

Sports News Roundup April 01



Baseball

The surprising Isla de la Juventud and Ciego de Ávila will star from next Friday an unprecedented end in the *54th Cuban Baseball Championship* in series of 7 games to win 4.

Isla de la Juventud made history by advancing for 1st time in a final after smashingly crushing Matanzas 15-5 in semifinals and closing with 4 wins against 2 while Ciego de Avila eliminated Granma 4-1.

The Isla de la Juventud-Matanzas series proved highly disputed, to the extent that 3 of the 6 matches went to extra-innings.

The cap, which ended in the early hours of Wednesday after more than 5 hours of battle at the *Victoria de Giron Stadium* in Matanzas, was won by Islanders' *Los Piratas*, team that without big stars accomplished the feat of eliminating to the mighty Industriales, Pinar del Rio and Matanzas teams.

Ferocious offensive of 20 hits, including Julio Pablo Martinez' homer and effective relief of star Hector Mendoza, led to the victory of the Islanders.

For its part and on the same day on Tuesday, Ciego de Avila won at home at the *José Ramón Cepero Stadium*, 3-0 to Granma, and reached their 4th consecutive success in the semifinal series, which they began losing.

The Avilanians, champions in 2012, have classified for the finals for the 3rd time in the last 5 years.

In the decider, Roger Machado's pupils decided early by scoring 1 run in the 1st chapter and 2 on the 5th, while Yander Guevara silenced the Granma's powerful offensive for 9 innings, allowing only 3 hits, with 6 strikeouts and no walks.

The *grand final* will start on Friday at the *José Ramón Cepero Stadium* where they also play on Sunday, and then move to the *Cristóbal Labra Stadium*, in Isla de la Juventud, to play on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday if necessary.

Chess

The Cuban GM Lázaro Bruzón went up 1 position, while his teammate Leinier Dominguez dropped 2 in the world ranking of chess, which was recently updated by the International Federation of discipline, and will run until April 30th.

Bruzón, with 2691 Elo points, improved from place 55th to 54th, while Dominguez, with 2729 units, fell from the 26th to 28th place in the world rank.

The two Cubans, inactive during March, are the only Latin Americans in the *Top 100* of world chess, and plan to come back to stage in the *World Team Cup* which starts on April 19th in Armenia.

The chess ranking that is monthly updated is led by the Norwegian GM Magnus Carlsen with 2863 followed by the Italian GM Fabiano Caruana (2802), only players that exceed 2800 points.

Swimming

From the 17th edition of *Marcelo Salado Swimming Cup*, the principal male figure of the national team, Armando Barrera, improved his mark on Tuesday demanded for the *Pan-Am Toronto-2015* in the 100 meter backstroke style when registered 56 sec. and 38 hundredths.

The Triton of only 19 years old surpassed the record of 56 sec. and 54 hundredths with what he got bronze medal in *Veracruz 2014* late November, and thus exceeded the 56 sec. and 59 hundredths demanded by the *International Swimming Federation* for the continental event in Canada, while adding his 2nd gold medal in this traditional Cuban lid after winning the 50m backstroke.

Young promising figures Christian Ricardo, Luis Vega and Elisbeth Gámez, also stood and improved their records, told to local agencies Rodolfo Falcon, President of the Cuban Federation of Swimming, and Olympic runner-up in *Atlanta'96* precisely at 100 backstroke.



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