

# World Baseball Classic: Quarterfinals

Thursday, 12 March, 2026

Houston, Texas, USA

Daikin Park

## Team USA

## Manager Mark DeRosa

### Workout Day Press Conference



**Q. Can you just walk me through what yesterday was like, what the team did? Was it a whole group together watching the game? And what were your reactions as Italy kept piling up those runs?**

MARK DEROSA: Yeah, we were certainly focused on the game. We went over to Andy Pettitte's house as a coaching staff. He made the best filets and steaks. Hung out with him. Watched the game.

I know the players were in like a conference room at the hotel watching the game.

Fortunate to be in. Italy played 4-0 in pool play. Very underestimated coming into this thing. Certainly not anymore. Played a hell of a series. Hats off to them. They bailed us out.

**Q. Is there anything that you want to clarify about the timeline of when all the tiebreakers became clear to you?**

MARK DEROSA: Yeah, it's just an overly confident statement on "Hot Stove," period, the end. And it's my fault. I felt good about where we were after Mexico.

Listen, us hanging out in a clubhouse is everything I ever dreamed of creating. You've got to buy into this thing super quick and try and create a team. For those players to invite the coaches in and for us to spend time together and enjoy a huge win that we hadn't had in 20 years was something that, I looked around the room and it was super special to me.

We did not lose sight of the fact that we had to go out and play well against Italy. They played a hell of a game. They smacked us in the mouth early. They got up big. We went into that game prepared to win it. I think there's a couple false narratives out there.

But, no, I was well aware that we had to win that game based on all the scenarios that could take place. I mean, they went in 2-0. We went in 2-0. And we knew they were playing Mexico the next day. We knew there was tiebreaker rules involved.

So I can understand the questions about lineup and pitching situations. We were up against a lot of guardrails with regards to teams, the deployment of certain relievers, how many pitches they can use, whether they can go back out, whether they can clean up innings. And you're just trying to piece it together in real time.

**Q. With those pitching moves before this round, can you share what those roster moves are in terms of who is off, who was on, and how you're planning --**

MARK DEROSA: We just added Will Vest from the Tigers, Tyler Rogers and Tim Hill from the Yankees. So they will replace, I believe, Ryan Yarbrough, Tarik Skubal, Michael Wacha.

**Q. Boyd?**

MARK DEROSA: Boyd is not here. He's gone back. And I completely understand that. There's a lot of pressure from the parent clubs to get these guys ramped up for the start of the season.

If he's going to be the Opening Day starter for the Cubs, we had to guarantee him innings -- the game's gotta dictate now. Pool play is a different animal. Trying to weave our way through it from a pitching standpoint, all bets are off now.

**Q. With regard to the position players, are you under the same obligations to get guys in that you are with the pitchers? Do you have to do that?**

MARK DEROSA: No, no. I'm not under the same obligations. I feel like I have 14 unbelievable position players in that room that I trust wholeheartedly. I don't think there's an A lineup and a B. I just don't believe that in my heart.

I think Ernie Clement and Paul Goldschmidt might play a



huge role off the bench. I thought he was deserving of a start in that moment. I really did. When I looked at the lineup, I felt confident going in. Bottom line.

I mean, I also look at it from a player's perspective. Like, Bryce Harper was struggling a little bit. I know it's three games, but from the dugout -- I played with him for a long time -- so it's like, okay, maybe we get him off his feet a day. We get Goldy in there. We allow him to work with Sean Casey, Matt Holliday, maybe something clicks. And we get him right back in there and going.

So Gunnar Henderson was deserving of a start. I mean, he was 4-for-5 the game before. He hit a huge homer for us. We talked about this. We walked through potentially moving Alex Bregman to second base. We kind of squashed that when we left Arizona and that not being the case. So the only way to get him in there was to give Bregman a day off his feet.

There's a design on all of this. There's truly a design, and even on the pitching side.

**Q. It's one thing to come into this with such high expectations with so little margin for error game to game. It's another now that you guys had this sort of near-death experience. What can that do for these guys? And what can you tell us about Canada and that opponent?**

MARK DEROSA: I mean, scrappy bunch, bottom line, and they're swinging the bats. I mean, a bunch of guys in their lineup, from Toro to Caissie, are swinging the bats well.

New lease on life for the boys, certainly. I put ourselves in a tough spot. Tip our hat to Vinnie Pasquantino and Italy, truly. Went into that game a little overly confident and got a huge wake-up call. And we turned the page and go to Canada. Bottom line, the guys are fired up to be in that room and get rolling.

**Q. Roster stuff, Wacha is gone, Skubal's gone, Yarbrough's gone, Boyd's gone. Clay Holmes is gone, correct?**

MARK DEROSA: Clay Holmes is still in there. I think he'll work out with us. But, yes, I believe it's 99 percent he's going back to Port St. Lucie.

**Q. Will there be two more additions?**

MARK DEROSA: There can't be. There can be one more addition after the quarterfinal game, which will be Joe Ryan.

**Q. And how do you anticipate Joe slotting in? Because you've got Webb, Skenes?**

MARK DEROSA: Joe will be ready for the 17th if and when we make it to the championship. So it will be a little Nolan McLean/Joe Ryan situation there. And we'll figure that out.

**Q. Do you have one more slot for a reliever? I thought you could have four. Just three?**

MARK DEROSA: What will happen is Clayton Kershaw will come off after the quarterfinal game, and then Joe Ryan will take his place. So that will be four.

**Q. U.S./Canada -- we always talk hockey, too -- did you watch those two gold medal games, men's and women's? What were your thoughts about that?**

MARK DEROSA: I did. I did. And actually Jack Hughes sent the boys a nice little fire-up message that I put out on their group chat. And I know there's talks of some hockey jerseys being sent in tomorrow for the guys to wear during BP or out and about the clubhouse. So yeah, firmly aware of the gold medal run there.

**Q. If there's any chance tomorrow night, if it gets a little lopsided, will you try to do anything possible to get Kershaw in that game?**

MARK DEROSA: I would love to get Clayton a little run, but it's win or go home. We'll see. I've got 10 relievers in there that are rearing to go. So I think that would be a long shot, but we'll see.

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