

Ava’s Angle: Juan Soto crushing the World Baseball Classic with Dominican Republic

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The World Baseball Classic is the first time that baseball fans get to see competitive baseball back in action since the World Series concluded in November. All the same star-studded players of Major League Baseball are playing for the threads of their native countries.

One of the major headliners in this tournament is Juan Soto, representing Team Dominican Republic. This is Soto's second appearance in the WBC after previously representing the Dominican Republic in the 2023 tournament. The 27-year old slugger is coming off his first season with the New York Mets following his historic contract signing with the team last offseason. Since joining the Mets, Soto has performed as expected, leading the league with a .396 OBP while also hitting 43 home runs. After never having more than 12 stolen bases in a single season, the star outfielder strengthened that skill with the Mets and ended up leading the league in stolen bases with 38. It's safe to say that Soto's adjustment to the Mets was as smooth as it could have been, finishing with a 40-30 season and placing third in the National League MVP voting.

After New York made a number of intriguing moves and additions in the offseason, Soto still remains the best player on the roster. But for now, Team Dominican Republic needs Soto's elite level of play in the WBC. If Soto keeps up his hot bat, he has a strong chance of adding a World Baseball Clas-



Juan Soto in Citi Field in Queens, New York. Soto is playing on Team Dominican Republic for the World Baseball Classic. PHOTO BY COURTESY OF @JUANSOTO_25 ON INSTAGRAM

sic championship to his already impressive baseball resume and bringing home a win for Team Dominican Republic.

With the focus set on the World Baseball Classic, Team Dominican Republic currently holds a perfect 4-0 record with wins over Nicaragua, the Netherlands, Israel and Venezuela. Soto is one of the best hitters

in all of baseball and one of the faces of this fearsome DR lineup. His performance in the first couple of games has been exactly as advertised and entertaining for all parties involved. Soto has already blasted multiple home runs in the WBC and is hitting well over a .300 AVG.

On Wednesday night, Soto

did not waste any time getting things started against Venezuela as he hit a two-run home run in the first inning. Not only did the homer give the Dominican Republic an early 2-0 lead in which they would not relinquish, but it also placed Soto among DR World Baseball Classic Legends.

Nelson Cruz and Adrian

Beltre were two of the best Dominican Republic players during their time spent in the major leagues. The two also made their mark on Team Dominican Republic in the World Baseball Classic, and Soto is clearly following in the same footsteps.

“Juan Soto now has four career World Baseball Classic homers, tying Nelson Cruz and Adrian Beltre for most in Team Dominican Republic history,” Sarah Langs wrote on X. “Both were around the cage when Soto took BP earlier.”

In all four games and all wins for Team Dominican Republic, Soto is slashing .333/.500/.733 with two home runs, four RBIs, five walks against four strikeouts and a whopping 1.233 OPS. Both of Soto's home runs were timely as well for the DR, helping them to close out a mercy-rule win against the Netherlands and to gain an early statement lead over Venezuela.

Through the start of the World Baseball Classic, Soto has continued to prove why he is considered one of baseball's brightest stars. He is using the WBC as another stage to showcase his talent on the field and leadership for Team Dominican Republic. Soto's heater performance at the plate, along with the rest of the DR's monstrous lineup, has been significant to power the team to an undefeated start and reinforcing its status as a serious championship contender. As the tournament advances, Soto's impact will remain a key factor in whether the Dominican Republic can finish its dominating run and bring home another World Baseball Classic title.

Softball: Huskies head to Seton Hall for a weekend series

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Riding a two-game winning streak, the UConn softball team heads to West Orange, N.J. for a three-game set against Big East foe Seton Hall.

The 7-16 Huskies look to keep their conference record in the positives after going 2-1 in their opening series against St. John's.

Also on a two-game winning streak, the Seton Hall Pirates sit at 8-10 after a month of play. They were swept in their opening conference series against Creighton last weekend, allowing more than nine runs in all three games.

The Pirates suffered nearly the last fate against UConn last season. The 2025 Big East champion Huskies swept Seton Hall in Storrs, with a three-game score of 30-11. UConn allowed a total of two runs in the first two contests.

Connecticut has won five straight games against Seton Hall and it has an all-time record of 47-20. Husky fans should be happy to know that the team has a 25-9 away record against the team as it once again makes the trip to New Jersey.

Angelina Benitez has been the best hitter in Seton Hall's lineup. The sophomore outfielder is batting .406 in her first 18 games of the season. She has knocked in 14 RBIs and scored 15 runs so far for the Pirates.

Seton Hall has a four-pitcher rotation with Kyra Kreuscher being its best arm. A member of the 2025 All-Big East Second Team, Kreuscher has a

3.60 ERA in 16 appearances this year. The senior has three saves on the season and has struck out 35 batters over the same number of innings. Expect her to toe the rubber multiple times this weekend.

The pitching staff for the Huskies is led by the duo of Jessica Walter and Caprice Bohmer. Both pitchers have started eight games this season, racking up a total of five wins including three complete games by Bohmer. The freshman Bohmer posted four scoreless innings in her last start, a UConn victory over St. John's.

At the other end of the spectrum, Walter is a graduate student in her first year at UConn. The Providence transfer came on in relief of Bohmer against the Red Strom and pitched 2.2 innings of relief to shut the door. She did not allow a single run in her 7 innings of work against the Jonnies last weekend.

Last year's Big East Freshman of the Year Cat Petteys picked up where she left off last year for Connecticut. Petteys is hitting .367 on the year including slugging 5 of the team's 14 home runs. She had two against St. John's last weekend and had two in one game against Florida Gulf Coast in February.

Petteys had two hits and scored a run in Tuesday's 7-3 win over Stonehill. The Huskies got homeruns from Caylee De Meo and Emma Willers to power the offense.

The game on Friday is at 2 p.m. while the games on Saturday and Sunday start at noon. Fans can tune into ESPN+ to see the Huskies take on the Pirates.



UConn softball team battles Franklin Pierce on Sept. 20, 2025. The game was the second of seven exhibition games, with the last scheduled for Oct. 12, 2025. PHOTO BY NORA MARIANO, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS