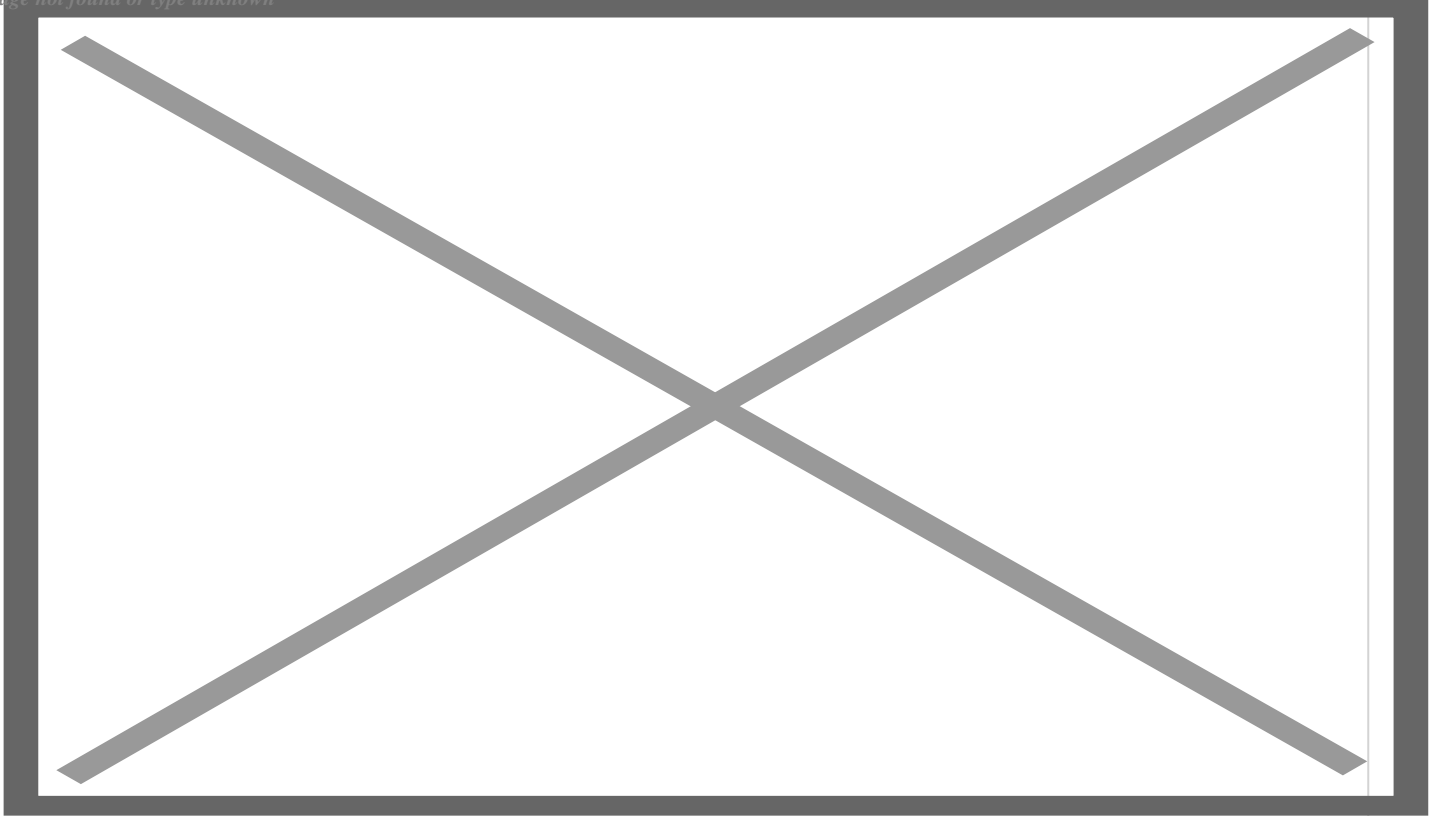


# *Cuban pitching leads Chunichi to victory in Japanese baseball*

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**Yariel Rodriguez and Raidel Martinez**

Tokyo, June 22 (PL) - Cuban pitchers Raidel Martinez and Yariel Rodriguez led the Chunichi Dragons to an extra-inning win over the Yakult Swallows in the Japanese baseball league.

Martinez allowed no hits and no runs in the ninth inning, in which he struck out his opponents twice and kept the scoreboard at a one-run cushion.

He was followed by Rodriguez, who allowed one hit and gave away one chocolate and one ticket, but preserved the scoreboard, until his team took a 2x1 lead at the end of that episode. In addition, his compatriot, catcher Ariel Martínez went 4-1, with one run scored.

Meanwhile, for the defeated team, the most outstanding player was Venezuelan José Osuna, who hit a home run in two at-bats and two tickets.

The Cubans Yurisbel Gracial and Alfredo Despaigne also had a good day by closing 4-2 and 4-1, respectively, but could not avoid the defeat of the SoftBank Falcons 3x4 against the Orix Buffaloes.

The Latin American armada also included Puerto Rican Neftalí Soto, 2-1 with a home run, and Venezuelan reliever Edwin Escobar, with a blank inning in the Bay Stars' 3x1 success against the Yomiuri Giants.

The Dominican Gregory Polanco was the best of the Giants as he compiled 3-2, with a double and a walk, but he left with a crestfallen head.

After these results, Yakult remains at the top of the Central League with 43 wins and 22 losses, followed by Yomiuri (37-34), while Chunichi (30-36) and Estrellas (28-34) are in the cellar.

With more than 70 games remaining in the regular season, SoftBank leads the Pacific League with a 37-27 record, and Orix is second to last with 32-36, although it still has hopes of advancing to the postseason in third place.

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