

# World Baseball Classic: Pool D - Dominican Republic vs Venezuela

Wednesday, 11 March, 2026

Miami, Florida, USA

LoanDepot Park

## Team Dominican Republic

### Fernando Tatís Jr.

### Juan Soto

#### Postgame Press Conference

Dominican Republic 7, Venezuela 5

**Q. Congrats for your performance and the team's performance. You faced Venezuela today. You were dominating relatively easy from the very beginning, except for the ninth inning, and eventually you won. Looking forward, what would be your goal, your approach against Korea on Friday? How are you going to stay focused and control your emotions? The question is for both of you. How do you deal with that?**

JUAN SOTO: We have a very good pace. We're feeling so well. It is not very comfortable, you know? We know the Venezuelan players -- they could blow up at any point in time. We continued playing aggressively. Thank God we were able to win.

Yeah, we feel very positive. Now we move to the quarterfinals and try to do the same job we have been doing with the same vibe, the same routine, and everything we've got.

FERNANDO TATIS JR.: I think Juan said it all, but I think that we can play even better, to be better in the defense, running bases, and we are going to face our rivals. Of course, we are not underestimating Venezuela and the other teams, but the other teams played very well in the other region. And yes, we should play better at the defense.

**Q. Juan, you started to party around the home runs. Tell me about the approach you have, especially in your first at-bat. Fernando, you speak about offense, defense, to make some adjustments in those areas, but how about the pressure by the defense in the outfield?**



JUAN SOTO: I think that I stayed focused in the swing, in the pitchers, in the previous games. We faced pitchers that we didn't know, young players from independent leagues, you know? It is a little more challenging to have a good result. Now when we face pitchers that we know from the MLB, they are not easy, but we know them a little bit. And we know how they can pitch, and this could be a leverage for us to do harm early.

FERNANDO TATIS JR.: Regarding the fans, wow. That was such an energy. The stadium was shaking. We weren't showing that. The fans were great. We enjoyed that.

At the same time, the game is more stressful and challenging, but we enjoyed that. They enjoyed the game, and we have to thank all the fans from Venezuela and the DR because they made this possible for us, and we enjoyed it a lot.

**Q. Greetings. Question for both. Juan, you made an adjustment when you went to the clubhouse. You said something. Do you remember what you said? Because I read that in the social networks. And for Tatis, you made a very special adjustment. You have been hitting homers after two strikes, so you are behind in the count.**

JUAN SOTO: No. What is said in the dugout stays in the dugout. What we say in the clubhouse, it stays in the clubhouse. Many emotions, feelings, you know, that we try to vent out. We are human beings, and there is a lot of energy and emotions. That is just emotion.

How about the adjustments to hit the homers? I made a good adjustment, long swings first. I just tried to be shorter in the swings in order to make contact with the ball.

FERNANDO TATIS, JR.: Regarding my at-bat, this is something that I have been building. I started with a catcher, you know? People don't know much about this, but there were two outs. I think it was a walk, then a good at-bat.



But if those things don't happen, I wouldn't hit the homer because the first base moves, and there is a bigger gap, and I can't make contact and try to address the ball. We are hitting a homer. But those details lead to the big homers.

**Q. Juan, were you sitting fastball on the 0-2 pitch from Rodriguez? He threw you two straight before then, and you were maybe thinking breaking ball. Were you anticipating the fastball there? And then Fernando, you got a slider up in the zone. Were you also anticipating that pitch?**

JUAN SOTO: For me, yes. That's my mindset all the time. I'm hunting fastball every single time. It doesn't matter if I'm 0-2 or 2-0. I was hunting the fastball. Definitely, I just make an adjustment on my swing, my motion, try to be more quick, try to be more short to the ball, don't be too big. And that's how it works, man. Sometimes I stick with my plan, and it came through.

FERNANDO TATIS, JR.: And for me, actually, he threw me a really good sinker for a strike, and the one swing, and that was the pitch that was in my head. I was hunting a fastball, trying to stay in the sinker and stuff like that. And your ability to just kick and play -- you just react to those sliders, the breaking ball, and your abilities just take over.

**Q. One question for Fernando, one question for Soto. In the case of Soto, I was talking to Acuna. He told me about the brotherhood between Latino players, especially between Dominicans and Venezuelans. And I saw you talking to him. Can you tell me what you were talking in right field and the energy that you feel between all the Latino players? And for Fernando, I insist that you are the most energetic player of the MLB. And when you hit the homers, we see that in every dancing, tell us about that at-bat. How do you live that moment when you hit the homer and the Perreo, which is the Latino dancing?**

JUAN SOTO: Ronald and myself, you know -- we went to the MLB at the same time. My first road trip was to Atlanta, and I got to know him. We have a very good relationship as friends, and we get along, not only with him, but with most of the Venezuelan players. We feel like family.

As Latino players, of course there is some rivalry in these games, but we are family, and everything that happens on the field stays there. Off the field, we are like brothers. We have a great relationship. We get along. That's what I can tell you.

FERNANDO TATIS, JR.: Regarding my Caribbean

baseball, I grew up seeing LIDOM. I grew up in a clubhouse in LIDOM. I saw the Dominican players in the clubhouse, and this is something that I planned. I don't know where that came from. I was overreacting, and I thought to myself, What have I done?

And then the stadium was vibrating, the energy from my teammates. This is something that you feel that comes up, that grows inside of me. If it is fake, people could feel that, you know? But this is spontaneous, and I have it inside of myself.

**Q. Greetings, guys. What do you take away from this win? Isn't it a relief not to face Japan in the next round?**

JUAN SOTO: There is no relief at all. There is no weak rival, you know? All the teams here that made it to the quarterfinals are strong teams with talented players, and they can do harm. There is no relief. We have that mindset that we are going to face South Korea, a great team. We are going to give our all. We'll try to go out and try to win.

Of course, we stay focused on our vibes. We trust our players, and that is what we are going to do, to go out and play good games.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

FERNANDO TATIS, JR.: We feel very well. We played aggressively today and very well against Venezuela. We are motivated.

As Juan said before, there are no weak rivals. This is a very short tournament, and we cannot be overconfident. Everything can happen in baseball. We have to continue with that strong mindset and trust the team that we have.

**Q. I'm hoping each of you can answer this. Who do you think has the best home run trot on your team and why?**

FERNANDO TATIS, JR.: I mean, we have really good candidates on our team, but I would feel the more loudest and the more that people are enjoying, because it is brand new, it's definitely have to be Junior coming out.

JUAN SOTO: 100 percent. I agree with that. Junior -- he is just so loud that he's funny to watch.

**Q. And how much do you think you guys just like having fun? How much do you think that's sort of bringing out your best baseball right now?**

JUAN SOTO: I think that's everything, having fun out there. Definitely, we respect the game too, but we have to have fun. I think that's when the best of you comes out, when you have fun out there. We don't worry about anything else but having fun, I think, is one of the things that changes everything for every single player.

I think that's why we have really good players here. That's why we have guys that are really emotional, because they play for their countries, and they're having fun, and they see the crowd and everything. I think it brings everything out of you. So when you're having fun, it's the most important thing, I will say.

FERNANDO TATIS, JR.: To pinpoint, it starts with who we are. It starts with our culture. The Dominican Republic is what we grow with, how we've seen, how we feel, how we dance. It's all credit to the Dominican Republic and who we are as a person.

**Q. Since neither of you guys mentioned your own homers, Juan, what did you think of Fernando's bat flip, and Fernando, what did you think of Juan's?**

JUAN SOTO: I thought that was fire. I had the best seat. I was right there on the hole just watching from the best seat in the stadium. And then you see the ball goes like that. He's fired up. The bat is flying all over the field. I think it's really cool. It's really cool to see it. I just feel like I have done that too, so he just -- whatever he does, I feel like it's myself, and I enjoy it just like it is me.

FERNANDO TATIS, JR.: Yeah. Same. It just feels like looking in the mirror, you know? And we definitely have some loud bat flips, but we enjoy each other. We enjoy watching play baseball with each other.

And now being able to be on the same team and the quality of the team that we have, we are definitely enjoying our moment. We definitely know it's something special, and we are just having fun and enjoying it.

(FastScripts by ASAP Sports)