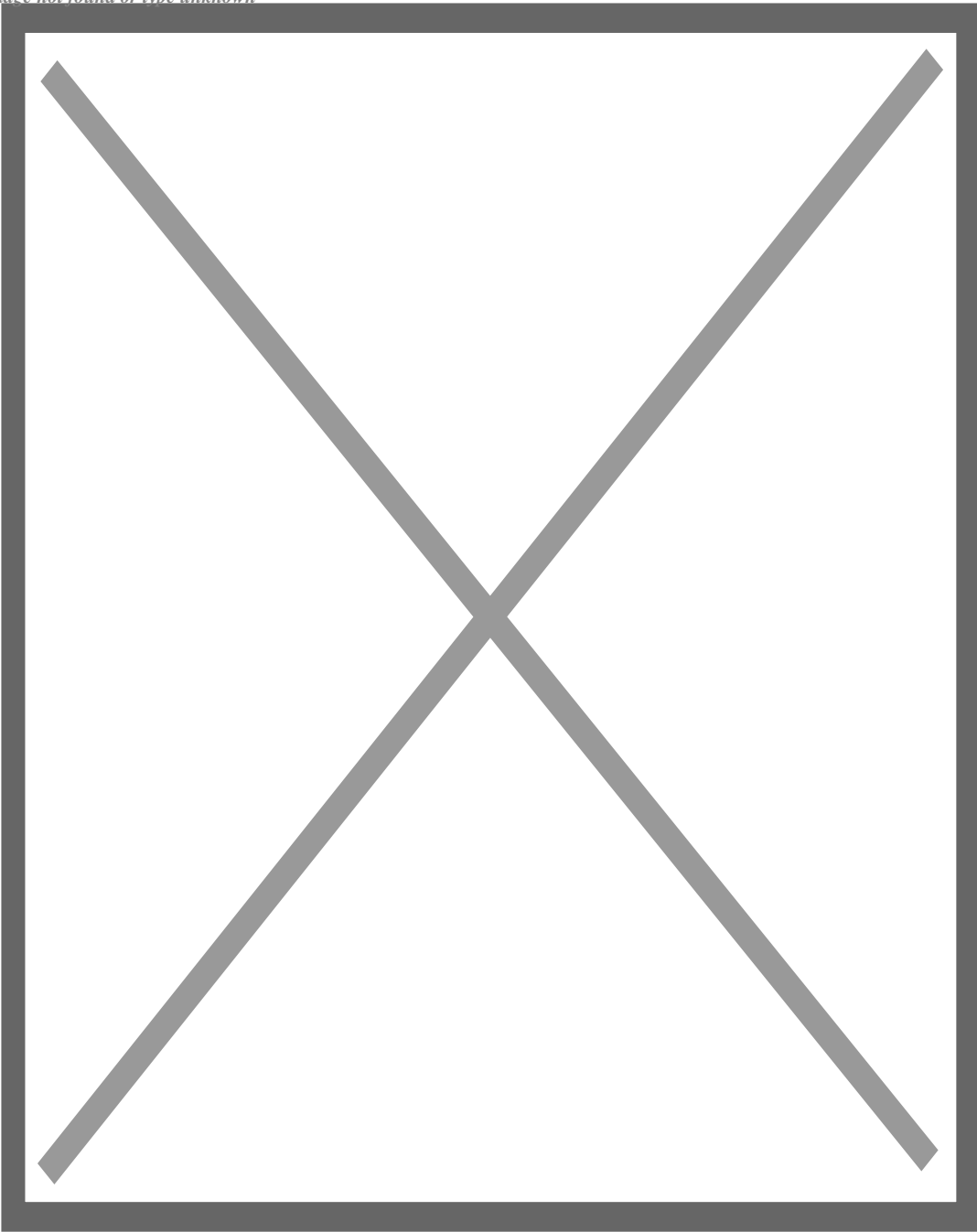


Elite League: No holding back for Agricultores

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Agricultores and Tabacaleros took the lead in the First Cuban Baseball Elite League, after defeating Portuarios and Centrales, respectively, for the second consecutive day.

Havana, December 2 (ACN) -- On a day in which the three winning teams showed alarming unproductiveness by leaving many runners on bases, the leader Agricultores continues to champion for its respect by defeating and finally passing the broom to Tabacaleros, in the closing of the twelfth particular subseries of the First Cuban Baseball Elite League.

The host team that combines players from Granma and Las Tunas left their rival lying on the field (11-10) on the grass of the Julio Antonio Mella stadium, when in the twelfth inning, and with the angles congested, the catcher Andy Cosme could not hold a pitch from the fast reliever Alberto Ocle.

For the pupils of the Granmense mentor Carlos Martí, Rafael Viñales, who went 6-3 with three RBIs, was the leader in that department (20). The bullpen's Andres de la Cruz also brought three teammates to the plate.

Agricultores hit 15 hits and received six walks. But his powerful bullpen left 17 runners in circulation. Third win for reliever Alberto Pablo Civil, who also has seven saves, for which he has been involved in 10 of his team's 22 victories.

Meanwhile, at its Coloso del Cerro stadium, Portuarios defeated Cafetaleros 4-1 and took another step forward in its quest to leave the red zone and move into the green zone for the post-season. The right-hander from Quivicán Yadián Martínez achieved his fourth victory and equaled in that leadership with Yunieski García (TAB), Wilson Paredes (CAF) and the left-hander Dariel Góngora (CEN), by giving six hits in the same number of innings.

Yadián was supported by excellent reliever Andy Vargas, who pitched 3.0 episodes with only one hit. For Portuarios, who left 13 runners on the pads, Lázaro Martínez, who went 4-3 with two runs scored, was the standout hitter.

And at the Augusto César Sandino stadium in Santa Clara, the visiting Ganaderos stopped their losing streak at five with a close 3-2 victory over Centrales, with an effective and immaculate relief of José Luis Brañas in 2.2 innings to sign his first save. Alex Guerra's first victory, despite admitting six hits and conceding three free passes in 5.2 innings.

For the Toros of espirituano mentor Héctor Huelga, Yordanis Samón, who went 4-2 and scored twice, was outstanding. The winners were very unproductive, because with 13 hits and eight tickets received, they left 13 men in circulation.

After these results, Agricultores maintains the lead (22-9), followed by Centrales (16-16), and Tabacaleros (15-16). Cafetaleros and Ganaderos (14-16) are next, followed by Portuarios (12-20), games behind the fourth and last place that will qualify for the postseason.

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