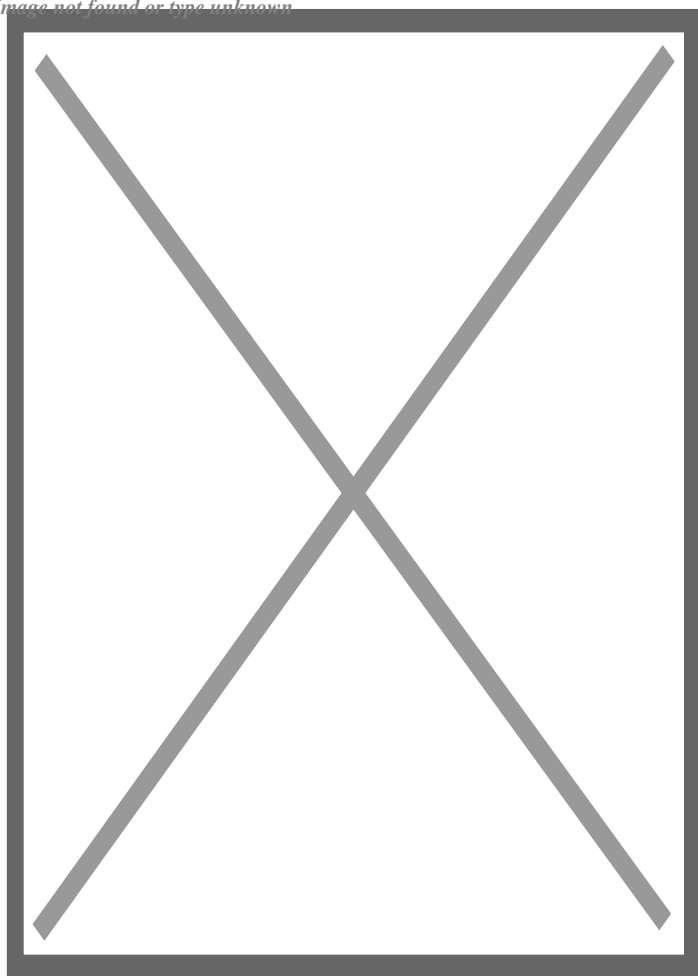


Five undefeated in start of National Baseball Series

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Havana, March 11 (PL) - Five sweeps and no less than 126 runs scored in eight games marked Sunday's 63rd National Baseball Series.

The offensive overflow on the second day of the championship, when 18 homers were hit, one less than on Saturday, but 17 more runs, triggered the alarms of a tournament that promises to break several individual and collective batting records.

Among the teams that repeated the victory is Industriales, victimized by a knockout of Isla de la Juventud (11x1), a triumph for the resume of Maikel Taylor (6.0 IP, 1CL, 6H, 3K, 1BB), who was released a few hours after the game, according to circular number two of the competition.

Catcher Oscar Valdés hit a grand slam and Roberto Álvarez and Ariel Hechavarría also hit back-to-back homers for the Blue Jays.

With the same score and an early finish, the Vegueros from Pinar del Río again defeated Artemisa, led by the complete work of Erlis Casanova (8.0 IP, 1CL, 5H, 6K, 3BB), who signed his 102nd victory in baseball tournaments on the Island. The fourth hitter Yaser Julio González hit 5-3, hit a two-run homer and drove in three runs.

The other 2-0 subseries were won by Sancti Spíritus, which defeated Cienfuegos (9x4); Holguín, which left Villa Clara on the field (10x9), and Ciego de Avila, which turned the scoreboard in the ninth inning against Camagüey with a trio of scores to win by 8x6.

Three teams hit back on Saturday to conclude the sub-series with an even 1-1 score. Santiago de Cuba needed an extra inning to beat Guantánamo 10x9, a team whose four fielding errors cost five runs.

Last season's champion, Las Tunas, finished off Granma 8x7 with Yunieski Larduet's run-scoring homer in the ninth inning, which found the speedy Héctor Castillo on the basepaths.

With 2.1 innings of relief, Alberto Pablo Civil got the win, despite a home run by Guillermo Avilés that tied the scoreboard momentarily.

Dennis Peña hit a pair of homers for the Leñadores and the pre-fielding Osvaldo Abreu from Granma was included in the list of those who send balls beyond the fences.

Mayabeque outscored Matanzas 15x7 with hits by Yasniel González, Jeison Martínez and Frank Alfonso, which supported the work of starter Albert Valladares.

This Monday will be a transfer day to begin a five-game sub-series on Tuesday at the same venue, with a rest on Friday.

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