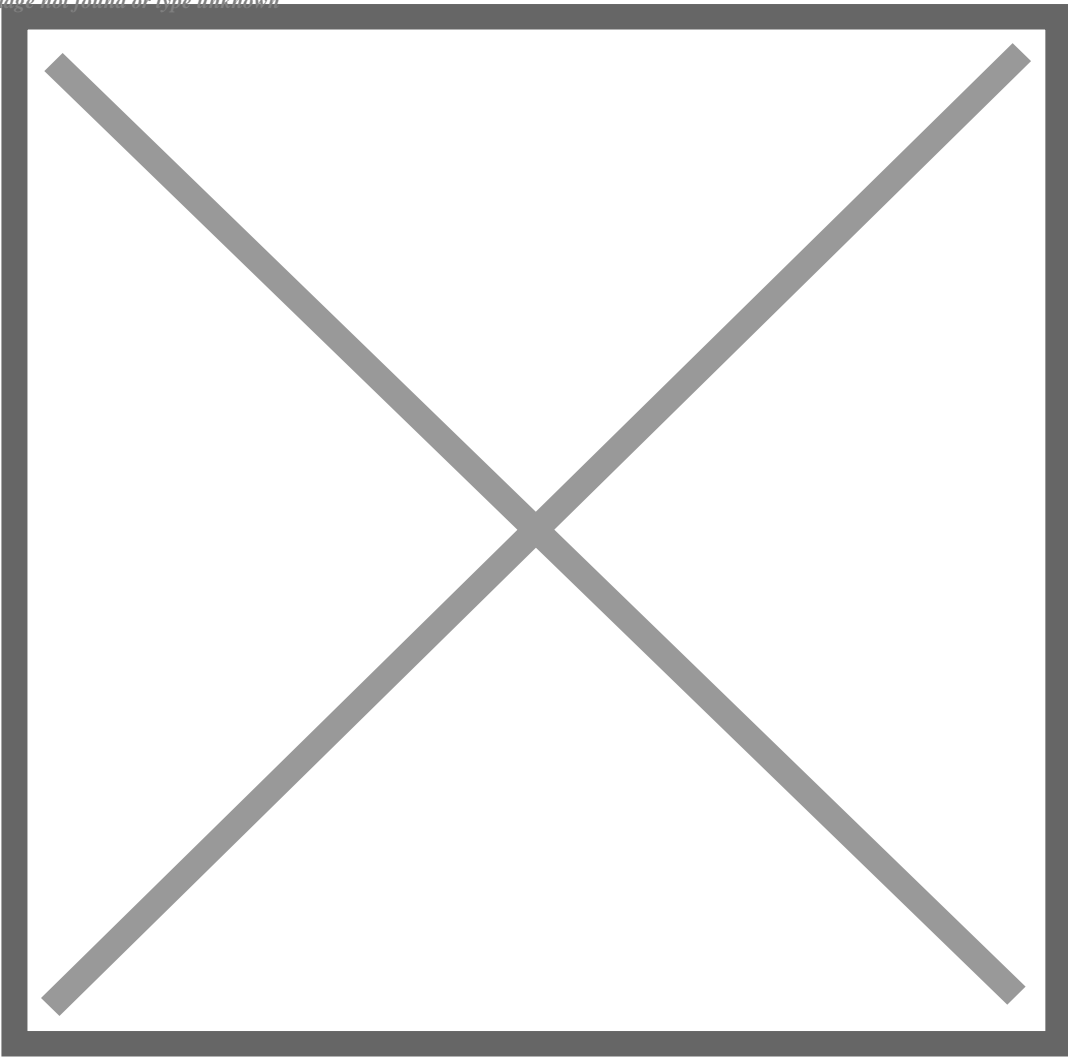


Cuba knocks out Nicaragua in women's pre-World Baseball Championship in Venezuela

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Applause for left fielder Katherine Fals. Photo taken from ACN

Havana, August 16 (RHC)-- The Cuban women's baseball team knocked out Nicaragua 12-2 on Tuesday in the pre-World Cup tournament held in the Venezuelan city of La Guaira, and got one step closer to

reaching its ticket for the 2023 World Cup.

At the Jorge Luis Garcia stadium, the students of mentor Jorge Luis Pimienta were very productive and, although they only hit seven hits -their opponents had eight-, they took good advantage of Nicaragua's poor defense, which committed seven errors.

Cuba decided the game in the very first inning by scoring a bunch of five runs with only two hits; but the speed and the good work done in training, allowed them to steal second base four times and always get the target against catcher Carol Rocha.

In that first act, starter and loser Lalka Arana gave out three tickets and her team committed two errors.

Former star pitcher Julio Romero, a sports glory invited to the tournament, had already seen the Nicaraguans play and alerted the coaching staff about Rocha's great deficiencies.

Cuba also scored two runs in the third inning, three in the fourth and the two needed in the sixth inning to put the Nicaraguans out of action.

For the Cuban team, the applause went to left fielder Katherine Fals, who hit 4-3, including a pair of triples, and drove in four runs.

Right-hander Yanet Cruz earned her second win -all of Cuba's- despite allowing eight hits and giving up five tickets. The lanky pitcher has appeared in all four games and her career-high is 15.2 innings worked.

"Today we had to win by any means, and I prepared myself to hit the ball well because the team needed it. We are very happy with this second victory and we are waiting for what happens in the Puerto Rico-Dominican Republic duel," Cuban outfielder Fals told Agencia Cubana de Noticias.

Fals was referring to the duel that would follow, in which a Puerto Rican victory would give Cuba the ticket to the 2023 World Championship and, at least, the fourth place in the tournament with the possibility of advancing to the semifinal phase.

Tomorrow, Pimienta's team will close the qualifying phase with a match against Mexico at 2:00 pm.

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