

Sports News Roundup Jan. 19



Baseball

Granma added on Sunday its 8th consecutive victory in the *54th Cuban Baseball Championship* to overcome current monarch Pinar del Río by 6-3, to complete the sweep in their bilateral subseries and maintained the siege of the top.

Urmani Guerra and Lázaro Cedeño drove in 2 per capita to lead the offensive of Granma's *Los Alazanes*, while Pinar hit 18 hits, but lacked timely hitting by leaving 13 runners on.

Juan Ramón Olivera won success as a reliever, while the star Freddy Asiel Alvarez charged with failure despite admitting no earned runs in 6 innings. So, Granma reached 37 wins with 20 defeats to be consolidated in the 2nd place, just 2 games from the leader Matanzas (39-18), which beat 12-4 to Isla de la Juventud on Sunday.

Rookie Ariel Martínez homered and drove in 3 as emerging batter to excel by national runners-up, along with 1st baseman Jefferson Delgado and designated Yadiel Hernández, with 2 RBIs per capita.

Ramón Licor relieved in the very 1st episode and spread 5 hits and 1 clean in 5 innings to file his 4th victory, with failure to Ulfrido García.

Meanwhile, Industriales escaped from the sweep by winning 10-6 to Ciego de Ávila with overwhelming offensive of 16 hits, including homers of veterans Carlos Tabares and Rudy Reyes, to underpin Frank Monthiet's solid pitching performance.

Holguín settled 4-1 to Artemisa to also avoid the broom, with great performance of its starter, Carlos Santiesteban, who just allowed 3 hits and 1 clean in 7 chapters, supported by Oscar del Rosario's batting of 4-2, 1 driven and 2 runs scored.

Now, behind Matanzas (39-18) and Granma (37-20), appear Industriales (32-25) and Isla de la Juventud (31-26), while Artemisa, Pinar del Rio and Ciego de Ávila march tied with 30-27, and Holguín closed the Table with 27-30.

After the break of this Monday, the Series will be resumed on Tuesday with clashes among Pinar del Río-Matanzas, Artemisa-Ciego de Ávila, Industriales-Holguín, and Isla de la Juventud vs. Granma, always at the home of the first ones.

And regarding baseball, Victor Mesa, head coach of the national baseball squad, relied on the success of the team that will represent Cuba at the upcoming *Caribbean Series*, agreed from February 2nd to 8th in the Puerto Rican city of San Juan.

Exclusively to local AIN news agency and during the recent match against Industriales, the also coach of Matanzas gave importance to the choice of athletes that will reinforce the team of Pinar del Río, Cuba's current monarch and representative of the island in the Caribbean competition.

The Cuban team will compete against the champions of the leagues of Venezuela, Dominican Republic, Mexico and Puerto Rico.

Cycling

The young Cuban cyclist Marliés Mejías starred in the best performance of the Cuban team in the 3rd and final phase of the *Track Cycling World Cup 2014-2015* that welcomed the Colombian city of Cali.

Mejias, who had managed an 8th place in the *team sprint* and 12th in the *persecution quartet*, sealed her participation in an outstanding 4th place with 163 units in the grueling *Omnium test*, reflected the event's website.

With this result, the multifaceted rider took over the 2nd seat in the ranking of the contest with 353 points, sums achieved during the stops held in Aguascalientes (Mexico), where he earned silver (2/135), and that of London (5/105/Great Britain), and Cali (4/113).

Also in the *team sprint*, alongside her compatriot Lisandra Guerra, Mejías got 82 units with their 8th place, higher than that of 60 made in the British metropolis, to settle in 14th place with 142 units, while in *team pursuit*, both Cubans closed 13th.

Also this Sunday, Guerra culminated 9th in *Keirin*, to be among the top 10 overall list with 172 points (10/49-49-74), although her main result was recorded in the *individual speed*.

In this event, although closing in 8th place, Lisandra won a sum of 235 (120-33-82), satisfactory result taking into account the high level of this test worldwide.

The overall medals by country, of this Colombian phase was led by Holland with 4 gold and 2 silver medals, followed by Australia, with 2 gold, and China (1-1-0), in that order.

The 3 stops of the *Track Cycling World Cup* awarded points to the world ranking meeting of February in Paris, France, and the *Olympics* in Rio de Janeiro 2016, in Brazil.

Soccer

The Cuban U-20 soccer team exhibited offensive improvements and drew 2-2 against Haiti during last weekend at the *CONCACAF World Cup Qualifying Tournament* based in Montego Bay, Jamaica.

However, Cuba is forced to win against Canada today Monday 19th as William Bennet's disciples only show 1 point from a draw 2-2 facing Haiti. Cuba's next presentations will be against El Salvador on Thursday 22nd.

This tournament in Jamaica grants 4 berths for the World Cup this year in New Zealand.

USA Triathlon Sends Athletes to Cuba for First Time

Adam Gordon has never won a triathlon, and the software engineer from Boulder, Colo., regularly finishes in the middle of the pack. But in 9 days, Gordon will write his name into triathlon's history books as one of the first Americans to ever compete in Cuba.

"The race is just another triathlon in my mind," said Gordon, 39. "The experience is one of those once-in-a-lifetime things."

Gordon is one of 25 American triathletes who will compete in the Jan. 24-25 *Habana Camtri Triathlon* events in downtown Havana, a two-day competition comprising triathlons of 3 different distances: *sprint* (.47-mile swim, 12-mile bike, 3.1 mile run), *Olympic* (.93-mile swim, 25-mile bike, 6.2-mile run) and *long course* (1.2-mile swim, 56-mile bike, 13.1-mile run).

Organizers expect approximately 220 athletes and Gordon will compete in the *sprint*. The Camtri event is Cuba's first-ever triathlon to welcome American athletes, according to the sport's international governing body, the *International Triathlon Union*.

A spokesman with the U.S. Olympic Committee said the race also marks the first American participation in any Cuban competition following last month's announcement that the U.S. and Cuba would reestablish diplomatic relations.

"This isn't about politics," said Barry Siff, board president for USA Triathlon, the sport's national governing body. "It's about showing our support for the Cubans who are trying to grow triathlon."



Radio Habana Cuba