

Sports News Roundup Jan. 27



Judo

Eight Cuban judokas will take part in tournaments in Belgium and Germany between late January and February as part of their preparation for the *Toronto Pan-American Games* and *World Championships* in Astana.

Departing for the event this Wednesday are the world runner-up in 100 kg in Chelyabinsk-2014, José Armenteros, along with Magdiel Estrada (73) and Ivan Silva (81), whereas among females traveling to the event are Onix Cortés, bronze in the 70 kg in Russian finals, plus Dayaris Mestre (48), Aliuska Ojeda (57), Maylín del Toro (63) and Kaliema Antomachin (78).

Males compete in the traditional *Open de Vise*, Belgium, from January 31st to February 1st to attend the strong *Grand Prix of Dusseldorf*, Germany, agreed from February 20th to 22nd. Meanwhile, the girls will be presented in the Belgian town of Arlon and will observe a training base in France.

The schedule for Cuba's judokas shows as its main stops the *Pan-American Championships* in Edmonton, Canada, in April, qualifier for Toronto in July, to close at the *World Championships* in the capital of Kazakhstan from August 24th to 30th.

Amid these prospects for the Cuban judo, coaches Ismael Borbona and Julio Alderete will attend a IJF training course in Malaga, Spain, with a view to updating the new rules.

Cuban judo also has 5 athletes scheduled to participate in the *Festival of Women* in Dominican Republic next March, a month in which the national classics will be made here in this capital's tatamis.

Boxing

Cuba's *Los Domadores* lead the *V World Series of Boxing* after two weekends, matched with *Otomans* of Ukraine in *Group A*.

The defending monarch squad is the only unbeaten in 10 starts after the whitening smoothly over the *Lions* of Morocco and Algeria's *Desert Hawks*.

Erislandy Savon's knockout in 91 kg on the Moroccan Amine Azzouzi provided the most dramatic denouement to Algeria, a team that should return to the ring against Russia in Havana on Friday.

Cuba should use its main exponents against Russia, i.e., Savon (91), Joahnys Argilagos (49), Robeisy Ramírez (56), Yasnier Toledo (64), and Arlen Lopez (75), as the Russians have great quality and come with only 1 stop after postponing its debut against the Algerians and previously beaten the *Dragons* of China by 4-1.

In *Group B*, *Astaná Promises* from Kazakhstan, *Knockouts* from US and Puerto Rico's *Los Huracanes*, smiled in their initial 2 commitments and exhibit 6 units each, but the best balance of 8-2 is in the hands of the Kazakhs.

The most surprising news was given by debutant *Caciques* of Venezuela after demolishing Azerbaijan's *Baku Fires* by 4-1.

Soccer

Cuba's National Soccer Commissioner, René Pérez, confirmed the Cuban Federation of that sport is open to any proposal to hire players for foreign teams. Pérez explained that still there is no regulation regarding contracts of Cuban soccer players for foreign teams, although they have unofficially received some proposals.

In that regard he made it clear that the first step would be a visit by representatives of clubs to evaluate Cuban talents and there has been none yet; however, he indicated that after that all depended in the interest of both parts, in the Cuban case with priority in technical development of the soccer player.

If it is a case of a young player with immediate perspectives, we gain nothing by sending him to a 4th division in a country without great potentiality, he said.

In this sense, he advanced that in the case of France, Dominican Republic and Mexico, they have listened to proposals but they would always follow the policy approved by Cuba and the regulations of the FIFA.

At last, he said specialists from the Cuban Federation have received and would ask, if necessary, counseling from FIFA and CONCACAF in this matter, inexistent in the last 50 years of Cuban sport.

Since the year 2013, the Institute of Sports (INDER) approved hiring of Cuban sports peoples in foreign leagues, but up to this time, they have only signed up 5 baseball players and one for volleyball.

Magnus Carlsen wins Tata Steel Masters 2015

Magnus Carlsen won the *77th Tata Steel Masters* with 9/11 half a point clear of Maxime Vachier-Lagrave, Anish Giri, Wesley So and Liren Ding.

Magnus Carlsen secured a draw in his final round game against Ivan Saric that proved enough for him to take first place alone in the *2015 Tata Steel Masters*. Carlsen was not happy with the quality of the final round game where he "just blundered a pawn" he was unhappy with his play even after this but eventually the game swapped down to a dead draw. This is Carlsen's 4th victory in the Wijk aan Zee top group. The *78th Tata Steel Chess* takes place 15th to 31st of January 2016. Carlsen didn't guarantee a return but thought it "not unlikely".

There were some pluses which Carlsen outlined on twitter as "First tournament win since April, first gain of rating since February, and my longest winning streak ever."

Anish Giri could have caught Carlsen with a final round win over Radoslaw Wojtaszek but instead a complex Gruenfeld traded off to a dull draw. Giri thought at various points he may have had chances but the tactics led to an equal position. Giri has moved to 2797 and 6 in the world and his progress is obvious.

Maxime Vachier-Lagrave played perhaps the most impressive game of the day to also share second place. He defeated Fabiano Caruana with a creative pawn sacrifice that almost immediately led to concessions by white. Vachier-Lagrave finished the game with a very nice mating flourish too.

Liren Ding defeated Levon Aronian in a very strange King's Indian. Aronian must have forgotten his preparation because he thought for 15 minutes over 16.g5 which is just losing after 16...Ne8! Aronian extended the game for a very long time but he never came close to recovering.

Wesley So defeated Loek van Wely in a Benoni. It didn't look like Van Wely had much patience to defend and once his aggression finished white simply broke through in the centre.

Baadur Jobava at least finished a catastrophic event for him with a win. It was a very odd game which started as a King's Indian and went into Benko style play. Radjabov missed the winning sacrifice 20.Nxf3+! and the game looked to be heading for a draw. 46.Rb4? was a bad error (46.Rb3+ first saves the game) and then was practically losing. However Jobava gave Radjabov at least some hope with the crude 50.Nxb2 giving up a piece (50.Nd2 is winning) but 51....Ke7? (51.Bxe5 and if white is still winning it is tricky) led to a white win.

Hou Yifan was better against Vassily Ivanchuk out of the opening but they locked the position up after which a draw was the natural result.

Final Round 13 Standings: 1 Carlsen 9pts, 2-5 Vachier-Lagrave, Giri, So, Ding Liren 8.5pts, 6 Ivanchuk 7.5pts, 7 Caruana 7pts, 8 Radjabov 6pts, 9-10 Wojtaszek, Aronian 5.5pts, 11 Hou Yifan 5pts, 12 Saric 4.5pts, 13 Van Wely 4pts, 14 Jobava 3pts.

In the Challengers group Yi Wei won with 10.5/13 half a point clear of David Navara. Yi Wei has earned a place in the Masters next year.

Next events: Gibraltar Masters 27th Jan to 5th Feb 2015. Topalov, Nakamura, Svidler, Vitiugov, Jakovenko, etc.

GRENKEChess in Baden-Baden 2nd-9th February 2015. Carlsen, Caruana, Anand, Aronian, Adams, Bacrot, Naiditsch, Baramidze.



Radio Habana Cuba