

Granma colossal in third playoff clash for the Cuban baseball title



Alexquemer Sánchez

Matanzas, June 22 (PL) - Granma rounded off a high-class exhibition to beat Matanzas (10x3) on Tuesday, stripping the rival's shortcomings and taking a 2-1 lead in the final of the 61st National Baseball Series.

In a Victoria de Girón stadium full of fans, the Alazanes did not believe in the cache of left-handed pitcher Dariel Góngora and attacked in the first inning with a double by Yosvani Millán, a driving rocket by Osvaldo Abreu and a sacrifice fly by Carlos Benítez.

The second inning seemed quiet for Góngora (1.2, 4C, 4H, 1DB) without his usual speed, but the visitors came back after a ball to Yulián Milán and a home run by the ninth hitter Darién Palma.

With the score 4x0 against, the manager of the Saurios lost patience, took his starter out of the box and relied on the skills of young Andy Quesada to extinguish the fire in front of more than 15 thousand fans in a red-hot facility.

In the midst of the storm and far from being discouraged, Matanzas got back on track with connections: Javier Camero's double and Juan Miguel Vázquez's single opened the scoreboard, in an episode that included a superb run by home runner Palma in the center field.

However, the Matanzas bullpen did not find vindication in the third act: Quesada (0.1, 2C, 1H, 2BB) lost control of his deliveries, Naykel Cruz (0.0, 2C, 1H, 1BB) was far from dominant and Alain López threw a

wild pitch that rounded off another four runs for the Granmenses.

From the opposite trench, right-hander Joel Mojena (5.0, 3C, 6H, 0K, 0BB) was master of the situation until he exploded in the sixth chapter, with three runs and six hits allowed.

Mojena achieved his second hit in the current postseason, while the reliever Kelbis Rodríguez (4.0, 0C, 3H) got the save, after completing four episodes without too many problems.

For the winners, Millán (5-2, 2CA), Alexquemer Sánchez (4-1, 2CI) and Palma (4-1, 2CI, 1HR) stood out, while Jefferson Delgado (4-2, 1CI, 1-2B, 1-3B) and Yadir Mujica (4-2, 1CA) supported the cause of the Cocodrilos.

The final will experience a sui generis impasse this Wednesday, as the Alazanes de Granma, reigning monarchs of the country, will complete the visa process on their way to represent Cuba in the Haarlem Baseball Week 2022, in the Netherlands.

RESULT

Granma 2 2 2 4 0 0 2 0 0 0 10 9 0

Matanzas 0 1 0 0 0 2 0 0 0 0 3 7 2

Wins: Joel Mojena (2-0)

Lost: Dariel Góngora (2-2)

Saved: Kelbis Rodríguez

Home Run: Darién Palma

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