

**MARCH 2026 | VENEZUELA CHAMPION | 70+ ENTITIES | \$3.5B+ | 20 NATIONS**

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11

LAYERS

70+

ENTITIES

\$3.5B+

CONTRACTS

124

LINKS

20

WBC NATIONS

[EXPLORE INTERACTIVE MAP →](#)

## 1. Executive Summary

Venezuela is the 2026 World Baseball Classic champion. This report maps the 11 legal layers connecting 70+ entities in the Dominican and international baseball contractual ecosystem: players, teams, academies, buscones, 20 national teams, sponsors, and regulators.

Venezuela eliminated Japan (defending champion), Italy (tournament sensation) and the USA (host). DR was eliminated in the SF by a controversial strike — ABS arrived in MLB 10 days later. The NFP insurance crisis destroyed Puerto Rico's roster. 3 MLB teams dictated reliever usage in the final. Each case is a laboratory of international sports law.

## 2. The 11 Ecosystem Layers

1

### PLAYERS

16 entities

\$3.2B+ contracts

MEDIUM

Sixteen players. Contracts from pre-arb to \$765M (Soto/Mets). Includes Ohtani (\$700M, \$680M deferred), Judge (\$360M), Witt Jr. (\$288M), Acuña Jr., Skenes, Alcantara, Julio Rodriguez (\$209M escalator), Oneil Cruz.

CBA MLB-MLBPA • IRC §§861-865 • NPB-MLB Posting

2

### MLB TEAMS

5 entities

\$40M+/yr in DR

LOW

Yankees, Mets, Padres, Rays, Red Sox. Academies with 50+ local employees each. Boca Chica Complex hosts all 30 franchises.

MLB Int'l Operations • DR Labor Code • Sports Law 356-05

3

### LIDOM TEAMS

4 entities

106 years history

LOW

Lickey (1907), Águilas (1937), Escogido (1921), Estrellas. Quisqueya: two rivals, one stadium.

LIDOM Rules • Law 356-05 • LIDOM-MLB Agreement

4

### ACADEMIES

3 entities

\$20-40M/team

HIGH

Niche Academy (produced Soto), official MLB academies, Boca Chica Complex. Private academies operate in total regulatory vacuum.

LEGAL VACUUM • Law 136-03 • DR Labor Code

5

### BUSCONES / AGENTS

2 entities

30-50% of bonus

CRITICAL

Biggest legal void in the ecosystem. Buscones invest in children ages 10-14. Pre-agreements with minors born in 2013 for signings in 2029 (Diario Libre, 2025).

NO LAW EXISTS • Law 136-03 • Criminal Code • MLBPA Agent Regulations

6

**WBC 2026 NATIONAL TEAMS**

20 nations

\$3.5B+ talent

**HIGH**

VENEZUELA CHAMPION. QF: DR 10-0 Korea, USA 5-3 Canada, Italy 8-6 PR, Venezuela 8-5 Japan. SF: USA 2-1 DR (controversial strike), Venezuela 4-2 Italy. FINAL: Venezuela 3-2 USA. NFP insurance crisis destroyed PR roster.

WBC Agreement • WBSC Art. 20 • WBCI Insurance • OFAC Regulations

7

**SPONSORS**

3 entities

\$100M+ endorsements

**MEDIUM**

Presidente (LIDOM), Nike/Adidas/NB (endorsements), Banco Popular. Morality clauses triggered in Tatis (PED) and Franco (criminal) cases.

DR Commercial Code • IP Law 20-00 • Morality Clauses

8

**STADIUMS**

2 entities

State-owned / PPP

**LOW**

Quisqueya Juan Marichal (14,000) and Cibao (18,000). Lacey-Escogido coexistence model unique in the Caribbean.

Law 85-99 • Municipal Law 176-07

9

**INSURANCE**

2 entities

\$500M+ premiums

**MEDIUM**

Seguros Universal (LIDOM) and Lloyd's (MLB disability). WBCI Insurance: does it cover pre-existing conditions (Tommy John)?

DR Insurance Law 146-02 • UK Insurance Law • WBCI Insurance Protocol

10

**REGULATORS**

9 entities

Multi-jurisdictional

**HIGH**

LIDOM, MLB, MLBPA, WADA, MIDEREC, DGII, TC, WBCI, WBSC. CBA expires Dec. 2026 — international draft would transform the ecosystem.

CBA • Law 356-05 • WBSC Statutes • WBC Agreement

11

**MEDIA / TECH**

4 entities

Biometric data

**CRITICAL**

ESPN, Statecast, GPTLegal, Social/NIL. Who owns an athlete's biometric data? Massive legal void.

Data Protection Law 172-13 • Illinois BIPA • NCAA v. Alston (2021)

### 3. WBC 2026: Tournament Bracket

#### Pool A — San Juan

Canadá	8-2	Colombia	A
Puerto Rico	5-0	Colombia	A
PR	4-3	Panamá	A
Canadá	3-2	Puerto Rico	A
Cuba	3-1	Panamá	A
Cuba	7-4	Colombia	A

#### Pool B — Houston

USA	15-5	Brasil	B
Italia	8-0	Brasil	B
USA	9-1	Great Britain	B
Italia	7-4	Great Britain	B
USA	5-3	México	B
Italia	8-6	EE.UU.	UPSET!
México	16-0	Brasil	B
Italia	9-1	México	B

## Pool C — Tokyo

Japón	13-0	Chinese Taipei	C
Corea	11-4	Chequia	C
Japón	8-6	Corea	C
Corea	5-4	Taiwán	C
Japón	4-3	Australia	C
Japón	9-0	Chequia	C

## Pool D -- Miami (DR UNDEFEATED)

Rep. Dominicana	12-3	Nicaragua	D
Venezuela	6-2	Países Bajos	D
Venezuela	11-3	Israel	D
Rep. Dominicana	12-1	Países Bajos	D
Rep. Dominicana	10-1	Israel	D
Rep. Dominicana	7-5	Venezuela	D MVP

## QUARTERFINALS

DR 10	—	South Korea 0	Mar 13 · Mercy Rule
USA 5	—	Canada 3	Mar 13 · Houston
Italy 8	—	Puerto Rico 6	Mar 14 · Houston
Venezuela 8	—	Japan 5	Mar 14 · Miami

## SEMIFINALS

USA 2	—	Dominican Rep. 1	Mar 15 · Controversial
Venezuela 4	—	Italy 2	Mar 16 · Miami

## FINAL — MARCH 17

VENEZUELA 3	—	USA 2	Mar 17 · CHAMPION
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## 4. Critical Cases

### Venezuela 3-2 USA — First title since 1945

Suárez RBI double 9th · García MVP · National Holiday Mar 18

VENEZUELA CHAMPION

Venezuela won their first WBC in their first final. Suárez hit the go-ahead RBI double in the 9th. Palencia closed with a perfect 9th. Harper tied it with a 432-ft HR in the 8th but it wasn't enough. USA had only 3 hits. López negotiated with 3 MLB teams over reliever usage.

### USA 2-1 DR — The strike that eliminated the Dominican Republic

SF · Perdomo vs Miller · 3-2 · ABS arrives in MLB in 10 days

CONTOVERSIAL

With tying run at 3rd, Perdomo was called out on Miller's slider that appeared low. ABS (robot ump) debuts in MLB March 27. The WBC used 2025 rules without ABS. The technology existed — a rule-making gap eliminated the DR.

### The insurance wall that destroyed Puerto Rico

NFP · Lindor/Correa/Berrios denied · Bad Bunny RB Boycott

NFP INSURANCE CRISIS

NFP introduced age 37+ rule and chronic injury criteria. 8+ PR players denied. Bad Bunny offered to pay alternative insurance — not approved by MLB/MLBPA. Federation and government considered withdrawal. Is the WBC really best-on-best if insurers dictate rosters?

### 3 MLB teams intervened in the WBC final

Tigers · Cubs · Mariners · Back-to-back reliever usage

MLB vs WBC

López woke up with 3 messages from MLB teams demanding he not use their relievers on consecutive days. Tigers prohibited De Jesus. Cubs prohibited Palencia. López negotiated: Palencia could only pitch the 9th in a save situation. Palencia closed the championship. Who controls the national team?

### Venezuela vs USA — Maduro, oil and baseball

Operation Absolute Resolve · National holiday 2028 Olympics

GEOPOLITICS

The final was played 74 days after the US captured Maduro in Caracas. Venezuela beat USA on American soil. Pérez: 30 million people on my back. Taiwan premier visited Tokyo for WBC. China protested. Cuba: 8 officials denied visas.

## 5. Key Findings

### Finding 1:

#### Venezuela is champion — and the WBC will never be the same.

First Venezuelan international title since 1945. They eliminated the champion (Japan), the sensation (Italy), and the host (USA). Pérez: Now I can retire. National holiday declared. The WBC proved it matters.

### Finding 2:

#### The NFP insurance crisis is the WBC's greatest systemic failure.

8+ Puerto Rico players denied. Bad Bunny offered to pay and was rejected. Trout, Altuve, Correa all out. If insurers dictate rosters, the tournament is not best-on-best. Reform needed before 2029.

### Finding 3:

#### The Perdomo strike changed history — and ABS arrived 10 days late.

The technology to review the pitch existed and was approved for 2026 MLB. But the WBC used 2025 rules without ABS. A rule-making gap eliminated the Dominican Republic from its own home tournament.

### Finding 4:

#### MLB teams control WBC national team managers.

3 MLB teams dictated which relievers López could use in the final. López negotiated and won Palencia for the 9th — who closed the championship. The tension between national sporting sovereignty and MLB employment contracts remains unresolved.

### Finding 5:

#### Baseball is geopolitics — Venezuela vs USA 74 days after Maduro.

The final was played on American soil less than 3 months after the US captured the Venezuelan president. Taiwan used the WBC for the first diplomatic visit to Japan in 54 years. Cuba had visas denied. Every game is an international law case.

## Explore the Complete Ecosystem

*The interactive map lets you explore each of the 70+ entities.*

EXPLORE INTERACTIVE MAP →

### OBJIO LEGAL

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