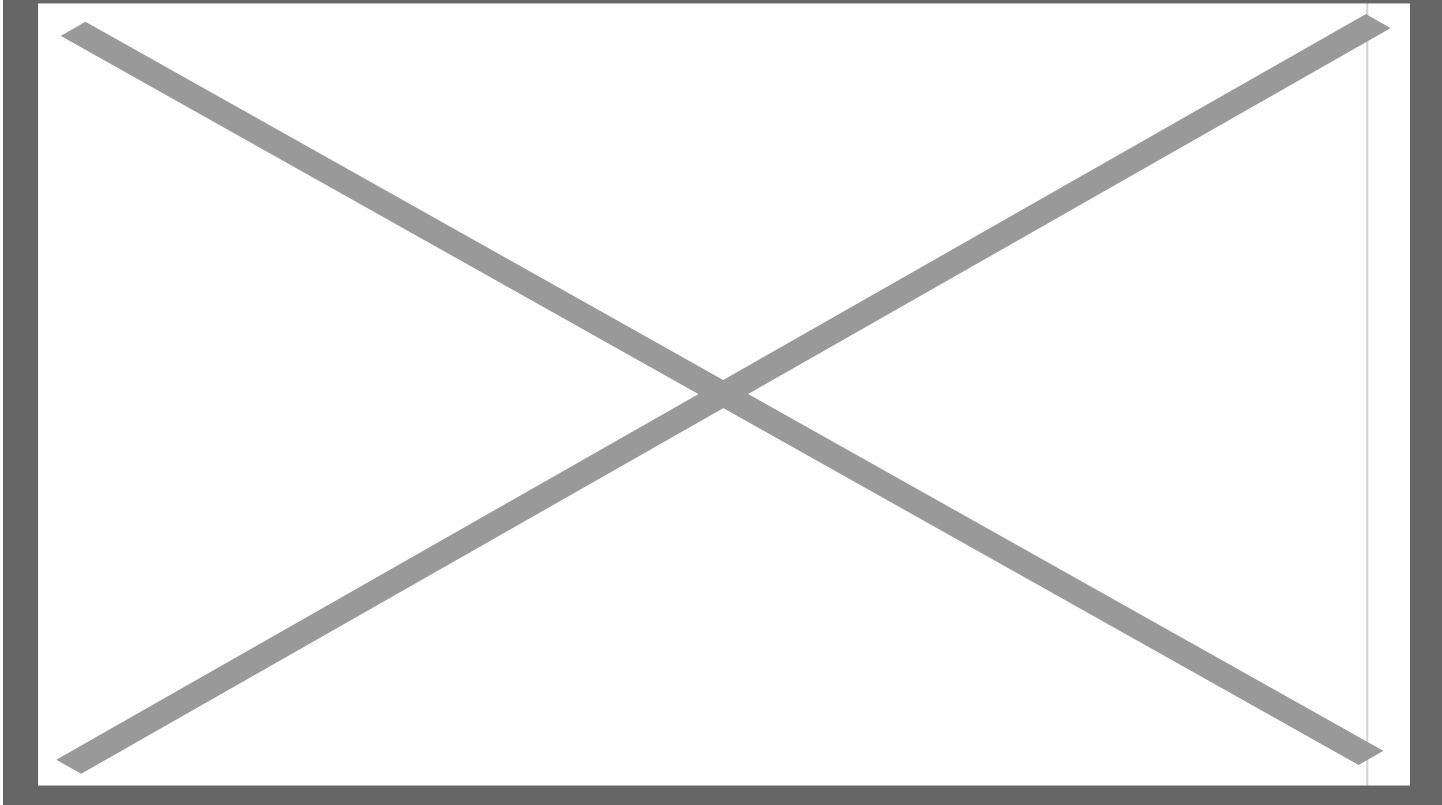


Matanzas breaks Las Tunas' unbeaten streak in semifinal playoffs

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Matanzas Crocodiles

Matanzas, July 25 (PL) - The Matanzas team left Las Tunas on the field in the third semifinal clash between them in the National Baseball Series, broke their undefeated record in the playoffs and got closer in the series 2 wins to one.

In the 80th extra-inning played in the post-season, Ariel Sánchez hit a jit with bases loaded in the tenth act to seal the match with a 3x2 score.

In this way, the Crocodiles avoided a situation from which nobody has recovered yet in the Cuban championships.

The outcome brought the Matanzas closer to the series, now 2-1.

Although he had a no decision, the Cocodrilos starter Denis Quesada contained the Leñadores offense, by pitching 8.2, with 1 run, 6 hits and 5 strikeouts.

It was not long before the Tuneros put the play-off 3-0, a score that has never been reversed in Cuban post-seasons. However, their defense left Matanzas alive in the ninth inning, with two consecutive errors that opened the doors to the tie.

Armando Dueñas (1.1, 1 run and 2 strikeouts, signed the sensational victory, which served as a tribute to the recently deceased player Yoandy Garlobo, a member of the all-star team in the First World Baseball Classic, for whom a minute of applause was requested in the fifth inning.

This Tuesday, the two teams will meet again. Yasel Labrada, for the Leñadores, and international player Naykel Cruz, for Matanzas, have been announced as pitchers.

Ariel Sánchez, author of the hit that decided the third game of the semi-final of the Cuban baseball tournament, dedicated the victory to Yoandy Garlobo, inspiration of the Matanzas team, according to his words.

To Garlobo, who died recently, his teammates paid tribute in the game against Las Tunas with a minute of applause in the fifth inning and all wearing a stamp with his historic number 31 attached to the jersey near the heart.

"This triumph is for him," Sanchez told the local press at the end of the clash.

"Garlobo's spirit is with us on the bench, his jersey is above my seat and I feel very proud to dedicate my decisive hit to him," said an emotional Ariel Sanchez.

Yoandy Garlobo is remembered, among other sporting merits, for his All-Star award in the first World Baseball Classic, where he was one of the pillars of the Cuban national team, runner-up in that event.

Ariel Sánchez described the victory as very important because it prevented the playoff from being 0-3 in favor of Las Tunas.

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