

# *Sport News Roundup March 02*

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## **Baseball**

Matanzas is secured on top of *54th Cuban Baseball Championship* with 4 games ahead when 14 games are left to complete the schedule of the 2nd phase.

The leaders, who already virtually have the ticket to the post season, defeated Industriales 7-1 on Sunday, in a game won by lefty Ramón Licor with Adrián Sosa's positive relay.

Licor allowed 1 run in 5 and 2/3 entries for his 5th win in 7 outings, and Sosa went on that domain before the final 27th out made by Félix Fuentes. Yurisbel Gracial, Yasiel Santoya and Jefferson Delgado drove in 2 each to command the winning drive.

Thus, Matanzas has 47 and 26 and increased the gap with its follower, Granma, which suffered its 4th straight loss after falling 9-0 to Artemisa despite Alfredo Despaigne's and Yordanis Alarcón's homers.

Meanwhile, Ciego de Avila, scored the 11th win in 15 challenges and was alone in 3rd place after surpassing Isla de la Juventud by a score of 9-0, led by Yander Guevara, who did not allow any runs in 7 innings but endured 9 hits supported by Rabbi Yadir's perfect relay for 2 chapters.

Meanwhile, the current champion Pinar del Río bowed 5 on 3 to Holguin thanks to excellent bullpen relievers Yaifredo Dominguez and Liván Moinelo who left no career to their rival in 5 episodes.

Under these results, Matanzas, Granma (43-30) and Ciego de Ávila (42-31) own 3 of the 4 berths of the *Semifinals*, as the 4th place is shared by Isla de la Juventud and Industriales with 41 and 32, while Pinar

del Río (39-34), Artemisa (36-37) and Holguin (31-42) complete the *Table*.

This Monday, Holguin-Pinar del Río, Granma-Artemisa, Industriales-Matanzas, and Isla de la Juventud-Ciego de Ávila duels are repeated.

And in other news about baseball, we learned that former Cuban ballplayer Orestes "Minnie" Miñoso, the first black to join the *US Major Leagues*, died in Cook county, Illinois, on Sunday, March 1st.

Speaking in Washington, US President Barack Obama expressed his condolences, saying that "Minnie" Miñoso, who inspired "generations of young Black and Latino" fans of the team which played in Chicago, "will always be *Mr. White Sox*."

Miñoso, a baseball legend who broke barriers against racism in the Majors, died Sunday at the age of 90 years without seeing fulfilled the dream of entering the *Hall of Fame*.

"Minnie could have been ignored by the *National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum* during his lifetime, but for me, and for generations of young blacks and Latinos, the quintessentially American story of Minnie represents much more than a simple plate could ever make." "For people on the "South Side" (south Chicago) and *White Sox* fans across the country, including me, Minnie Miñoso is, and always will be, *Mr. White Sox*," Obama said in a statement.

Obama, who has spent much of his life in Chicago and is an avowed *White Sox* fan, recalled the legacy of the first black player who played in a major league team in Chicago and was the first Latin-American black to play in the Majors, making his debut in 1949 with the *Cleveland Indians*, 2 years after Jackie Robinson broke the racial barrier with the *Brooklyn Dodgers*.

Miñoso, a native of Perico, in the Cuban province of Matanzas, played most of his career in left field, debuted in the *Major Leagues* with the *Cleveland Indians* in 1949, and 2 years later, he was traded to the *White Sox*.

The legendary baseball player played his 1st game with the *White Sox* on May 1st, 1951, and homered at his first time at bat against the famous right starter of *New York Yankees*, Vic Raschi.

Minoso played 12 of his 17 Seasons in Chicago, which allowed him to reach 304 batting average with 135 homers and 808 RBIs. In his honor, the Chicago team of the American League withdrew its number 9 in 1983 and built a statue in the field of the *White Sox*.

The star of the *White Sox* played 14 *Seasons* in the *Cuban Professional League*, plus 17 in the majors. In Cuba, he gained several titles at batting, and was the best player, among other categories, from 1945 to 1957.

Miñoso, who won 3 *Golden Gloves* with the *Major Leagues*, could not make it to *Cooperstown*, the baseball fame saloon, but his career showed he was one of the greatest ever.

## **Football**

The Cuban soccer team, Sub-17 years category, will rival this Monday the local Honduran team in their 2nd match of *Group A* of the *CONCACAF* world qualifying. The duel is agreed for the *Francisco Morazan Stadium* in San Pedro Sula, and led by Fidel Jiqui Zalazar will seek to win against a team that successfully opened 2-0 against Jamaica.

Cuba lost by a score of 5-0 in its debut against the States. The event, which enrolls 12 teams, will award 4 places for the World Cup category, to be held later this year in Chile.

The winners of each key get fit for the world cap, while the 2nd and 3rd of each key, and the best of the 4th in the 1st round, will play against the 4th while the 2nd will face the 3rd one. The winners of these duels will also go to the World top.

Cuba has attended two *World Cups Sub-17* years, in Scotland 1989, and Italy 1991, under the direction of coach Manuel Rodríguez.

### **Australian City of Brisbane to Bid for 2028 Olympic Games**

The mayor of Brisbane, Australia, Graham Quirk, recently said that the city intends to host the *Olympic Games* in 2028.

That would be the natural choice for the next Australian candidacy, the official said to the *Brisbane Times* newspaper.

Quirk added that he will propose the plan at a meeting of mayors of Australia's east coast in early this month.

In November, Brisbane hosted the *G-20 Summit*, with thousands of participants from around the world, which is a kind of guarantee for the Summer event returning to Australia, 28 years after the success of Sydney.

The Australian city could face Berlin or Hamburg, German cities that also hope to host the Games in 2028.

In addition to the candidate of Germany, Doha (Qatar), Madrid (Spain) and Lima (Peru) have shown an interest in hosting the greatest sporting event worldwide.

However, so far everything is at the level of intention, as the official announcements for the appointment of 2024 are expected in January 2016, while the announcement for 2028 will come four years later.

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