this. I mean, Andrew, you've been involved in this tournament in some capacity since the beginning. How have you seen the event grow over the years? And Ozzie, just for the years that you've been involved, how have you seen it expand over that time?

ANDRUW JONES: I mean, this has been always grow every year since 2006. You know, obviously Major League baseball players put this well tournament together. Every year get excited. Every year is a new team showing up and do something special, so it's obviously -- I've always been a big fan of it. I wish we can have last restrict with a lot of players just like everybody with that team, but we're still in spring training mode, so everybody needs to be on the same level so nobody get hurt. And, you know, we can do this better.

OZZIE ALBIES: Yeah. Definitely some special moment. I was always a fan watching WBC. I think this year I participate, definitely one of the best moments of my life, and playing for Team Netherlands and representing the island has been really special and an honor to do it.

Q. How much of today is just going to be about you guys going out there and having a good time playing good baseball? You guys have already prequalified for the next tournament, and the two teams have already clinched for the quarterfinals, but how much is to go out there and have fun?

ANDRUW JONES: You know, it's fun to go out there and have another W with all the boys and enjoy the last game here. It's going to be fun.

OZZIE ALBIES: Good question. I think we answered it already, but I'm going to answer it again for you. It's just the pride of winning. Obviously we didn't -- like I said before, we didn't play good enough to go to the second round. You know, every win of this tournament counts for other tournaments that we're going to probably have to play, qualified for the Olympic, Prime 16, you know, where we're going to be ranking at. So each game that we can win is going to be very important.

Q. I would like to know your opinion on the game between Venezuela and the Dominican Republic. As a player, the emotions that you leave, we have seen that Acuna is very relaxing to get the side out. Venezuela champion, the Dominican Republic is going to be champion. Can you tell us a little bit about that rivalry?

OZZIE ALBIES: You know, that Acuna is like a brother to me. I always tell him that he's one of the best players in baseball today and I support him, and I bless him so that they continue playing well and win everything.

It's a very good tournament to see the different teams playing at the highest level, and I wish them the best of luck. It is not easy to win all of our games, so we have to do our best.

Q. This can be for either of you. In baseball we are so accustomed to a long season, the grind, the 162 games. This is more of a sprint over for five days. What can the players, particularly the young players, draw from their experience here that they can apply for

themselves in their careers as they move forward?

ANDRUW JONES: To be honest with you, I love it. I love it every bit for these guys, and it's a great experience for them to be in this hype of -- this intense of a tournament and such a short tournament that, you know, if you do one mistake, you're done. So you try to eliminate a lot of mistakes. It's not like you're going to be play 162 games. This week I may struggle and I've got it the next two months. This tournament is a sprinter. If you make mistakes, you're going to get paid for it.

I think especially with teams like Venezuela and the Dominican Republic, you make a mistake, they're going to take advantage of it, and that's what Major League Baseball players do. They take advantage of it. And if you make a mistake, they will beat you big.

Q. Just if you give a recommendation about the WBC, what would you improve, the tournament, I mean? What can be better for the upcoming additions?

ANDRUW JONES: Well, you mean for the whole Classic with everybody playing? Nothing. Like I said before, it's a very well organized tournament by the MLB. Maybe we have to remove the restrictions for pitchers and what they can throw, and if they throw X innings, they have to rest for today.

This is something that could be improved, but there are the rules and all the teams respect them, have to respect them. The season is about to start, and they have to play 162 games with their organizations and not with their teams, national teams.

Q. (No microphone.)

ANDRUW JONES: The date? Well, if this could be done after the season, this could be better. Everyone will be ready. I went to Japan and played, and over there everyone is in good shape, and everyone was ready, but not here. They are still in training mode.

I saw Nicaragua, for example. They have been practicing for a long time. The Japanese are always practicing in Japan. The United States are very good professionals and they know what to do to be ready for the season and the spring training, of course. So maybe yes, maybe not. I don't know. So the timing.

Q. Ozzie, just after you go back to camp after this, I'm just curious, since it's now getting close to the regular season, is there anything you want to, like, get used to, especially with the ABS stuff coming, that you're, like -- it's going to be different from what you're doing this

tournament?

OZZIE ALBIES: Definitely the pitch up, I would say. If you're talking about ABS, box and the zone, definitely got to get used to the pitch up because I was getting called on it a lot.

But other than that, you know, I mean, it's baseball. You've got to go compete. I don't think I will be out there just looking for a ball to be tapping on my helmet the whole time. I'm just going to go play baseball and focusing on helping my team win, whatever I've got to do.

(FastScripts by ASAP Sports)

