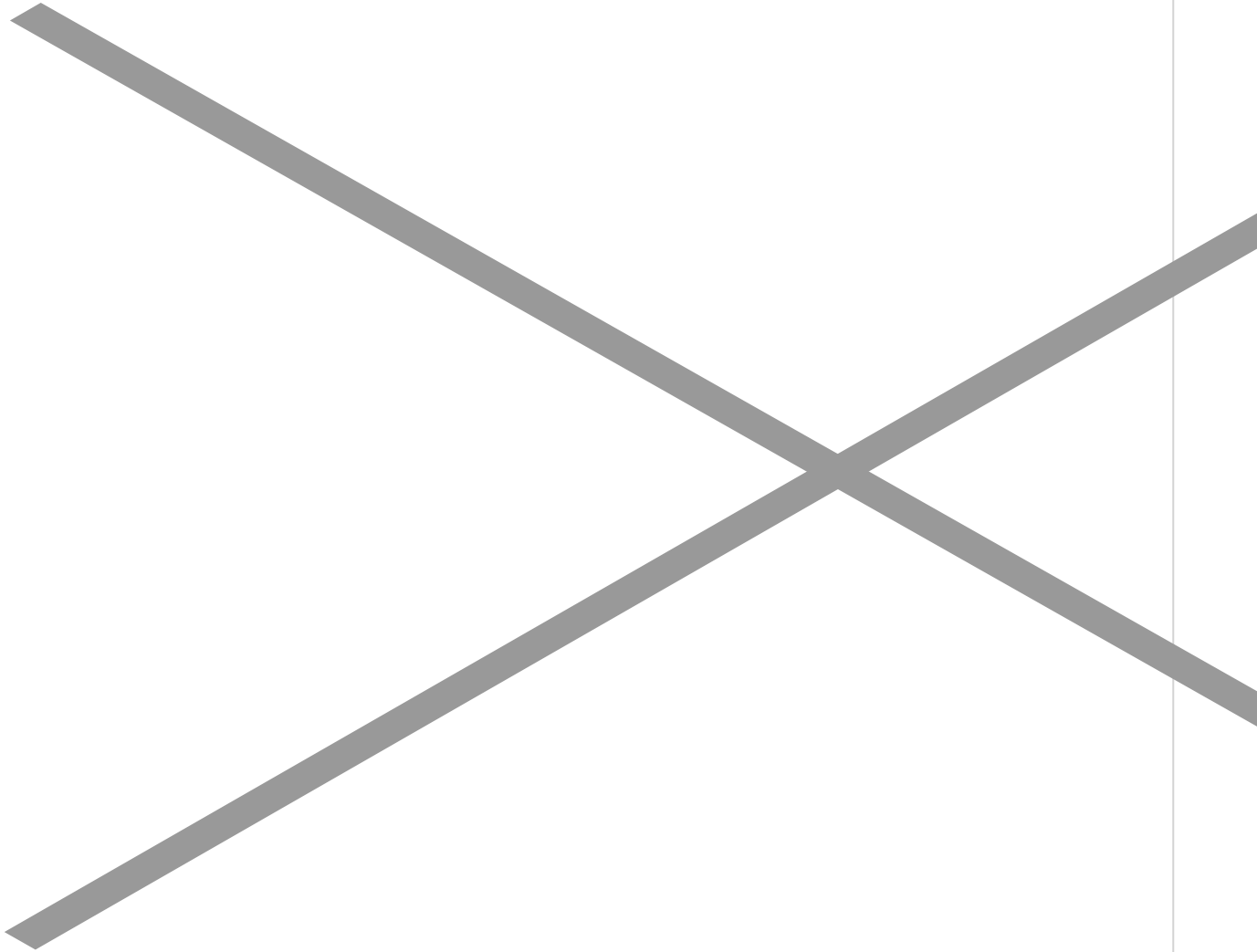


Cocodrilos show power and reaction capacity in Cuban baseball

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Matanzas, January 8 (PL) - The Cocodrilos de Matanzas achieved their second victory against Las Tunas in the semifinals of the Cuban Elite Baseball League, this time with a score of 10-2 at the Victoria de Girón stadium in the city of Matanzas.

In addition to confirming their powerful offense, the Matanceros showed their reaction capacity to achieve their second consecutive triumph and were halfway to the finals of the tournament.

They will now travel to Tunisia to play three games in the east of the country, from Tuesday to Thursday.

Unlike Saturday's match, marked by the devastating attack of the Matanzas from the first inning, on Sunday Armando Ferrer's pupils did not connect any hits until the sixth inning.

During five innings, young pitcher Yadián Martínez had barely given up three tickets and his teammates gave him a 2-0 lead.

But in the sixth inning, the Leñadores' pitcher withstood Alexander Pozo's home run and then the League's home run leader, Yurisbel Gracial, hit his tenth home run to tie the score at two and in the process, the stands of the Victoria de Girón Park in Matanzas, located 44 kilometers from the famous beach resort of Varadero, went wild.

After that hit came a pair of hits, a sacrifice fly by former major leaguer Erisbel Arruebarrena and two errors by the Tunera defense that rounded off the package of five runs in the sixth chapter.

From then on, the game took a similar course to Saturday's, with the Cocodrilos scoring once more in the seventh, towed by a jit by the also former U.S. Major League Baseball player Rusney Castillo, and finished off with four runs in the eighth, after five hits and the third error of the night by the Tunera defense.

Reliever Frank Luis Medina (3.0 IP, 2H, 1K) signed the victory that put his team two hits away from the League title game.

Among the pleasant notes of the game was also the exhibition of arms of the Matanzas outfielders, especially Eduardo Blanco, considered one of the best in Cuba for the power and precision of his throws, who cooled a runner on the rubber and prevented others from venturing to take more than one base.

The other semifinal game of the day was rained out in Artemisa, where the hosts Cazadores de Artemisa were leading Industriales 7x1 in the fourth inning. That game will be resumed on Monday, according to the tournament organizers.

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