

Artemisa to embrace favorite in Cuban baseball final

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Matanzas, January 17 (PL) - The Artemisa team will seek revenge here today against the Matanzas team in the second day of the playoff for the gold medal of the Cuban winter baseball league.

It will be a duel between right-handers Raymond Figueredo (ART) and Yoel Mogena (MTZ), confirmed by both managers, who praised the performance of their respective teams in the opening game of the final series.

The so-called Cazadores lost yesterday, 6-5, in one of the most thrilling games played in the entire championship, defined in the eighth inning by the home run of young José Amaury Noroña, his second of the post-season and tenth in the tournament.

In addition to Noroña, third baseman Yurisbel Gracial hit a two-run home run that eventually evened the score in the fifth inning.

It resulted in Gracial's fifth home run since the playoffs began, ratifying her league-leading 13 home runs.

The game featured sensational plays to the outfield on both sides, although the Artemiseños committed three costly errors.

Among the good catches was one by bartender Yordan Manduley in the eighth inning that prevented several runs by the Cazadores.

For many experts, that pitching turned the game around by preventing the visitors from getting ahead on the scoreboard, in addition to boosting the spirits of the Matanzas team.

Closer Armando Dueñas got the last five outs and scored the victory, while José Ignacio Bermúdez suffered the setback.

Left-handed starters Yoannis Yera (5.0IP, 4CL, 8H, 2K, 1BB) and Geonel Gutiérrez (6.0IP, 3CL, 7H, 2K, 1BB) left the game close.

With one out left, Luis González hit a single, then Dayán García received a ticket and the stage was set for Frederich Cepeda to leave everyone in the stands breathless with a hit caught in the depths of left field.

Both mentors, the experienced Armando Ferrer and the rookie Yulieski González, agreed that the rivalry will continue to mark the championship series.

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