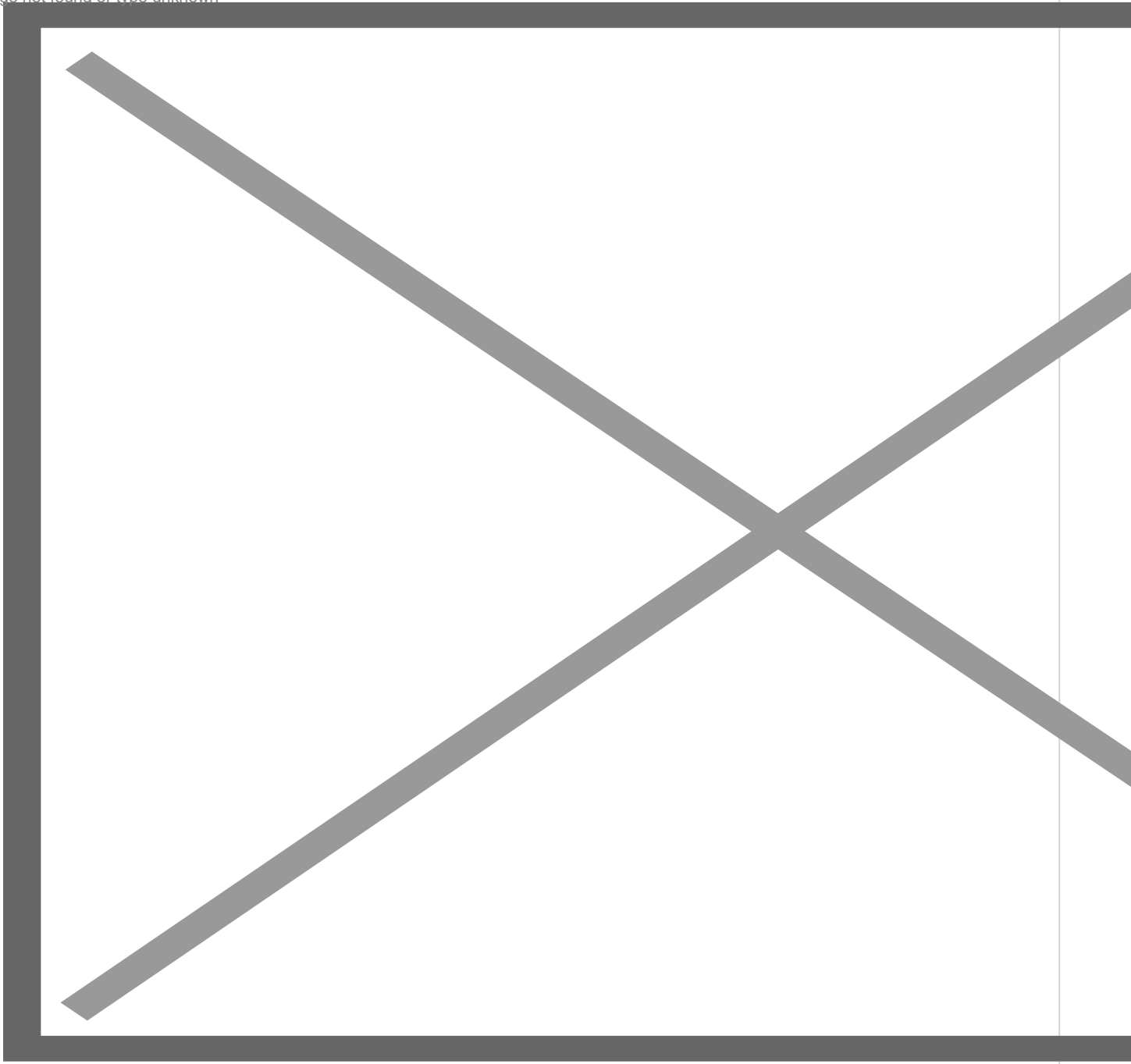


*Santiago and Capitalinos  
maintain good pace in Cuban  
basketball*

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**Photo: JIT.**

Havana, March 18 (RHC)-- The Santiago de Cuba and Capitalinos teams maintained their good pace in the men's Superior Basketball League (LSB) on Friday at the start of the second and decisive round of the tournament.

At the Alejandro Urgellés multi-purpose hall of the Hero City, the Halcones santiagueros defeated the debuting team of Mayabeque 87-52, to remain at the top with only one game ahead of the representatives

of the capital.

The Mayabequenses won the first quarter of the game 17-13, but from then on the indomitable were far superior with scores of 25-12, 25-14 and 22-9, in the remaining three sets, according to statistician Wilber Rodriguez.

Also this Friday, the Havana team defeated at home with a bulky 94-54 scoreboard the runner-up team of Las Tunas, at the Ramon Fonst multipurpose hall.

At the Mariposa de la Universidad de las Ciencias de la Cultura Física y del Deporte Manuel Fajardo, in Havana, home of the Artemisa team, the hosts beat the Villaclareños 78-60, who suffered their fifth successive setback, although they remain third in the standings.

Finally, the reigning champions of Ciego de Avila won 78-63 as visitors to the Espirituanos in the Yayabo hall, in what was a repeat of last year's final in the LSB.

With these results, the qualifying phase remains dominated by the Santiagueros (14-1), followed by Capitalinos (13-2), Villa Clara (9-6), Ciego de Avila (7-8), Mayabeque and Artemisa (6-9), Sancti Spíritus (4-11) and Las Tunas (1-14) at the bottom.

The eighth sub-series of the main Cuban men's basketball tournament, in which the top four teams will advance to the post-season after the end of the 28-game regular stage, will conclude today.

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