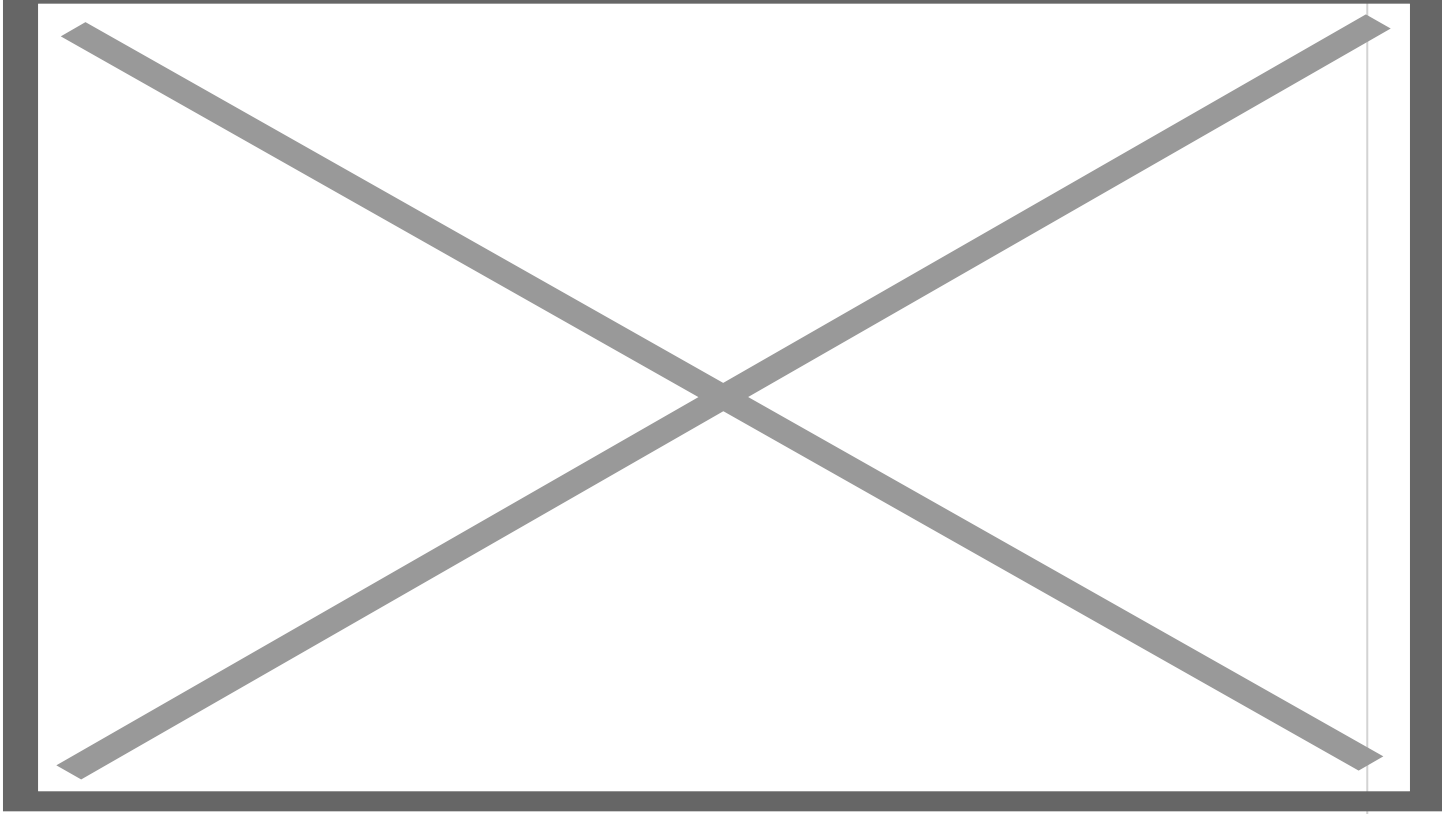


Santiago climbs to the top in Cuban baseball and Matanzas sweeps in sub-series

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Matanzas-Santiago

Havana, February 11 (RHC/PL)-- Santiago de Cuba climbed to the top of the Cuban National Baseball Series by beating Villa Clara twice and Matanzas swept Holguín, in the conclusion of the fifth sub-series of the island's elite championship.

The runner-up Cocardillos de Matanzas defeated Holguín 9-6 to materialize the sweep and occupy the second position with nine wins and three losses, behind Santiago de Cuba which defeated Villa Clara 3-2 and 7-4 to occupy the lead thanks to 10 wins and three losses.

Matanzas right-hander Renner Rivero (7-INN, 7-H, 2-CL, 6-K, 1-BB) got his second win of the campaign and with the lumber Eduardo Blanco homered and Yariel Duque (3-1) drove in four runs to contribute to the Matanzas' success.

Meanwhile, Santiago de Cuba won Wednesday's suspended game over Villa Clara 3-2 in seven chapters, supported by the third win of right-hander Alberto Bicet (5.2-INN, 6-H, 2-CL, 3-K, 0-BB) and run-scoring runs by Osday Silva (2-1), Dasiel Sevilla (2-1) and Nelson Batista (2-1).

In the second and seventh innings, the Santiago team repeated their success, this time 7-4, with joy from the box for reliever Yoandri Montero (1.2-INN, 1-H, 2-K, 0-C) and offensive leadership of designated Osday Silva, author of three hits in four innings, with two runs batted in.

Industriales could not sweep Ciego de Avila and left the Jose Ramon Cepero Stadium with a 2-1 lead in the particular commitment, after losing 4-2 on Thursday and with a balance of 6-6 occupies the ninth position in the standings.

In the challenge, right-hander Yander Guevarra (7-INN, 7-H, 2-CL, 2-K, 2-BB, 2-BI) celebrated his fourth victory in the same number of outings to ratify his position as the maximum winner of the baseball competition. According to statistical data, Industriales has not managed to score a victory over Yander Guevara for more than 4 years.

Guantanamo tilted the duel against Cienfuegos in their favor 2-1 by beating them 6-4 with the second win of Enyer Fernandez (6.1-INN, 4-H, 2-CL, 6-K, 4-BB) and an offense of eight hits.

Sancti Spíritus dominated the program 2-1 against Isla de la Juventud, winning Thursday's doubleheader 6-4 and 3-2.

Also completing wins were Artemisa 7-3 over Camagüey, Pinar del Río blanked Las Tunas 3-0 and the Granma champions defeated Mayabeque 5-4.

After five sub-series, Santiago de Cuba (10-3), Matanzas (9-3), Mayabeque (8-4), Ciego de Avila (8-5), Pinar del Río (7-6), Granma (7-6), Sancti Spiritus (6-6) and Villa Clara (6-6) are in the top eight places in the table with access to the post-season in this 61st edition of the Cuban baseball classic.

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