

Sport News Roundup March 21



Baseball

Pinar del Rio took revenge of Industriales by 9-5 and regain the 2nd seat of the Tables at the *53rd Cuban Baseball Championship* and ensure its passport to the *post season*.

The disciples of Alfonso Urquiola deployed a 12-hits offensive, especially with solo homers of designated Yosvani Peraza and 1st baseman William Saavedra while Rudy Reyes did the same for the losers.

Osmar Carrero relieved for 2 entries to archive his 5th victory supported by Jesus Guerra's 10th rescue, while Vicyohandri Odelín took the loss.

This result led to a new tie for 3rd place between Industriales and Villa Clara, both with 48 and 35, since the former won 5-2 to Artemisa.

The star Ismel Jiménez added his 7th victory by allowing just 4 hits in 6 episodes, supported by offensive of Yorbis Borroto, Andy Zamora and Andy Sarduy with 1 trailer per capita.

Meanwhile, Holguín suffered another devastating blow in its aspirations to advance when it was combined its 6-5 defeat against the leader Matanzas with Villa Clara's victory against Artemisa.

Los Cocodrilos of Matanzas guaranteed their success thanks to José Miguel Fernández' decisive hit with loaded bases in the 9th, a cap won by reliever Alexander Bustamante, who did not allow any liberties in 1 and a half episode.

In other results, Santiago de Cuba and Isla de la Juventud divided honors 5-3 and 2-3, in a subset without any significance for classification.

Thus, with 8 straight wins, Matanzas (54-29) commands with 3 games ahead of Pinar del Río (51-32), while Industriales (48-35), Villa Clara (48-35) and Holguin (46-37) are struggling for the 2 remaining tickets to the semifinals when only missing 4 games.

Spanish Olympic Committee

The President of the Cuban Olympic Committee, Jose Ramon Fernandez, received his Spanish counterpart, Alejandro Blanco, with whom he discussed issues of common interest, Cuban Sports Institute (INDER) on-line newspaper Jit reported.

Both executives held a meeting in which they reviewed the current state of relations between the two agencies, discussed prospects of strengthening them, as well as the role of the Olympic movement, the international sports scene and the specific development of this sector in their respective countries.

Mr. Blanco was also given a detailed explanation of the organization of the *1st Grand Prix of Judo* to be held in Havana, from June 6th to 8th, bringing together more than 700 competitors from 80 countries in search of ranking points for *Rio-2016 Olympics*. The last visit of the Spanish Olympic official to Cuba was in December 2008.

Women's Soccer

Cuba will hold today a *National Women's League* as a first step in the preparation of its girls for the Caribbean qualifying rounds for *Canada 2015 Women's World Cup*.

The League will be held at Havana's stadium Pedro Marrero until March 25th and will consist of a 3-day round robin including the participation of the country's 64 top female players over 17 years old, who will be divided into 4 teams to fight each other in a single lap, distributed in Havana, West, Central and East groups.

According to the National Federation, the main goal of this tournament is to select the 23 players who will make up the national pre-selection for the Caribbean qualifying rounds, starting on April.

After this first round, 3 teams will advance to the finals of the Caribbean region, from October 16th-26th in Cancun, and Playa del Carmen, Mexico, where the 3 participants in *Canada-2015* will be announced.

Athletics

The double world medalist in triple jump, Pedro Pablo Pichardo, became the great figure of *Cuba Athletics Cup*, after achieving 17.71 m. to break by a wide margin the event's record dating back almost 3 decades.

Pichardo, who reached bronze in the *World Indoor Meeting of Sopot*, Poland, a few days ago, made only 3 of the 6 trials, an event held for 3 days at the *Panamericano Stadium*, east of Havana.

However, along with Pichardo also shone the talented young local athlete of barely 16 years old and 1.92 m, Lázaro Martínez, winner of silver with an excellent jump of 17.11 for his category.

Other records of the final day were recorded by Cuba's male 4x400 relay team, who registered 3:04.86, to improve the former record of 3:05.52 set in 2011, as well as the victory of runners in 800 m, Rose Mary Almanza, who went down from 2 minutes with 1:59.76, and Jorge Liranzo with 1:46.21, winner of the experienced Andy Gonzalez.

Field Hockey

The hockey players of Ciego de Ávila and Villa Clara will fight today for the gold at the *National Field Hockey League*, to be held in the city of Ciego de Ávila.

For the second year, these teams are facing off in a final, lost by the first ones in the penalty kicks in the previous edition.

The bronze medal will be discussed between Havana and Santiago de Cuba, which complete the Big 4 of this sport in Cuba.

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