Olympics: Groups, schedule announced for Americas baseball qualifier in Arizona

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• The eight-team tournament will be played in Surprise and Tempe

• Group play is scheduled from 22 -24 March, with the Super Round 25-26 March

• Winner will advance to the Tokyo 2020 Games • 2nd and 3rd Place teams will play in the final Olympic qualifier in Taiwan

The World Baseball Softball Confederation today announced the groups, schedule and location of the WBSC Baseball Americas Qualification Event for the Games of the XXXII Olympiad Tokyo 2020. Hosted by USA Baseball, the qualifier will be staged in Surprise and Tempe, Arizona, USA, where eight nations will compete for an Olympic spot over 16 games.

Group A: No. 2 USA, No. 10 Dominican Republic, No. 11 Puerto Rico and No. 15 Nicaragua.

Group B: No. 8 Cuba, No. 9 Venezuela, No. 12 Canada and No. 14 Colombia.

Game Schedule (all times local)

Sunday, 22 March-Surprise

1 pm Puerto Rico-Dominican Republic
7 pm USA-Nicaragua

Sunday, 22 March-Tempe

1 pm Venezuela-Cuba

7 pm Colombia-Canada

Monday, 23 March-Surprise

1 pm Colombia-Venezuela
7 pm Canada-Cuba

Monday, 23 March-Tempe

1 pm Nicaragua-Puerto Rico
7 pm Dominican Republic-USA

Tuesday, 24 March-Surprise

1 pm Nicaragua-Dominican Republic
7 pm Puerto Rico-USA

Tuesday, 24 March-Tempe

1 pm Canada-Venezuela
7 pm Cuba-Colombia

After group play concludes, the top two finishers from each group will advance to the Super Round, where they will each play two games. Head-to-head contests among these teams from the opening round will carry over into the Super Round standings.

The team with the best Super Round record will be declared the winner and become the fifth National Team to advance to the baseball tournament of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, joining world No. 1 Japan, No. 3 Korea, No. 5 Mexico and No. 18 Israel.

The runner-up and the third-place team in the Americas Qualifier will play the Final Qualifier, scheduled from 1 to 5 April in Taichung and Douliou City, Taiwan. They will battle for the last spot in the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, along with No. 4 Chinese Taipei and No. 20 China, who both qualified through the Asia Championship, the runner-up from the Europe/Africa Qualifier, No. 8 Netherlands, and No. 7 Australia, the Oceania representative.

Venues

Surprise, Arizona, is located approximately 45 minutes northwest of downtown Phoenix. The stadium (cover picture) is the Spring Training home of the Kansas City Royals and the Texas Rangers. It opened in 2002 and has a seating capacity of 10,714. Surprise Stadium was rated as the top Spring Training facility in Arizona by USA Today.

Diablo Stadium -- located in Tempe, in the East Valley of the Phoenix Metropolitan Area -- is the Spring Training home of the Los Angeles Angels. The 9,558-seat facility opened in 1969 and was renovated in 2002.