

Sport News Round Up February 18th



Baseball

Matanzas blanked 3-0 to Villa Clara and extended its leading position in the 1st place of the *53rd Cuban Baseball Championship*, while Industriales' decline continued after being swept by Santiago de Cuba.

Lefty Yoanni Yera, Matanzas' staff leader, took the win with a superb job during 8 innings, in which allowed only 1 hit. Thus, Matanzas set at 38-22 its balance of wins and losses and settled as a leader 2 games ahead of Villa Clara (36-24).

However, this game was tinged by an unfortunate show at the end of the 7th when players from both teams staged a nasty brawl, after Villa Clara starter Freddy Asiel Alvarez gave 2 ball hits, and all on national television cameras.

Given the seriousness of the act, the *National Baseball Commission* headed by Higinio Vélez, shall take an official decision in the next few hours, announcing the proper suspensions, especially the particular sanction for Matanzas' player Demis Valdés who hit Villa Clara's player Ramón Lunar's face with his bat, which led to suspend the game.

Industriales, meanwhile, which has already lost 10 of the last 14 games played, continued into a tailspin after losing for 3rd consecutive day against Santiago de Cuba, basement owner, this time by 2-4.

Thus, Holguin also lost after being knocked out by Isla de la Juventud by 1-12, marching the 6th with 32-28 and tied with Artemisa after sharing honors yesterday facing Pinar del Rio (36-24), runner-up leader of the contest that is tied with Villa Clara to 36-24.

This Tuesday is a resting day and the Series will resume tomorrow with Industriales-Pinar del Rio, Artemisa-Villa Clara, Santiago de Cuba-Isla de la Juventud, and Matanzas-Holguin duels.

Cycling

The captain of Santiago de Cuba's team, Arnold Alcolea, fights today to keep the leadership of *1st International Camagüey-Havana Cycling Classic*, 4th stage, a segment of 134 km. between Camagüey and Sancti Spiritus cities.

Owner of the *Tours of Cuba* in 2009 and 2010, Alcolea filed 4:41.35 hours, and will try to keep the difference of 2 seconds separating him from Yennier López (Guantánamo) and 28 he's got over Victor Horta, Ciego Avila, their closest pursuers.

Yesterday, Alcolea finished 2nd in the *time trial* of 35 km. between Moron and Camagüey cities with 44.12 minutes behind the winner, Yennier López, who scored 44.04, while the local Victor Horta came 3rd with 45 minutes and 2 seconds.

Today closes the 5th day, which is divided into 2 parts and from 8 am. the platoon will run 82 km. in the ascent to *Topes de Collantes* and at 1 pm., contestants will leave *La Sierrita* village to the city of Cienfuegos, a distance of 51 km.

World Cup Brazil-2014

The *International Federation of Association Football (FIFA)* will decide today whether the Arena da Baixá, in the Brazilian city of Curitiba, remains as one of the 12 hosts of the *2014 World Cup*.

After an evaluation of the technical report of the facility, whose construction is behind, it will be decided if the Arena da Baixá is excluded of the Cup, stressed the FIFA's secretary general, Jerome Valcke.

The international body gave as deadline this Tuesday to Brazilian organizers prove that the Brazilian Stadium of Curitiba will be ready before the beginning of the World Cup, scheduled for June 12th.

If this stadium is eliminated, the FIFA will analyze to move the matches of the 1st phase (Spain-Australia, Iran-Nigeria, Germany-Russia, and Holland-Ecuador) to the city of Natal.

Recently Valcke visited the stadiums of Manaus, in the state of Amazonas, and Brasília, and on Monday walked the Beira-Rio in Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul.

State authorities announced that the Arena Beira-Rio will be opened on April 6th, which secured its stay on schedule for the Cup.

The organizing committee of the World Cup said in a statement that another facility of the Cup, the Arena Pantanal of Cuiabá, State of Mato Grosso, remains within the 12 venues of the Cup.

Due to information of international agencies about possible damages in infrastructure in that stadium caused by a fire last October, the company responsible for the construction of the Arena certified that there are not structural damages; however, the Ministry of Sports urged on Monday to Cuiabá authorities to conduct a new evaluation on safety of the stadium, opened last December.

The first match of the Cup in Cuiabá is scheduled for June 13th, between Chile and Australia.

France Closes Schumacher's Ski Accident Investigation

French attorney announced today his decision to close the investigation into the accident on the slopes of the German former *Formula One* driver Michael Schumacher in the absence of evidence of any infringement.

According to the attorney of Albertville, Patrick Quincy, the accident occurred out of the track, but it was marked in accordance with the Gallic standards.

On the other hand, images of the the Shumacher's camera show that he was skiing at a normal speed.

Schumacher suffered a fall last December 29th in the French Alps and his helmet split in two when it hit a rock which forced him to be operated twice in the hospital of Grenoble and remains in an induced coma.

Two weeks ago, doctors in charge reported about the beginning of the process to wake him up, which is to reduce progressively the sedatives that are being administered.

So far, there is no different news about his health and the family's spokeswoman, Sabine Kehm, warned that the process could take several weeks.

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