

Granma hopes to arrive to the land of Cuban baseball giants

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Bayamo, June 29 (PL) - Alazanes de Granma faces the challenge of becoming the sixth four-time champion baseball team in Cuba today to maximize its historical status under the guidance of manager Carlos Marti.

In 60 National Series (SN), only five teams have -at least- four trophies in their trophy cabinets and, incidentally, carry the epithet of the "greatest" ever: Industriales, Santiago de Cuba, Vegueros, Villa Clara and Pinar del Rio.

Before clashing against Cocodrilos de Matanzas in the last game of the 2022 season, the Granmense team longs to reach that land of giants, after lifting its first trophy in 2017 (SN 56) and five years later having the qualifier of "golden generation", despite some losses of players along the way.

Wins in 2018 and 2021, as well as being just one step away from another reign, leaves the horses in a spectacular situation as their 73-year-old mentor assesses the possibility of hitting the retirement button and enjoying the ball away from the dugouts and the pressure of competitions.

The same man who "has a shot" at second place in the ranking of the most successful coaches, as he can match Ramón Carneado and Higinio Vélez, both with four, all behind leader Jorge Fuentes (five).

The books indicate that nine champion teams stopped playing three decades ago, except for Habana, predecessor of the current Artemisa and Mayabeque as a result of the last political-administrative division of the country in 2011.

Industriales, the flagship team in the Caribbean territory, is the most dominant, after winning the 1962-1963, 1963-1964, 1964-1965, 1972-1973, 1985-1986, 1991-1992, 1995-1996, 2002-2003, 2003-2004, 2005-2006 and 2009-2010 editions.

Behind are Santiago de Cuba (eight), Vegueros (six), Villa Clara (five), Pinar del Río (four), Henequeneros (three), Azucareros (three), (La) Habana (Marrones/ Vaqueros, three), Ciego de Ávila (three) and Granma.

Occidentales (1962), Orientales (1967), Agricultores (1975), Ganaderos (1976), Citricultores (1977, 1984), Sancti Spíritus (1979), Holguín (2002), Las Tunas (2019) and Matanzas (2020) also know the taste of victory in the main baseball tournament of the largest Caribbean island.

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