

World Baseball Classic

# US edges Japan, advances to WBC championship

## US faces Puerto Rico tonight for world title

By GREG BEACHAM  
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Brandon Crawford scored the tiebreaking run when Nobuhiro Matsuda bobbled Adam Jones' grounder to third in the eighth inning, and the United States reached the championship game of the World Baseball Classic for the first time by beating Japan 2-1 on Tuesday night at rainy Dodger Stadium.

Andrew McCutchen drove in an early run for the U.S., which will play Puerto Rico for the title Wednesday night. Puerto Rico beat the Netherlands 4-3 in 11 innings Monday.

The World Baseball Classic final has been played in the United States in each of its four editions, but the home team had never made it.

The Americans only reached the semifinals once before, in 2009. But this All-Star-laden roster has won two straight elimination games to earn the chance for its first crown.

Ryosuke Kikuchi hit a tying homer off reliever Nate Jones in the sixth inning for Japan, but the two-time WBC champions were twice let down by their normally sturdy defense on a rain-soaked night at Dodger

Stadium, where an intermittent downpour kept fans in ponchos.

McCutchen opened the scoring with an RBI single in the fourth inning moments after Kikuchi's two-base error at second. In the eighth, Crawford likely would have been out at the plate on Jones' innocent grounder, but Matsuda didn't field it cleanly and had to throw to first.

Tanner Roark pitched four scoreless innings of two-hit ball before U.S. manager Jim Leyland went to his bullpen early and liberally. His sixth reliever, Luke Gregerson, pitched a

perfect ninth inning after Pat Neshek escaped a two-on jam in the eighth.

Although the crowd of 33,462 strongly favored the team with five California natives in the starting lineup, thousands of Japanese fans showed up early and chanted throughout the game, accompanied by the brass band in the left-field bleachers.

Leyland kept a lineup with eight All-Stars, making only one change from the team that beat the Dominican Republic on Saturday to avoid elimination. Buster Posey was behind the plate, continuing his alternation

with Jonathan Lucroy, apparently in accordance with their major league teams' wishes.

Tomoyuki Sugano, the Yomiuri Giants ace with a seven-pitch repertoire, tossed six innings of three-hit ball for Japan, striking out six and yielding only one unearned run.

"He's a big league pitcher," Leyland said before the game.

But Sugano was matched by Roark, who had given up three runs over 1 1/3 innings in his only previous WBC appearance. The Washington Nationals right-hander was largely outstanding against Japan, giving up just two singles and a walk and hitting a batter with a pitch. After Christian Yelich

reached second in the fourth inning when his hard-hit grounder was mishandled by Kikuchi, the standout defensive second baseman, Eric Hosmer worked out of an 0-2 count to draw a two-out walk.

McCutchen had just two hits in his first 14 at-bats in the WBC, but he drove in Yelich with a sharp single to left.

Kikuchi atoned for his mistake in the sixth, driving Jones' fastball barely over the reach of McCutchen in right field for his first homer of the tournament.

Japan, unbeaten coming into the game, won the first two WBC tournaments before losing in the semifinals in 2013.

### SCOREBOARD

#### Local Slate

**PREP BASEBALL**  
**Thursday**  
Wilsonville at Hermiston, 4 p.m.  
Heppner at Umatilla, 4 p.m.  
Pilot Rock at Stanfield, 4:30 p.m.  
Walla Walla (WA) at Pendleton, 4:30 p.m.  
**Friday**  
Riverside at Columbia (WA), 3:30 p.m.  
Pendleton at Walla Walla (WA), 4 p.m.  
McCall (ID) at Mac-Hi, 6 p.m.  
**Saturday**  
Orofino (ID) at Mac-Hi (2), 11 a.m./1 p.m.  
Irrigon at Heppner (2), 11 a.m./1 p.m.  
Weston-McEwen at Stanfield (2), 1/3 p.m.

**PREP SOFTBALL**  
**Today**  
Bend at Hermiston, 4 p.m.  
**Thursday**  
Irrigon at Heppner (2), 2/4 p.m.  
Pendleton at Southridge (WA), 4 p.m.

**Friday**  
Weston-McEwen vs Enterprise (at Pilot Rock), 9 a.m.  
Scio at Pilot Rock, 11 a.m.  
Columbia (WA) at Riverside (2), 2/4 p.m.  
Weston-McEwen vs Gaston (at Pilot Rock), 3 p.m.  
Hermiston at Pasco (WA), 4 p.m.  
Gaston at Pilot Rock, 5 p.m.  
**Saturday**  
Weston-McEwen at Pilot Rock, 11 a.m.  
Mac-Hi at Yamhill-Carlton, 11 a.m.  
Pendleton at Walla Walla (2), Noon/2 p.m.  
Weston-McEwen vs Scio (at Pilot Rock), 3 p.m.  
Enterprise at Pilot Rock, 5 p.m.  
Mac-Hi vs Banks (at Yamhill-Carlton), TBD

**PREP TENNIS**  
**Thursday**  
Baker at Pendleton, 4 p.m.  
**Friday**  
Pasco (WA) at Hermiston, 4 p.m.

**PREP TRACK & FIELD**  
**Thursday**  
Hermiston, Mac-Hi, Helix, Irrigon, Pilot Rock, Riverside, Stanfield, Umatilla, Weston-McEwen at Pendleton, 11 a.m.

**PREP GOLF**  
**Thursday**  
Pendleton, Hermiston, Mac-Hi at Big River Golf Course (Umatilla), 10 a.m.

**PREP LACROSSE**  
**Friday**  
Hood River at Hermiston, 7 p.m.

#### COLLEGE BASEBALL

**Saturday**  
Grays Harbor at Blue Mountain (2), 11 a.m./2 p.m.  
**Sunday**  
Southwestern Oregon at Blue Mountain (2), 11 a.m./2 p.m.

#### COLLEGE SOFTBALL

**Friday**  
Eastern Oregon at College of Idaho (2), 1/3 p.m.  
Blue Mountain at Columbia Basin (2), 2/4 p.m.  
**Saturday**  
Eastern Oregon at College of Idaho (2), 10 a.m./Noon  
Blue Mountain at Walla Walla (2), Noon/2 p.m.

#### Basketball

NBA EASTERN CONFERENCE				
	W	L	Pct	GB
1. x-Cleveland	46	23	667	—
2. Boston	45	26	634	2
3. Washington	42	28	600	4 1/2
4. Toronto	42	29	592	5
5. Atlanta	37	33	529	9
6. Indiana	36	34	514	10 1/2
7. Milwaukee	35	35	500	11 1/2
8. Miami	35	36	493	12

WESTERN CONFERENCE				
	W	L	Pct	GB
1. z-Golden State	57	14	803	—
2. x-San Antonio	54	16	771	2 1/2
3. x-Houston	49	22	690	8
4. Utah	43	28	606	14
5. L.A. Clippers	43	29	597	14 1/2
6. Oklahoma City	40	30	571	16 1/2
7. Memphis	40	31	563	17
8. Denver	33	37	471	23 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Portland	32	38	457	24 1/2
Dallas	30	40	429	26 1/2
New Orleans	30	41	423	27
Minnesota	28	42	400	28 1/2
Sacramento	27	43	386	29 1/2
Phoenix	22	49	310	36
L.A. Lakers	20	51	282	37

#### z-clinched division

**Tuesday's Games**  
Toronto 122, Chicago 120, OT  
Brooklyn 98, Detroit 96  
**Sunday**  
Miami 112, Phoenix 97  
New Orleans 95, Memphis 82  
Golden State 112, Dallas 87  
San Antonio 100, Minnesota 93  
Milwaukee 93, Portland 90  
L.A. Clippers 103, L.A. Lakers 109

**Wednesday's Games**  
Charlotte at Orlando, 4 p.m.  
Indiana at Boston, 4:30 p.m.  
Atlanta at Washington, 5 p.m.  
Detroit at Chicago, 5 p.m.  
Philadelphia at Oklahoma City, 5 p.m.  
Cleveland at Denver, 6 p.m.  
Milwaukee at Sacramento, 7:30 p.m.  
New York at Utah, 7:30 p.m.

#### NCAA Men's NCAA Tournament

**EAST REGIONAL Semifinals**  
**Friday**  
South Carolina (24-10) vs. Baylor (27-7), 4:29 p.m.  
Wisconsin (27-9) vs. Florida (26-8), 7 p.m.  
**Regional Championship**  
Sunday, March 26

**SOUTH REGIONAL Semifinals**  
**Friday**  
Butler (25-8) vs. North Carolina (29-7), 4:09 p.m.  
Kentucky (31-5) vs. UCLA (31-4), 6:40 p.m.  
**Regional Championship**  
Sunday, March 26

**MIDWEST REGIONAL Semifinals**  
**Thursday**  
Michigan (26-11) vs. Oregon (31-5), 4:09 p.m.  
Purdue (27-7) vs. Kansas (30-4), 6:40 p.m.  
**Regional Championship**  
Saturday, March 25

**WEST REGIONAL Semifinals**  
**Thursday**  
Gonzaga (34-1) vs. West Virginia (28-8), 4:39 p.m.  
Xavier (23-13) vs. Arizona (32-4), 7:10 p.m.  
**Regional Championship**  
Saturday, March 25

**FINAL FOUR**  
At University of Phoenix Stadium

#### Glendale, Ariz.

**National Semifinals**  
Saturday, April 1  
East champion vs. West champion  
South champion vs. Midwest champion  
**National Championship**  
Monday, April 3

#### NCAA Women's Tournament

**BRIDGEPORT REGIONAL Semifinals**  
**Saturday**  
At Bridgeport, Conn.  
UConn (34-0) vs. UCLA (25-8), 10:30 a.m.  
Maryland (32-2) vs. Oregon (22-13), 8:36 a.m.  
**Regional Championship**  
Monday, March 27

**STOCKTON REGIONAL Semifinals**  
**Saturday**  
At Stockton, Calif.  
Washington 4, Calgary 2  
South Carolina (29-4) vs. Quinnipiac (29-6), 1:06 p.m.  
Florida State (27-6) vs. Oregon State (31-4), 3 p.m.  
**Regional Championship**  
Monday, March 27

#### Hockey

NHL EASTERN CONFERENCE Atlantic Division							
	GP	W	L	OT Pts GF GA			
Montreal	73	41	23	9	91	200	182
Ottawa	72	40	24	8	88	191	187
Boston	73	38	29	6	82	209	195
Toronto	71	33	23	15	81	216	210
Tampa Bay	72	34	29	9	77	197	202
Florida	72	31	30	11	73	183	208
Buffalo	74	30	32	12	72	183	214
Detroit	72	29	32	11	69	180	213

NHL METROPOLITAN DIVISION							
	GP	W	L	OT Pts GF GA			
x-Washington	72	47	17	8	102	232	161
x-Pittsburgh	72	46	17	9	101	252	199
x-Columbus	71	47	18	6	100	228	164
N.Y. Rangers	73	45	24	4	94	233	192
N.Y. Islanders	71	33	26	12	78	210	218
Carolina	71	31	27	13	75	186	206
Philadelphia	72	33	31	8	74	188	216
New Jersey	72	27	33	12	66	167	211

WESTERN CONFERENCE Central Division							
	GP	W	L	OT Pts GF GA			
x-Chicago	73	47	20	6	100	222	183
Minnesota	72	44	22	6	94	235	180
St. Louis	72	39	28	5	83	201	195
Nashville	72	36	25	11	83	212	202
Winnipeg	73	33	33	7	73	220	232

#### Pacific Division

	GP	W	L	OT Pts GF GA			
San Jose	73	42	24	7	91	198	169
Edmonton	72	39	24	9	87	209	186
Anaheim	72	38	23	11	87	186	178
Calgary	73	41	28	4	86	203	197
Los Angeles	72	34	31	7	75	175	181
Vancouver	72	29	34	9	67	166	211
Arizona	73	27	37	9	63	178	233

x-clinched playoff spot

NOTE: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.

**Tuesday's Games**  
Pittsburgh 3, Buffalo 1  
New Jersey 3, N.Y. Rangers 2, OT  
Washington 4, Calgary 2  
Ottawa 3, Boston 2

**Wednesday's Games**  
Toronto at Columbus, 4 p.m.  
N.Y. Islanders at N.Y. Rangers, 5 p.m.  
Edmonton at Anaheim, 7 p.m.

#### Baseball

**World Baseball Classic CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND**  
At Dodger Stadium  
Los Angeles  
**Semifinals**  
**Monday**  
Puerto Rico 4, Netherlands 3, 11 innings

**Tuesday**  
United States 2, Japan 1  
**Championship**  
**Today**  
Puerto Rico vs. United States, 6 p.m. (TV: MLB Network)

#### Motorsports

**NASCAR Monster Energy Cup Points Leaders**  
Through March 20  
1. Kyle Larson 184  
2. Brad Keselowski 178  
3. Chase Elliott 171  
4. Martin Truex Jr 153

#### Upcoming Schedule

March 22-26 — Auto Club 400, Fontana, Calif., 12:30 p.m. (TV: FOX)  
April 2 — STP 500, Martinsville, Va., 11 a.m. (TV: FS1)

April 9 — O'Reilly Auto Parts 500, Fort Worth, Texas, 10:30 a.m. (TV: FOX)

#### Golf

**PGA Upcoming Schedule**  
March 22-26 — WGC-Dell Match Play, Austin CC, Austin, Texas  
March 23-26 — Puerto Rico Open, Coco Beach GC, Rio Grande, Puerto Rico  
March 30-April 2 — Shell Houston Open, Golf Club of Houston (Tournament Course), Humble, Texas  
April 6-9 — Masters, Augusta National GC, Augusta, Ga.

**World Golf Rankings**  
Through March 19  
1. Dustin Johnson USA 11.67  
2. Rory McIlroy NIR 9.12  
3. Jason Day AUS 9.03  
4. Hideki Matsuyama JPN 8.28

5. Henrik Stenson SWE 8.03  
6. Jordan Spieth USA 8.02  
7. Justin Thomas USA 5.58  
8. Adam Scott AUS 5.54  
9. Rickie Fowler USA 5.32  
10. Sergio Garcia ESP 5.26  
11. Alex Noren SWE 4.86  
12. Patrick Reed USA 4.75

#### Upcoming Schedule

March 23-26 — Kia Classic, Park Hyatt Aviara Resort Golf Club and Spa, Carlsbad, Calif.  
March 30-April 2 — ANA Inspiration, Mission Hill CC, Rancho Mirage, Calif.

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