

# *Cuba's 55th National Baseball Series Underway*

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## **Baseball**

The team of Cuba won its 3rd success at the *U-18 Baseball World Cup* by knocking 11-1 to Canada in 7 innings in a game played in Osaka, Japan.

The winning drive was led by Oscar Luis Colas, designated and 4th batter, and Miguel Antonio Vargas, 1st baseman and 5th in the lineup, who connected 4-3 with 1 double and 3 RBIs, like Vargas, but with 1 triple.

In total, the Caribbean team amassed 13 hits against 3 Canadian pitchers, with victory for the right-hander Josimar Coucin, who worked 7 innings just allowing 1 run and 3 hits, walked 1 and gave 7 strikeouts.

In its previous presentations, Cuba defeated Italy and South Africa, and lost to South Korea in the latter in 10 innings.

According to the disclosed program, those led by Caribbean coach Luis Cuba will face Chinese Taipei on the closing day of the qualifiers.

In other matches on Monday, the South Koreans overcame Taipei 4-3 and to lead *Group B* unbeaten with 4 successes without setbacks, followed by Cuba (3-1), Chinese Taipei and Canada (2-2), Italy (1-3) and

South Africa (0-4). The first 3 places in each group will advance to the 2nd phase of the contest.

And in baseball at home, the team of Ciego de Avila, defending champion of Cuban baseball, debuted with victory in the *55th National Series* this Sunday to overcome current runner-up Isle of Youth with a score of 5-1 at the *José Ramón Cepero Stadium* where the host, *Los Tigres*, deployed an 8-hits offensive, including 3 extra-bases to support the stellar pitching performance from starter Vladimir García while the loss corresponded to Luis Manuel Suarez, who endured 5 hits and 2 runs in 6 episodes.

In the other games also triumphed Cienfuegos, Sancti Spiritus, Artemisa, Santiago de Cuba and Guantanamo, while Matanzas, Granma, Pinar del Rio, Mayabeque, Holguin, and Camaguey lost, and Villa Clara-Isla de la Juventud and Industriales-Ciego de Avila will bump into a double play today.

## **Beach Volleyball**

The male and female pairs of Cuba won the gold and silver medals respectively in the 4th Circuit stop of the North, Central American and Caribbean Volleyball Beach, located at the *Barcelo Solymar Arenas Blancas hotel* in Varadero.

Cubans Nivaldo Diaz and Sergio González defeated 2-0 Christham Canadians Redmann and Felipe Humana on Sunday, with partials of 21-13 and 21-13 while for the bronze medal, the Americans Edwin Burik and Curt Toppel beat 2-1 (21-16, 20-22 and 15-13) to the 2nd local duo, composed by Cubans Yendry Castillo and Liosbel Mendez.

Among women, Sara Hughes and Kelly Claes, from US 1 team, won the title 2-0 (21-18 and 24-22) in the final against the also Cubans Leila Martinez and Lidianni Echevarria.

## **Judo**

Cuba's male and female judo teams had a very pale performance in the recently concluded *World Judo Tournament* held at the *Ice Palace of Alau* in Astana, the Kazakh capital city.

In both cases the gold was taken by Japan, whose ladies outstripped the Polish, Russians and Germans, while the men were imposed over the South Koreans, Georgians and the Mongols themselves; besides, as it was also expected, Japanese ruled in the medal table by individual nations tournament with 15 medals (6-4-5), followed by France (2-2-2) and South Korea (2-0-3).

The bronze of Idalys Ortiz at +78 kg. was the only medal of Cuba, thanks to which the Caribbean nation closed in 20th place by countries, though wasted an excellent opportunity to add points to the ranking in the Olympic qualification in the last world top before *Rio de Janeiro 2016*.

Undoubtedly, the excellent French judoka Teddy Rinner was the most important figure of the tournament by winning his 8th consecutive crown with his 26 years of age at +100 kg. category.

## **Volleyball**

Turkey electrified the spectators with a scintillating straight sets win (25-19, 25-18, 27-25) against Cuba in the *2015 Men's U23 World Championship's* semifinal at Al Nasr Hall in Dubai, United Arab Emirates on Sunday.

Turkey qualified to their 1st final at this age category to face the winner of the other semifinal between Russia and Italy on Monday, while Cuba played for the bronze medal against the losers.

In the process, the winners recorded their 5th win in 6 encounters in their campaign, while Cuba suffered the first loss in 6 matches. Star outside hitter Gokhan Gokgoz led the Turkey's scoring with 21 points while opposite attacker Metin Toy added 17 to his team record. For Cuba, middle blocker Abraham Alfonso delivered 14 points with Osoria Rodriguez chalking up another 10 equal to Osmany Uriarte.

The winners led the match through the sharp serving, making over a wide lead of 9/1 in ace services with another remarkable lead 45/35 in spiking and 9/7 in stuff blocks to make the Cubans opportunity very difficult.

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