

World Baseball Classic: Pool D - Dominican Republic vs Venezuela

Wednesday, 11 March, 2026

Miami, Florida, USA

LoanDepot Park

Team Venezuela

Manager Omar Lopez

Postgame Press Conference

Dominican Republic 7, Venezuela 5

Q. Greetings, Omar. What are the takeaways from the game? This is a good game, but the most important part is coming. Can you confirm Suarez against Japan?

OMAR LOPEZ: Is that your question?

Q. Takeaways.

OMAR LOPEZ: The game plan was different. Some situations happened between Eduardo and Senzatela. The Dominican offense is big, you cannot make mistake, but they did a good job attacking the strike zone.

But this is part of the game. You are facing that kind of offense. So we adapted the game plan. They scored two runs. We came back. They scored again. We came back, and they scored three runs after two outs.

So I talked to the bullpen, trying to stop the Dominican offense, and that happened. We had some chance because they were leading the game very early, and we were almost about to win in the ninth inning. So the guys never quit.

Yes, I confirmed Suarez against Japan.

Q. You have said that this was just another game, that we had to think about the qualification. You were speaking about Suarez. What do you think was the inflection point of the game? What do you really think at -- what was the main mistake, the key for that? Are you continuing with a game plan against Japan?

OMAR LOPEZ: It's always difficult for me to judge a pitcher. You know, it's difficult to judge a pitcher. When you are on the mound, you look at home plate. It's difficult



to locate the pitches there, you know? And it's difficult to say something.

I mean, I couldn't do that, first because I have never been a pitcher, a manager.

The most important thing to me is that they were competing. Soto hit a homer, but then Eduardo struck him out. This is part of the game. And the same with Senzatela. He made two outs, but after that, a walk. He had some issues. A slider was a little high against Tatis. And the dynamics of the game was different.

This is part of the game. Like I said before, the pitchers did a good job, and we had a chance knowing that the idea was to use the same strategy of scoring one run in every inning.

So the guys competed. We got on the bases. And they could have got the final inning. That was very good.

Q. Juan Soto was 0-2, and in baseball they used to use a different pitch, but Rodriguez repeated the pitch around the zone, and he hit a homer. That was the strategy or that was a mistake? Israeli manager said that the Dominican offense was the best on the planet. Now that you've faced them, is that your opinion?

OMAR LOPEZ: It is very easy to say that was a mistake with that pitch count, amateur or something like that. Eduardo wanted to make a good pitch in order to strike out Soto, but that was a sinker. It was higher and in the zone, and we know Juan Soto; right? He was dominated with two strikes. The pitches were not at the same height, and Soto made an adjustment, and he hit the homer.

And your next question, Brad Ausmus, of course, I agree with him. Brad said that this is the best offense on the planet. Well, I would say that they are the best in this pool.

We need to see Ohtani and other very good batters and hitters from other teams. To me, one of the best Dominican players is not on this team, Joseph Ramirez. My respect to him. This is one of the best players in the



Dominican Republic. In my opinion, not for other people, he is one of my favorite players in the majors.

Q. What happened with Eduardo Bazarido? Why didn't you choose him as a pinch batter? Nothing happened with him.

OMAR LOPEZ: Eugenio Suarez -- I trust Salvador.

And speaking of strategy, my backup catcher is Salvador. If something happens in the ninth or tenth inning, if I removed Wilson Contreras, for example, for Eduardo I would be out of backup camp. And I trusted them. But Eugenio Suarez will be back in the lineup in the quarter finals.

Q. What do you think about the offense of Venezuela? Was it a surprise for you that the Dominican Republic was so aggressive from the very beginning?

OMAR LOPEZ: No. We were dominating them, but we had to execute, and that's difficult for pitchers, especially when you have that -- such a solid lineup from the first to the ninth hitter. We have to execute better to control that offense.

In our case, in three innings we removed Alcantara. Alcantara was not that good, and the same thing happened in a previous Classic. So the Dominican pitcher called the bullpen and he made those adjustments, and I did the same.

Q. Omar, speaking of the quarterfinals, what changes are you going to do in the lineup? There are some limitations because of the number of pitches.

OMAR LOPEZ: So far, we have not made a decision. Jesus Luzardo is complicated, but we could have him in the second or the third round. We are going to make that decision who are going -- who is going to be considered, who is going to be removed.

Yoendrys Gomez won't be with us in the second round. We have to say who their replacement is.

Q. After today's game, how difficult is it for Venezuela to face Japan? They were undefeated, 4-0, with so many home runs hit. Their history in the Classic.

OMAR LOPEZ: You have to beat the best teams if you want to be the champion. If they are favored, we have to be prepared for that. I trust my coaching staff. I coach my players. So no panic. We just have to prepare for that.

We were able to compete today. We tried to minimize the

harm from the very beginning, and we fought throughout the game, and the same is going to happen against Japan.

We cannot think that we are going to be defeated. No, we are going to win that game.

Q. The offense was kind of slowed down from the game against Nicaragua, and today what are you going to do against Japan?

OMAR LOPEZ: We have a couple of days to study their bullpen. Who is going to be the starter? They have only one starter, and I think that now they sort of can pitch 85 pitches. We are going to see who is going to pitch. Maybe Yamamoto. And then we are going to evaluate how they used their bullpen.

So the coaching staff is taking a look at the videos, how the manager works, and to be ready for any situation.

Q. Omar, when two major teams such as Venezuela and the Dominican Republic face in terms of sports pride, everyone wants to win. What to do when you lose so that the team keeps motivated for the upcoming games?

OMAR LOPEZ: Nothing different. There's nothing different we have to do. You have to forget. If you won or if you lose, you have to flip the page. Tomorrow we are going to wake up, thank God. We are going to wake up and we are going to wear the uniform again. This is the beauty of this game.

If we have the heads down in this kind of moment, we better go home; right? No, we have to continue fighting, fighting, fighting to see where we go. This is baseball. Thank you.

(FastScripts by ASAP Sports).