

Sports News Roundup Sept 26



Baseball

Industriales and Granma beat for the 2nd consecutive day Mayabeque and Holguín, respectively, in the Cuban baseball series.

Industriales defeated 5-1 to Los Huracanes in a match marked by the offensive production by veteran 1st baseman Alexander Malleta, who hit 3-4 with a homer and 3 RBIs for the winning team.

The starting pitcher Noelvis Entenza, who is this year with the Havana Blues after playing several seasons for Cienfuegos, allowed only 2 hits and 1 earned run in 7 innings, although reliever Hector Ponce took the win and Yohandri Portal saved the game.

In turn, Granma beat Holguín 8-1 thanks to great pitching performance by Alain Tamayo, who allowed 5 hits and 1 unearned run in 7 innings of action, while Guillermo Aviles hit 2-4 with a homer and 3 RBIs as the most outstanding batter.

The outfielder and leadoff hitter Roel Santos also highlighted by hitting 3-4, with 3 runs, while Ernesto Hernández took the loss.

After these results, Industriales and Granma entered the group of undefeated teams with 2 wins, which also includes Matanzas, Sancti Spiritus and Las Tunas, in the newly opened *54th Cuban National Baseball Series*.

In another striking outcome of the day, Lander Moreira allowed only 1 hit in 6 innings and Yoennis Turcas relieved for 3 perfect innings to lead Guantanamo to a tight 2-0 win over Santiago de Cuba.

Previously, during evening hours, Isla de la Juventud defeated 5-3 to Artemisa, Villa Clara 7-0 over Cienfuegos; Sancti Spiritus did the same but 2-1 over Ciego de Avila, Las Tunas versus Camagüey was 7-1, while Matanzas and Pinar del Río re-scheduled their 3rd clash.

Volleyball

Cuba's women's volleyball team suffered its 3rd consecutive defeat at the *World Volleyball Championship*, losing 0-3 against Japan in the 1st round of *Group D* of the tournament, in a match held in Bari, Italy.

The Japanese won in 1 hour and 18 minutes, in which Cuban delivered 26 points for mistakes, for only 14 their rivals'.

The top scorer of the match was the Asian Yukiko Ebata with 14 points, followed by Cuban Alena Rojas (12) and Melissa Vargas (10).

This Thursday also triumphed in *Group D*, Azerbaijan 3-2 to Puerto Rico and China 3-0 to Belgium, while in the *A*, based in Rome, Germany beat Tunisia 3-0, Dominican Republic 3-2 to Croatia, and Argentina-Italy 3-0. Brazil, Serbia and Bulgaria were also granted wins facing Canada, Cameroon and Turkey, in that order, in *Group B*.

This Friday is a rest day and then, Cuba comes up with China and Azerbaijan on Saturday and Sunday, last day of the 1st preliminary stage of this world cap, which brings together 24 teams.

Yesterday, Puerto Rican women's team defeated Cuba in the same city by 3-0 in 1 hour and 17 minutes, where the top scorer of the game was the Puerto Rican Karina Ocasio, with 24 points, who was backed up by her teammates Stephanie Enright (12) and Yarimar Rosa (10), while Cuba's best scorers were Melissa Vargas, who is only 14, with 14 units, followed by Daymara Lescay and Alena Rojas (9).

Chess

Cuban chess players have shown stable results in the past few years to rank the nation as one of the world's powerhouses in this sport as well as being the strongest team in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Those results are closely associated with the performance of Leinier Domínguez, who is currently ranked 11th on the International Chess Federation's list, thanks to a 2,760 point ELO, making him the best Latin American player on the list.

Domínguez started off this year with an excellent performance as he finished 5th at the Tata Steel tournament hosted by the Dutch city of Wijk aan Zee, where he won 6 points in 11 games.

The performance and progress of Cuban chess also stems from the *Capablanca In Memoriam Tournament* hosted by this Caribbean nation, and regarded as the strongest regional competition that honors Cuba's best chess player ever, José Raúl Capablanca, who was born in Havana on November 19th, 1888, and remained as world champion from 1921 through 1927.

At the latest *Capablanca In Memoriam tournament*, held last May, the *Elite Group* went down in history with the highest ELO average, of 2,721 points, for which it was included in FIDE's 19th category.

With 6.5 points in 10 games, Wesley So, from the Philippines, won the tournament, followed by the Cubans Lázaro Bruzón (5,5) and Leinier Domínguez (5.0).

The latest credential added by Cuban chess was the performance of its men's team at the recent *World Chess Olympiad* hosted by the Norwegian city of Tromso, where it finished 7th to equal their country's best performance ever at this competition.

The Cuban team came ahead of nations like the United States, France and the Netherlands and did much better than in Istanbul 2 years ago when it was 11th with 7 wins, 2 draws and 2 defeats in a tournament that gathered 1,900 competitors from 174 nations.

The results at Tromso ratified Cuba as Latin America's chess powerhouse. Argentina was the region's 2nd best at the recent Olympiad, finishing 18th, followed by Peru (19), Brazil (22), Colombia (41) and Venezuela (42).

However, Cuba's women's team did not do as well, tallying 6 wins, 1 draw and 4 defeats and finishing 30th, a result well below expectations as they were 4th at the Olympiad hosted by the Russian city of Khanty Mansiysk in 2010.

Russia's female team secured their 3rd consecutive title by beating Bulgaria in the last round followed by China and Ukraine.

Cuba's performance so far this year has reconfirmed its standing as one of the most respected nations in the world of chess.

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