

# *Sports News Roundup March 04*

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## **Baseball**

Without defining the 4 semifinalists and with the current champion a far cry in 6th place, the *54th Cuban Baseball Championship* takes a break on Wednesday with just 12 games to close the present stage prior to the post season.

Despite Matanzas' 2-1 wins over Industriales, and those of Granma facing Artemisa, plus Ciego de Ávila's sweeping Isla de la Juventud, none of them have secured their spot for the playoffs, although major steps toward that objective were taken.

On Tuesday, Matanzas defined the match against Industriales to leave them dramatically on the field by 6x5 in more than 4 hours of mediocre baseball, as 14 tickets, 3 balls and 5 errors occurred.

Granma got same result after beating 14x13 to Artemisa in another over-time game of 13 innings.

Meanwhile, the Avilans' *Los Tigres*, with 16 wins in the last 21 games, swept Isla de la Juventud by 1x0, supported by Alain Sanchez' and Yunier Cano's excellent pitching.

For its part, the champion Pinar del Río fell 11x3 versus Holguín, which produced 15 hits, including consecutive homers of Yeison Pacheco and Edilse Silva against Freddy Asiel Alvarez, plus another Franklin Aballe's solo homer.

With just 4 subseries to close the 2nd phase of the tournament, Matanzas (48-27), Granma (45-30) and Ciego de Ávila (44-31) are very close to the playoffs, while still competing for the 4th and final quota

Industriales (42-33) and Isla de la Juventud (41-34) and less likely, Pinar del Río (39-35) are pulling out the string; the Table is completed Artemisa (36-39) and Holguin (33-42).

The stops will resume on Thursday with the duels of Pinar del Río-Granma, Matanzas-Isla de la Juventud, Ciego de Ávila-Industriales and Artemisa-Holguin, always at the headquarters of the formers.

## **Weightlifting**

The well-known *Manuel Suárez In Memoriam International Weightlifting Tournament*, to be held for the province of Cienfuegos from March 9th to 15th, will be attended by more than 70 foreign competitors from 9 countries.

Cuba will present 14 men and 8 women, including the 3-time world medalist Yoelmis Hernandez, in the 85 kg division, Vicente Gálvez, Cuban head coach, told exclusively to local ACN news agency.

The list of the men includes the 9 athletes who participated in *Veracruz 2014*, last November, and the *World Championship of Almaty*, Kazakhstan, also in that month of the same year.

Besides Hernández, there will also be present Javier Vanega (94 kg), Alejandro Cisnero (105), Alberto Pupo (+105), the promising Victor Quiñones (94), Adriel La O and Jordanis Espinosa, both in 77 kilos.

Meanwhile, the women's event shall be attended by Niulis Gonzalez (53), Saily Valdespino (58), María Rodríguez (63) and Marina Almaguer (69), and they all will try to get the only 1 ticket Cuba owns for the Pan-American contest in Toronto, Canada, next July.

This tournament will be used by Cuba as training for the Canadian event, where it is expected them to reach their best competitive shape, said Jorge Luis Barcelán, national commissioner of the discipline.

## **Judo**

The Cuban women's judo team intensifies its preparation for the *National Tournament, First Category*, the *Festival of Women of Dominican Republic*, and *Team Tournament of New York* to be held in March.

Cuban Professor Ronaldo Veitía, head coach of the women's national team, told local AIN news agency that they will be 3 major events, facing the continental championship next April in Edmonton, Canada.

In this regard, he noted that in the lid, teams seek tickets for the Pan-American Games in the Canadian city of Toronto, from July 10th to 26th.

About the elite event of local judo, Veitía confirmed that the only absences of members of the national pre-selection will be Marciet Espinosa, 63 kilograms and Yanet Bermoy (52 kilos) because of medical surgery though being recovered satisfactorily.

The rest will be representing their provinces, including Idalis Ortiz (78), *London 2012* Olympic champion and world champion in *Rio de Janeiro 2013* and Chelyabinsk 2014, and Yalennis Castillo (78), Olympic monarch in *Beijing 2008*.

About the Dominican appointment from 13rd to 25th in Santo Domingo, Veitía confirmed the presence of Arnais Odelín, at 52 kilos, Anailis Dorvigni (57 kilos), Dalisdaivis Rodriguez (63) and Nairelis Fuentes (70), all led by Driulis González, Glory of Sports in Cuba and Olympic, World, Pan-American multimedallist.

Regarding the quintet, the Cuban professor stressed that Rodriguez, though being a visual impaired, has gotten Olympic and world laurels.

Veitía finally said the Team Tournament of New York is expected to be attended, as guests, by Dayaris Mestre (48), Bermoy (52), Aliuska Ojeda (57), Olga Masferrer (63), and Castillo (78).

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