

Sports News Roundup December

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Sports Journalism: Sports Media Pearl Awards

Cuban Ricardo Erick Lòpez Hevia from Granma newspaper won the Sports Media Pearl Awards in the **Photography Athletic Prowess** category with his work *Women more than shadows*.

The Awards are the first internationally to be dedicated to awarding excellence in the sports journalism industry and have seen a huge number of submitted entries.

The elite in sports journalism were awarded for their work at a glittering ceremony in Abu Dhabi, the UAE on Tuesday night, attended by Sheikh Nahyan Bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, Minister of Culture, Youth and Social Development.

The evening at the Etihad Towers complex in Abu Dhabi welcomed hosts of notable faces from the world of sports, such as Italian soccer player *Alessandro Del Piero*, who joined NBA star *Yao Ming* and Olympic Gold Medalist *Jonathan Edwards*.

An expert executive committee led by the AIPS (International Sports Press

Association) studied more than 700 international submissions across a range of categories from sports photography and weblog to writing and audio. Eighty-five submissions were then shortlisted at an event in Abu Dhabi in November.

The winner of each category was awarded the prestigious Pearl trophy and a prize of \$10,000 dollars, with the second and third placed finalists receiving \$5,000 dollars each.

Cuban Baseball Series: Second Phase

Current Cuban champions Ciego de Avila's Tigres won over Industriales by a close score of 5-4 at Jose Ramon Cepero stadium at the beginning of the second phase of the Cuban Baseball Series on Tuesday also marked by wins of Granma, Matanzas and Las Tunas.

Granma's Alazanes defeated Pinar del Rio's Vegueros by slide of 3-0 with excellent pitching by Lázaro Blanco.

Matanzas' Cocodrilos delivered a good batting offensive at Holguin's pitching to win 10-3.

Las Tunas' Leñadores reached the eighth inning, losing by three runs but took the lead after scoring four runs to beat Isla de la Juventud 4-3.

MLB and Cuba Start Academic Exchange

MLB representatives expressed their aim to promote and favor the transfer of ball players living in Cuba to the United States organized baseball leagues.

The Cuban Baseball Federation expressed concern about the immigration status of Cubans traveling to play baseball in the United States.

Dan Halem, Major League Baseball vice president for labor relations and chief legal officer, said the objective of Commissioner Robert Manfred, Jr. and the Major League Baseball Players Association is to have a legal and save system for the normal flow of ball players between Cuba and the United States. Negotiations will take place under the laws of both countries with the cooperation of both governments.

Tony Clark, executive director of the Major League Baseball Players Association, also highlighted their highest interest to guarantee the welfare of players as both parties need to secure a strong negotiation process, hard work and cooperation.

Clark recognized the level of baseball is better in the entire planet and the MLB's main interest is to learn how the game is played in each country, including Cuba.

Havana Hotel Nacional hosted the national media talks with Joe Torre, MLB's chief baseball officer and Hall of Famer Dave Winfield, along with active players as Dominican Nelson Cruz, Venezuelan Miguel Cabrera, Cubans Alexei Ramírez, Yasiel Puig, Brayan Peña and José Dariel Abreu, Cuban-American Jon Jay and American Clayton Kershaw.

Joe Torre, outstanding player and manager and member of the Hall of Fame, thanked the invitation to visit "a beautiful country" and was very excited by the exchange. "Baseball like music is a universal language. Baseball is felt and lived with passion in Cuba and that's why we came to work with children and pass on our friendship," he said.

The program of activities of the MLB delegation continues on Wednesday with a children's clinic at Havana's Latinoamericano stadium. Another similar clinic will take place in Matanzas' Victoria de Girón stadium on Thursday. Both events are open to the public and free of charge.

Tennis: Cuban tennis pair advances to semi-finals in DR

The Cuban tennis duo made up by William Dorantes and Marcos Lazo advanced to the quarterfinal round of the F3 Futures Tournament, which takes place until December 19 in the Dominican capital, Santo Domingo.

In a grueling match, the Cuban couple beat 2-1 (6-3, 5-7 and 13-11) the host pair, made up by Julio Armando Fernandez and Nick Hardt, said the official website of the contest.

For Cubans, this result allowed them to recover from the losses suffered by both in the men's single

event, just hours before this match, also at the Parque del Este National Tennis Center, in the Dominican capital.

On that occasion, Dorantes lost to Canadian Alexander Donski (1-2 / 3-6, 6-3, 2-6) in one hour and 24 minutes while Lazo could not even score a point to Spanish Nicolas Moreno, who defeated him 2-0 (6-0, 6-0) in just 44 minutes.

Cubans will face the winners of the game between the pairs formed by Argentine Mateo Martinez and Mexican Luis Patiño and the duo made up by Kyle Joseph, from Antigua and Barbuda, and Bahamian Jody Turnquest.

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