

*Cuba defeats Dominican Republic 9-4 in baseball practice game ahead of the pre-Olympic games*

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Miami, May 28 (RHC)-- The Cuban baseball team defeated the Dominican Republic 9-4 in a warm-up game played in Florida ahead of the Pre-Olympic Games of the Americas, which will begin next Monday in the cities of West Palm Beache and Port St Lucie.

With several of its main offensive players, the team showed a good performance four days before the ballgame. Leading the Cuban offense were Yordanis Samón (4-4, with 4 RBIs), Rafael Viñales (1-1, a home run with 2 RBIs), Frederich Cepeda (a double and an RBI) and Yadir Mujica and Roel Santos, authors of two hits each.

Lázaro Blanco, the leader of the Cuban pitching staff and the starter on Monday against Venezuela, worked two innings without allowing any runners to the Dominican pitching staff.

The high command of the team gave the ball to more than half of its pitching staff to let their arms loose for the tournament, which will give a ticket to the champion for Tokyo-2020 and the option to the occupants of the 2nd and 3rd places to go to a playoff in Mexico in search of the last Olympic berth.

After Blanco worked five other pitchers -- Yoanni Yera (punished with 4 runs in one inning), Bryan Chi (indecipherable in 2 innings), Yudiel Rodriguez (also immaculate in 2 innings), and Frank Alvarez and Andy Rodriguez, who pitched one inning each without allowing hits or runs.

The victory went to right-hander Bryan Chi, third pitcher employed by Armando Ferrer, who achieved his first triumph in the Team Cuba uniform.

According to a report by colleague Roberto Ramirez of Jit, an organ of the Sports Institute (Inder), this Friday the Cuban team will hold a training session and on Saturday they will not play the scheduled practice game against Nicaragua.

In the first date of the Pre-Olympic, on May 31, in addition to Cuba-Venezuela, Colombia and Canada will play in Group B, while the host United States and Nicaragua and Puerto Rico-Dominican Republic will play against each other in Group A.

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