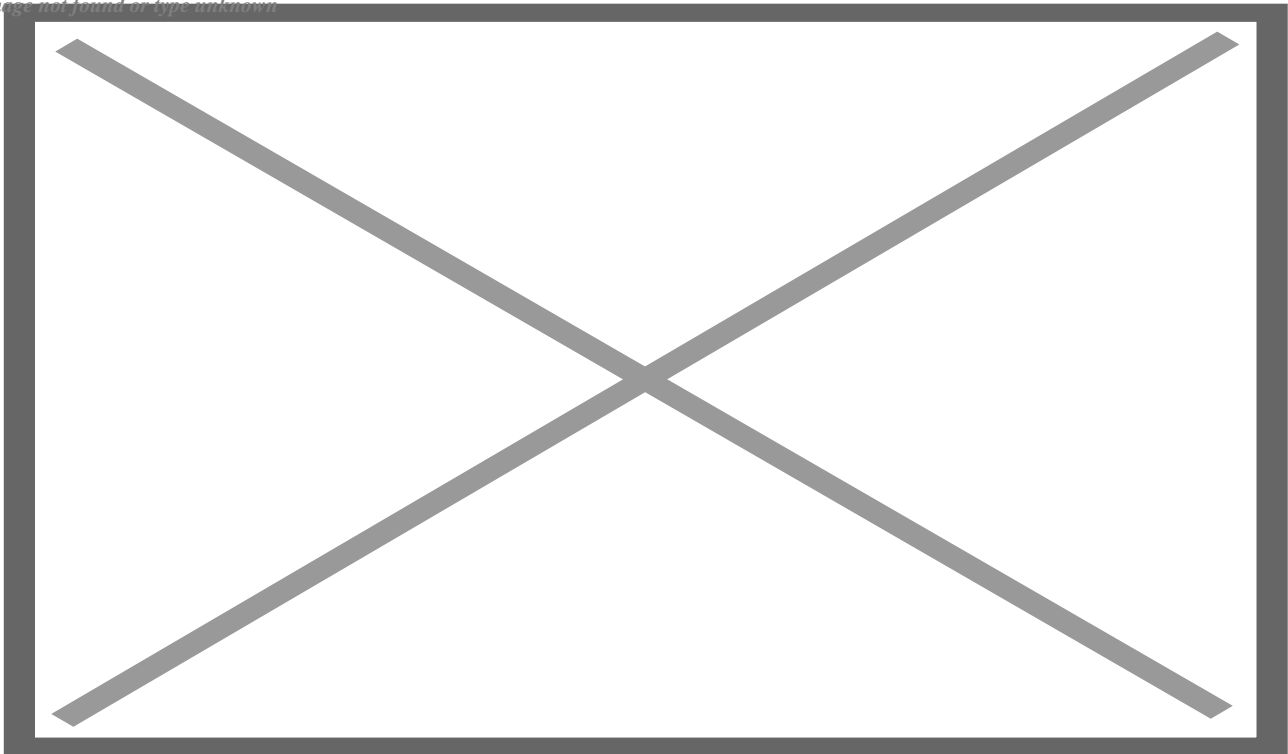


Cubans shine in Venezuelan basketball

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Havana, July 27 (JIT) - The Guaros de Lara have two new jewels in the Venezuelan Professional Basketball Super League 2022 since the arrival of Cubans Neysser Coutin and Marlon Diaz.

The two athletes disembarked in Barquisimeto, taking on a leading role, to reinforce a team that is in last place in the western conference of the western division.

That is exactly what they did in their first game against the Trotamundos de Carabobo, despite the 79-87 defeat.

The two-meter tall, 24-year-old center, Marlon Díaz, took the court in the starting five in his first game at the Domo Bolivariano of Barquisimeto and did not disappoint with 22 points and nine rebounds, one short of a double-double.

His compatriot Neysser Coutin, despite coming off the bench, played 31 minutes on the court and accumulated 17 points with the same amount of rebounds as Díaz. That performance earned him a starting spot in the next game.

With both Cubans in the starting line-up, the Guaros faced the Toros de Aragua at home and found the victory again, only the second of the campaign that is starting.

Such was Coutin's performance that he deserved to be named the most valuable player of the game. The 25-year-old forward, 1.92 meters tall, scored 25 points with five rebounds and two blocks. His countryman, with 12 points, seven rebounds and two assists, was among the highlights of the game.

The third game of the Crepusculares, also away at the Domo Olímpico de San Juan de los Morro against the Llaneros de Guárico, ended with an unfavorable result of 73-60.

However, Coutin, in only his third game in the Superliga, was the leader in rebounds (7) tied with Marlon, in assists (4) and blocks (2) for both teams, in addition to leading in steals for his team with two and seconding with 14 the ones scored led by Diaz with 15.

Now the Guaros have two wins and five losses at the bottom of their section, but 2.5 games behind the leader when the tournament is still young.

After three appearances, the Cubans are the undisputed leaders of one of the most successful teams in Venezuelan basketball: the only one along with Trotamundos de Carabobo to have international titles and one of the few clubs in the Americas to win the Intercontinental Cup, the South American Club League and the League of the Americas.

The performance of these members of the Cuban national team not only gives prestige to the island, but also opens the door to future recruitments of basketball talents here.

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