

Tampa Spartans Win First Game of Cuban Trip

Havana, Jan 16, (RHC), -- Playing in its first game during its Cuba trip, the University of Tampa baseball team picked up a 2-1 victory over Havana's Industriales Blue Lions youth team on Wednesday.

"This was a great baseball game with outstanding pitching," says head coach Joe Urso.

"It was a blessing and an honor to play the Cuban team today. I will remember this visit for the rest of my life," said Senior Spartans player Preston Packrall.

The team has two more games this week against other teams in Cuba's 16-team national league.

So far, the group of nearly 50 team members, staff, and some parents have toured historic and cultural sites, met with students at the University of Havana, and talked baseball with retired Cuban players, said head coach Joe Urso in a telephone interview from Havana.

The Spartans aren't in Cuba in any official capacity, but rather are on a people-to-people exchange — a type of trip that allows Americans to travel to Cuba despite the U.S. blockade.

The Spartans will be back in action on Friday at 10:30 a.m., against the Artemisa Hunters and will face the Mayabeque Hurricanes in their final game in Cuba on Saturday. /PHOTO: AP

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