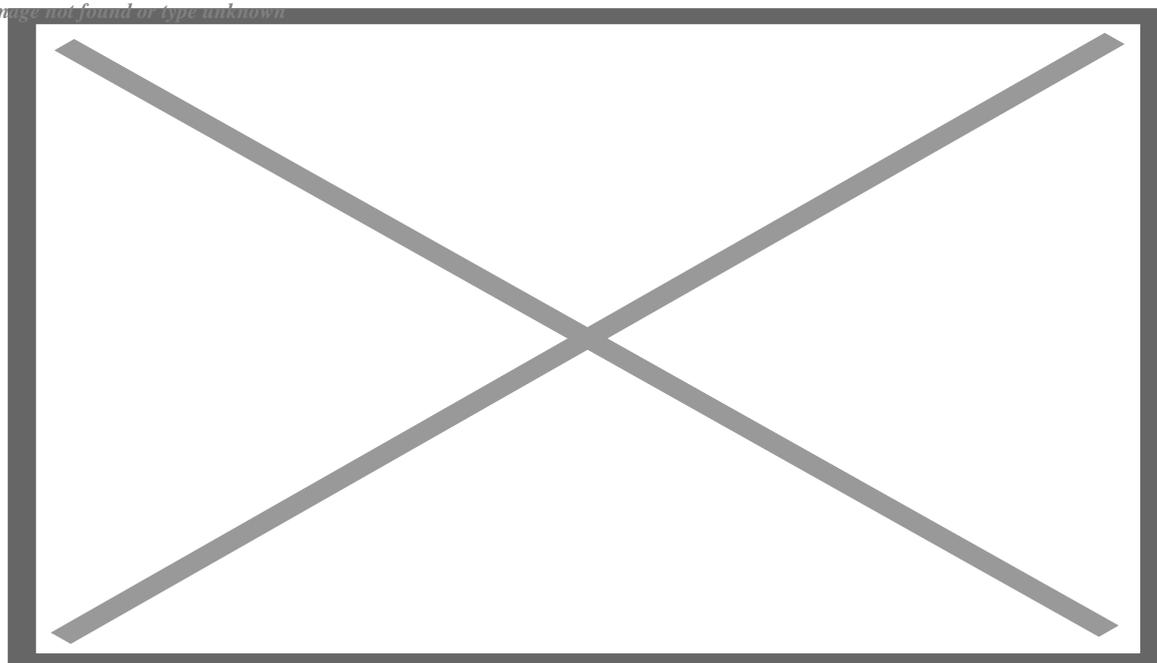


Cuban president hails Industriales' advance to baseball finals

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Havana, August 2 (PL) - Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel hailed the victory of the Industriales team against Santiago, which will allow them to advance to the final of the 62nd National Baseball Series in the Caribbean nation.

"The Lion roared at the Guillermón! After 11 years, Industriales returns to a final. Thanks to habaneros and santiagueros for reviving the classic, the crowded stadiums, the conga, the healthy rivalry. May the passion last. Cuba deserves it," the president wrote on Twitter.

The Industriales team -representing the island's capital- won the seventh game of the semifinal at the Guillermón Moncada stadium in Santiago de Cuba the day before and will be discussing the title of the island's baseball tournament with the team from Las Tunas.

With the 3-1 victory, the Azules, the top winners of championships with 12, assured their return to a final, after two consecutive defeats that had evened the series against the Avispas.

Right-hander Raymond Figueredo (6.0 IP, 1CL, 4H, 5K and 2BB) made his third start in the playoff against the Santiagueros and signed his second hit, undoubtedly the most important for the Azules who will face Las Tunas for the gold.

With the score so close, the bullpen played a leading role. Frank Herrera (2.0 IP, 2H, 2K) kept the lead and Juan Xavier Peñalver earned his 15th save of the entire fair by hanging up the last run.

It was another high tension game, at the height of the existing rivalry between the protagonists of the Cuban baseball classic, decided in the fifth inning when the Azules stepped on the rubber a couple of times with four hits, among them Alberto Calderón's homer and Yasmani Tomás's single, both of which brought in the key runs.

The hosts' starter, Alberto Bisset, suffered the setback and added three of his team's four losses in the series against Industriales.

The final between Industriales and Las Tunas begins next Saturday at the Julio Antonio Mella stadium, home of the Leñadores.

Santiago de Cuba won the bronze medal after a praiseworthy performance during the season.

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