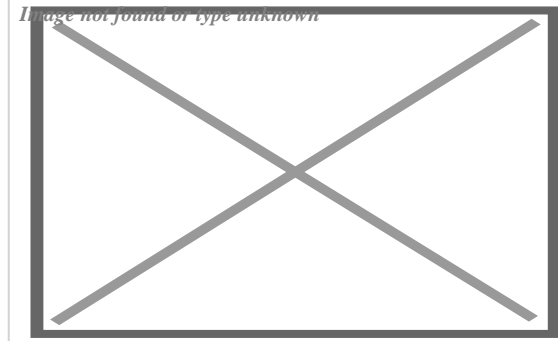


Ariel Martinez's home run in baseball preview in Japan

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Havana, March 22 (JIT) - Cuba's Ariel Martinez hit a three-run home run today as his team Nippon Ham Wrestlers left the DeNA All-Stars on the field (5x3) in a preseason game of the Japanese Professional Baseball League 2024.

At the Es Con Field stadium in Hokkaido, for the Pacific League, the Luchadores were down 2x3 with two men on base with no outs in the bottom of the ninth inning. Ariel then straightened out a grounder to closer Kohei Morihara, on an even 2-2 count, and took Mizuno over the 385-foot fence.

The matancero starter also fired two tubeyes in four innings, scored on a pair of occasions and drove in four runs.

With this praiseworthy performance, the lanky Yumurino raised his average to .361 and his total number of runs batted in to 10 in this preseason, with only Saturday and Sunday's games remaining.

In another game of the day, in the Central League, the Chunichi Dragons narrowly defeated the Lotte Marinos (4x3), in a game played at the Vantelin Dome in Nagoya.

For Chunichi, the young Cuban slugger Cristián Rodríguez hit a two-run single to raise his average to .161.

The Japanese League will be officially inaugurated on March 29.

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